

Many people profess beliefs in a multitude of ideas and attitudes in life. At the core, we can separate beliefs into two categories. It is either intellectual belief that translates into personal opinions, or true sincere belief from the heart based on the facts presented.

True sincere belief stems from relying in the integrity and reliability of the source of information, which results in committing to follow and apply such beliefs to our life.

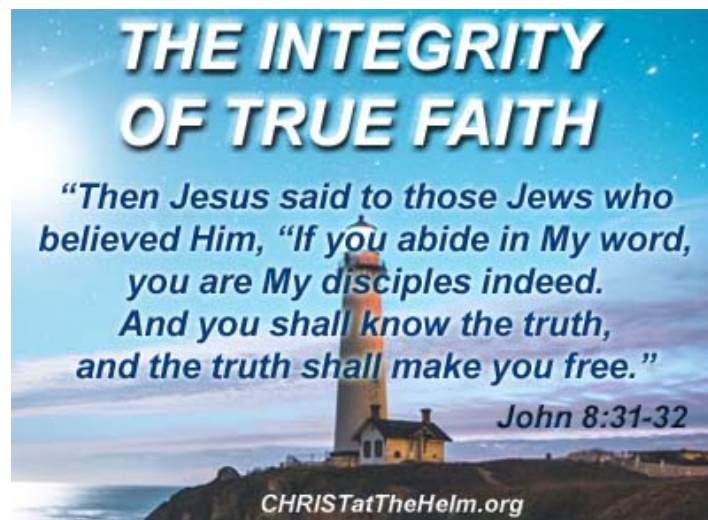
Intellectual belief, on the other hand, is simply an acknowledgement of the information presented, accepting the benefits it offers, but without engaging in the facts and responsibilities involved.

Jesus in John 12:46 is quoted as saying, "I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness." Obviously, belief must involve a commitment to not only say we believe, but as well prove it through our commitment to follow whatever Christ taught us in His Word.

The reason as well Paul said in 2Tim 3:16-17, "All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Is our belief in Christ from the heart, or is our belief strictly intellectual?

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In truly believing in God, we realize that belief from the heart involves acknowledging and confessing our belief, as Rom 10:10 says, “For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

What should our confession then imply, as Jesus clarified about entering the Kingdom of God?

Mat 7:21: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

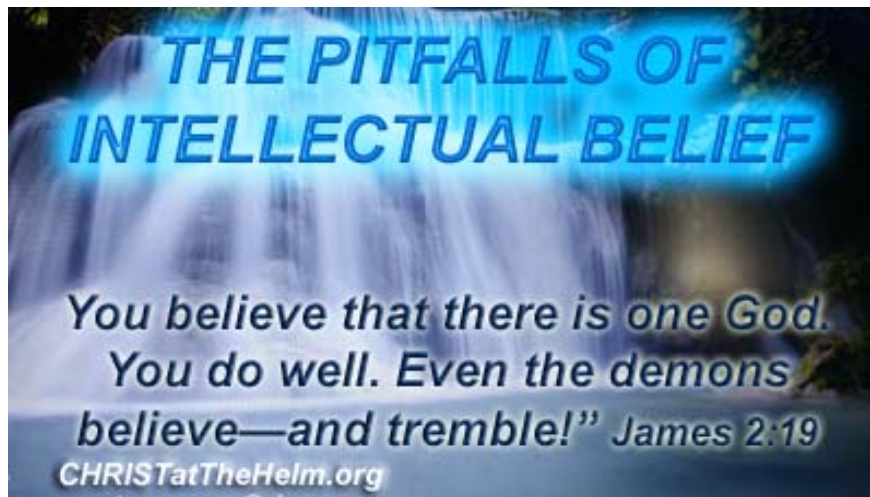
It is obvious that true belief in Christ requires we believe in all His teachings and live by them, as otherwise, we’re just pretending to believe, an intellectual belief in other words.

In Rom 12:2, Paul gave us a clear attitude to adopt for true belief from the heart saying, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Acts 17:11 describes Bereans who truly believed, saying, “They received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily.” If we are to be true to our belief in God, we must obviously live and follow what Jesus taught us in His Word.

Considering this, are we true believers in Christ and fully committed to live by God’s Word?

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In short, intellectual belief in God boils down to accepting that there is a God, then seeking to receive blessings and benefits without ever engaging to find out how to live according to God's Word.

In the parable of the sower in Mat 13:5-7, Jesus defined such people saying, "Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them."

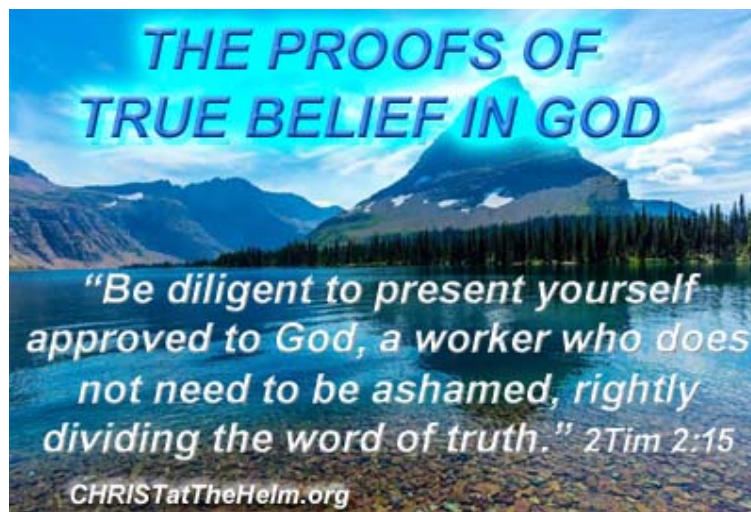
In other words, if we say that we believe in the message of salvation in Christ and follow the world as opposed to truly seeking the truth from God's Word, we will become slaves to the world and the flesh.

The apostle in 1John 2:19 described such people: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us."

The reason Jesus said in John 10:26-27, "But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."

How true, sincere and grounded is our belief in God?

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An interesting description of true believers is found in 1Thess 2:13 written by the apostle Paul: "For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe."

Did we notice the last sentence which says, "Which also effectively works in you who believe"?

How else are we to change our lives to confirm our true belief in God?

1Tim 6:11-12: "But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

1Peter 3:15: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."

It is clear that while salvation is not based on works, it also isn't to simply say we believe, and accept Christ intellectually as some teach. Rather, it demands that true belief translate into action.

Does our life presently reflect our confession of faith in Christ?

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Are there warnings contained in the Word of God about hypocritical belief?

John 3:36: “He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

Rom 8:13: “For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

1Cor 6:9-10: “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.”

Rev 21:8: “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

1John 4:1: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

Finally, what are we to do?

2Cor 13:5: “Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless indeed you are disqualified?”

Will we stand with God or cower to the world?

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