

JOHN 20:30-31
THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE!

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 20 as we continue our in-depth study of the Gospel of John.

We have spent several weeks on this chapter that deals with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And as we have seen, the resurrection is vital to our faith.

Paul put it like this in I Corinthians 15:13-19, **“But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up - if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.”**

I think that is very clear. Paul is saying that if Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead, then – ***FORGET ABOUT IT!*** We might as well toss our Bibles in the garbage and go home because our faith is empty, and we are just fools!

Paul wants to drive home this point about the resurrection of Jesus and how important it is to our faith. Yes, Jesus died for our sins, all our sins, He paid them in full. But He also rose from the grave and because He rose one day we too will get our resurrection bodies for our spirit and soul to dwell in!

Now Paul tells us that we are *MISERABLE* if Christ has not risen because our faith is based on a lie! But Paul does not leave us there. Not at all! He goes on to say in I Corinthians 15:20-22, **“But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.”**

Earlier on in I Corinthians chapter 15 Paul gave to us the facts of Christ’s resurrection, the eyewitness testimony, and now he is just restating that fact – *Christ is risen!*

Jesus is the firstfruits of the harvest that is to come. And regarding this Trapp tells us, *“As in the Firstfruits offered to God, the Jews were assured of God’s blessing on the whole harvest; so by the resurrection of Christ, our resurrection is insured.”*

It is as Paul said in Romans 8:23, **“Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.”**

What a glorious promise that God has given to us, that we will be raised in a new body one day!

Why can’t these bodies be raised up?

Paul explains that as he shows us that through Adam, we have all be born into that sin nature and with it came spiritual death, separation from God. And these bodies of flesh and blood can’t inherit the Kingdom of God because of sin and thus, we must be changed, we must get new bodies for our spirit and soul to dwell in!

And please listen carefully to what he does say here in I Corinthians, because not all the people of this world are saved. They can be but it is a choice that they have to make.

You see, Paul said that all who are *IN* Adam will die and all who are *IN* Christ will be made alive!

Thus, if you are not in Christ, if He is not your Lord and Savior, then you will not enter into that eternal life with Him, your spirit will remain dead because we have all been born into Adam and thus, we need to be born again!

Last time we closed with these words from John 20:29, as Thomas has now seen the risen Lord and Jesus tells him, “. . . ‘Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’”

And what we will see this morning is that John is using the resurrection of Jesus, and for that matter the whole Gospel he wrote, so – *THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE!* That is what I have titled our study this morning.

Belief is important and belief in that which is true is vital to our faith. C. S. Lewis put it like this. He wrote,

You never know how much you really believe anything until its truth or falsehood becomes a matter of life and death.

It is easy to say you believe a rope to be strong as long as you are merely using it to cord a box.

But suppose you had to hang by that rope over a precipice. Wouldn't you then first discover how much you really trusted it?

- C. S. Lewis, A Grief Observed

I am not sure where some of you are at this morning, what you believe and how that belief is played out in your life. But it is important not only to know the truth, believe the truth, but we must also apply it to our lives. We need to let His love not only flow into our lives but through us to touch the lives of others.

And my prayer as we go through this is that your faith would be even stronger. And for those who may not know that Lord, that you would believe what John is saying, that Jesus is the Savior of the world, and the evidence is overwhelming if you would only look closely!

You see, believing opens your eyes of faith and you can see Jesus. I know, some call that blind faith, but the reality is, you can look around and look at all life, the universe and see what is out there. Not only that but you can look at the Scriptures and see what they are saying and if you seek the Lord you will find Him, but that is a choice you need to make.

I have broken our study this morning into two main points. I know, you are thinking, *“There are only two verses, how many more points can you make out of that?”* Don’t challenge me on that one. You know me, I can come up with many more.

But this is important - ***THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE!***

Here is how I have broken down these two verses,

THE MIRACLES OF JESUS – JOHN 20:30

THE REASON FOR WRITING THIS GOSPEL – JOHN 20:31

So with that as our introduction, let’s begin reading in John chapter 20, beginning in verse 30 and let’s see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and we look at this topic –

THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE!

JOHN 20**VERSE 30**

John wants us to understand that he is not writing down all the miracles that Jesus did. The other Gospel writers cover more of the miracles, maybe some 35 miracles in total. But John is focusing his attention on seven miracles that Jesus performed.

And keep in mind that the Holy Spirit is guiding John as he wrote this Gospel! Why only seven?

Keep in mind that the number seven is the number of perfection or completeness. And you can go on the internet, and you will find over several hundred references to the number seven or just do a search in your concordance.

Let me share this with you. We are told,

The first use of the number 7 in the Bible relates to the creation week in Genesis 1. God spends six days creating the heavens and the earth, and then rests on the seventh day. This is our template for the seven-day week, observed around the world to this day. The seventh day was to be “set apart” for Israel; the Sabbath was a holy day of rest (Deuteronomy 5:12).

Thus, right at the start of the Bible, the number 7 is identified with something being “finished” or “complete.”

[The law of first mention, which means that the definition of the word is found the first time it is mentioned in the Bible and that idea continues on throughout the Bible]

From then on, that association continues, as 7 is often found in contexts involving completeness or divine perfection.

So we see the command for animals to be at least seven days old before being used for sacrifice (Exodus 22:30), the command for leprous Naaman to bathe in the Jordan River seven times to effect complete cleansing (2 Kings 5:10), and the command for Joshua to march around Jericho for seven days (and on the seventh day to make seven circuits) and for seven priests to blow seven trumpets outside the city walls (Joshua 6:3-4). In these instances, 7 signifies a completion of some kind: a divine mandate is fulfilled. . . .

In all, the number 7 is used in the Bible more than seven hundred times. If we also include the words related to seven (terms like sevenfold or seventy or seven hundred), the count is higher.

Of course, not every instance of the number 7 in the Bible carries a deeper significance. Sometimes, a 7 is just a 7, and we must be cautious about attaching symbolic meanings to any text, especially when Scripture is not explicit about such meanings.

However, there are times when it *seems* that God is communicating the idea of divine completeness, perfection, and wholeness by means of the number 7.

- <http://bit.ly/3mZZbLI>

And I think that is what we see here with the miracles that John wrote about. They show the completeness of the work of Christ!

And, as we will see, what John is doing here with these miracles of Jesus, the ones he wrote about in his Gospel, was so that his readers may believe that Jesus is the true Messiah and the Son of God. Believing, they will have eternal life in His name. And we will deal with that more as we get to our second point in a few minutes.

Let me share with you the seven miracles that Jesus did, and I will expound on them.

1. WATER INTO WINE – JOHN 2:1-11

First of all, in John chapter 2, Jesus turns water into wine, and we are told, “**This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.**” John 2:11.

Now think about this. The first miracle that Jesus did was turn this water into wine. Why did He do that? Think about it. If God is so against drinking or drunkenness, why did He do this, why didn't He turn the wine into water or the water to grape juice? Great question!

Remember the six water pots that were used to do this miracle were also used for ceremonial cleansing or purification, it related to the Law that became a heavy weight upon the Jewish people.

That was the law, no joy, just heavy burdens.

Thus, in this first miracle Jesus takes this water and turns it into wine, a symbol of joy.

You see, out of Judaism, out of the Law, out of the old covenant would come the new covenant that is not based upon our faithfulness to keep the Law, but upon the faithfulness of God who would pay in full the penalty for our sins, and what joy we find in that!

So this first miracle is related to the New Covenant and thus, it makes sense that it is wine for wine is symbol of joy and there is tremendous joy in the New Covenant that is based in the faithfulness of God. Out of what God has done that we receive by faith, we receive eternal life, the forgiveness of our sins through His shed blood!

2. HEALING THE OFFICIALS SON IN CAPERNAUM – JOHN 4:46-54

With the healing of the official's son, we see the faith of this man and Jesus even comments on this. He also rebukes the people because they needed a sign to believe and for this official, he believed the words of Jesus.

So as this man believed the Words of God, we see this miracle of healing and that only confirmed what he believed! And through this all this man's faith grew and it touched his family; they got saved through his testimony of Jesus!

Also, I want you to understand that this man did not travel home right away, he took his time and got home the next day.

Spurgeon wrote regarding this, *“The nobleman was so sure that his child was alive and well, that he was in no violent hurry to return. He did not go home immediately, as though he must be in time to get another doctor, if Christ had not succeeded; but he went his way leisurely and calmly, confident in the truth of what Jesus had said to him.”*

That is faith!

And John tells us, **“This again is the second sign that Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.”** John 4:54.

3. HEALING AN INVALID AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA IN JERUSALEM – JOHN 5:1-18

This man was in a hopeless condition and his only hope, he thought, was for someone to carry him into the waters of that pool and as the water was stirred, he needed to be the first one in. But that has not happened and there was no indication that it would!

But notice how this man was set free, not by man's help, not by the Law or by rules and regulations, but by Jesus.

You see, Jesus commanded this man to **“Rise, take up your bed and walk.”** And the man said back to Jesus, *“Are you kidding me? I haven’t walked for thirty-eight years and now you are telling me to grab my bed and walk! If I could do that, why would I be here at this pool?”*

No, he did not say that. What he did do is listen to Jesus and obey Jesus and he stood up and walked! Now he could have continued on making excuses why he couldn’t, but he didn’t. He obeyed the voice of God who told him to do the impossible, and he stood up and walked and probably leaped for joy as he was set free from this bondage he was in!

4. FEEDING THE 5,000 MEN NEAR THE SEA OF GALILEE – JOHN 6:5-14

Here we see Jesus feed 5,000 men plus women and children with just five barley crackers and two small fish that a young boy gave to Jesus. His disciples wanted to send the hungry people home, but this lad was willing to give these things to Jesus and in the end, they had twelve baskets of leftovers, and the people were stuffed from eating!

5. WALKING ON THE SEA OF GALILEE – JOHN 6:16-21

Jesus sent His men on the Sea of Galilee in a boat to go to Capernaum. Jesus did not go with them. And as they got out there a windstorm arose and they panicked, they thought they were going to die. And Jesus walks out to them on the water and calmed the sea. Jesus was testing their faith. He told them to cross over to Capernaum, not go under!

6. HEALING THE BLIND MAN IN JERUSALEM – JOHN 9:1-7

Here was a man blind from birth and the disciples were wondering who sinned, this man in the womb or his parents. And Jesus said that neither did but through this He would show them who He was, God! And He healed this blind man!

7. RAISING LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD IN BETHANY – JOHN 11:1-45

One of the greatest miracles from a human standpoint, is that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Now this was not difficult for Jesus, but it shows us that all things are possible with God!

So all these miracles were to point to the fact that Jesus is God, and that you might believe in Him. Now, keep in mind that the Gospel, and for that matter, all of the Bible, was written so that we may believe, not that we might doubt.

And that is going to lead us into our next point – ***THE REASON FOR WRITING THIS GOSPEL!***

And let me say this. The greatest sign of all was the death and resurrection of Jesus.

But as you look at these miracles collectively, these signs give us a strong foundation for faith in Jesus as Messiah and God. That faith isn't a blind leap; it is a reasonable step based on strong evidence.

But before we get to that, let me share this with you about doubt, the devastating effects it can have on us. And for John, he wants to make sure we have no doubts on who Jesus is and what He has done for us.

We are told,

A defendant was on trial for murder. There was strong evidence indicating guilt, but there was no corpse.

In the defense's closing statement, the lawyer, knowing his client probably would be convicted, resorted to a trick.

“Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I have a surprise for you all,” the lawyer said as he looked at his watch.

“Within one minute, the person presumed dead in this case will walk into this courtroom.”

He looked toward the courtroom door. The jurors, somewhat stunned, all looked on eagerly.

A minute passed. Nothing happened.

Finally the lawyer said, ***“Actually, I made up the previous statement; but you all looked on with anticipation. Therefore, I put to you that you have a reasonable doubt in this case as to whether anyone was killed and insist that you return a verdict of not guilty.”***

The jury, clearly confused, retired to deliberate.

A few minutes later, the jury returned and pronounced a verdict of guilty.

“But how?” inquired the lawyer. ***“You must have had some doubt; I saw all of you stare at the door.”***

The jury foreman replied, ***“Oh, we looked, but your client didn't.”***

Funny but true. Doubt shows that you don't believe, and that doubt is then manifested in your actions. And, if you have any doubt, John is going to show us that it is not doubt that is the issue, it is that you refused to believe in Jesus!

Now let's look at – ***THE REASON FOR WRITING THIS GOSPEL!***

VERSE 31

First of all, belief is not very complicated. In fact, it is as simple as ***ABC!***

What do I mean by that?

Accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior!

Believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose the third day!

Commit your life to Him as you have repented of your sins and asked Him to be Lord and Savior of your life!

You see, as simple as ***ABC!***

And let me be clear on this. When John says “**... that believing you may have life in His name**” it does not mean by naming His name. It is speaking of the One who has the power to do the things, and Jesus has that power. He alone can give us life. And thus, this is speaking of all that He is!

Now, we have gone over the seven miracles that Jesus did and here in John he also focuses on the seven “**I AM**” statements that Jesus made to show people that Jesus is God and that if you would surrender your life to Him as Lord and Savior, it will bring you into that abundant and eternal life.

For some, they just laugh at the idea of someone dying for their sins, they think it is foolish and they think the Word of God, the Bible is inaccurate, that it contains all kinds of errors, that it was written by man to get man to act a certain way, but the reality is, there is no God, at least in their mind!

I totally disagree and tragically, people have come to this conclusion without searching this out for themselves.

First of all, for those who believe you must turn your brain off to become a Christian, I think it is the opposite; you must turn your brain off so you don't have to see the evidence that is before you, and you must suppress the truth not to believe.

Christianity is an intelligent faith for Jesus said in Matthew 22:37, “**... ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’**”

Notice, with our mind, we are to think these things out not turn off our brain!

Also, Paul tells us “**Test all things; hold fast what is good.**” I Thessalonians 5:21.

To put something to the test to see if it is good, to see if it is right means you must use the brain that God has given you! Don't just believe with blind faith, test them, and see if they are true!

Historian E. M. Blaiklock said this,

I claim to be a historian. My approach to classics is historical. And I tell you that the evidence for the life, death, and the resurrection of Christ is better authenticated than most of the facts of ancient history, which I taught for forty-two years as a university teacher with some confidence.

I said that Christ was quite different from anyone I had ever seen. And as a figure of history, Christ is precisely that.

Four small books of simple Greek, called the gospels, picture a person who was not the product of His times, but remote from human conception or expectation – so remote that His own men never fully understood Him, until an astounding event transformed them, enlightened them, and so launched them on the world that the dozen of them infiltrated the Roman Empire in a generation.

Their successors beat the Empire to its knees in three centuries.

Here are the alternatives.

Either four men, only one of them with any education in the liberal sense of the word, invented the Character who altered the whole course of history, or they wrote of One they knew or had heard about from those who knew Him, a person so extraordinary that He could claim deity, sinlessness, all authority, and rouse no revulsion among those who long knew Him intimately. . .

The religious leaders, collaborators with the occupying power so feared Him that they betrayed and murdered Him, and in so doing . . . loosed forces which swept the world.

- E. M. Blaiklock, Why I am Still a Christian, p. 16

I think he nailed that!

Also, Peter tells us in II Peter 1:16-18, **“For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.”**

Peter was an eyewitness of the things that Jesus said and did. These were not stories passed down to him!

You see, our faith is an intelligent faith, not a blind faith. Even today, in the twenty-first century we can investigate the claims of the Bible and see that they are true!

The question is “*Do you believe?*”

Now some would argue that over the years things have been added or taken away from the Bible, which has caused many errors and deviations from the truth so what we have today is far from what was originally written!

Again, I totally disagree!

The Bible has survived for over 4,000 years for some parts and close to 2,000 years for the New Testament very well!

We have gone over this before, so I am not going to expound a lot on this but let me say this; any variations in the Bible do not change the text, the doctrine, the meaning that is being spoken.

We have some 25,000 manuscripts of the New Testament in Greek today and from that there are some 200,000 variations, which seem like a lot, but when you think about it, it is not!

Remember, the meaning of the text does not change.

Let me give you an example of what I mean.

In Matthew 17:10 some manuscripts read “*the disciples*” while others read “*His disciples.*”

Thus, every time this difference occurs it is a variation. If a word is misspelled in 1,000 manuscripts, that is 1,000 variations! I think you get the idea.

Isaiah 40:7-8 tells us, **“The grass withers, the flower fades, Because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.”**

How true that is as skeptics have come and gone but the Bible still remains.

H. L. Hastings put it this way,

Infidels for eighteen hundred years have been refuting and overthrowing this book, and yet it stands today as solid as a rock.

Its circulation increases, and it is more loved and cherished and read today than ever before. Infidels with all their assaults, make about as much impression on this book as a man with a tack hammer would on the Pyramids of Egypt.

When the French monarch proposed the persecution of the Christians in his dominion, and old statesmen and warrior said to him, ***“Sire, the Church of God is an anvil that has worn out many hammers.”***

So the hammers of infidels have been pecking away at this book for ages, but the hammers are worn out, and the anvil still endures.

If this book had not been the book of God, men would have destroyed it long ago.

Emperors and popes, kings and priests, princes and rulers have all tried their hand at it; they die and the book still lives.

- H. L. Hastings, *The Greatest Book in the World*, pp. 17-18

Amen to that!

Thus, what we have in our hands this morning, the Bible, the Word of God is not only accurate, but it has survived all the assaults that have been made against it and the men who have made them have long since departed!

Understand that no other religious book has been held under such scrutiny and has stayed the test of time other than the Bible!

The question is, “*Do you believe?*”

Now the central theme of the Bible is Jesus, of course.

In Psalm 40:7 we read, “**Then I said, ‘Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me.’**”

And in John 5:39-40 Jesus said to the religious leaders, “**You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.**”

Thus, from Genesis through Revelation we see the story of fallen man, which only takes a page or two in Genesis to occur and the rest of the Scriptures deal with God’s redemption of man. God becoming flesh, dwelling among us, and paying in full the penalty for our sins on the cross of Calvary and rising from the dead the third day.

It is His resurrection that separates Jesus from all other religious leaders; past, present and future ones and because He conquered death, so too will we if we surrender our life to Him.

In John 14:6 Jesus said “**. . . ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’**”

You see, there is no other way, it is only through Jesus that we can enter into that abundant life. It is His message, His life that can transform ours into a new creation and no other book can lead you to the power to live the kind of life that God wants you to live except the Bible as it reveals to us Jesus and gives us the power through the Holy Spirit!

When Jesus said in John 3:16-21, **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”**

Do you believe that?

All you have to do is come to Him, repent of your sins, ask Him to forgive you and to be Lord and Savior of your life and He will! In other words, it is as simple as doing the ABC's!

That is why John wrote this Gospel, that you would believe!

But let me say this, it does not end there.

You see, if we truly believe these things, then why don't we apply them to our lives?

Are you living what you believe?

If Jesus is real to you, if He has impacted your life, then that should be seen in not only what you say, but how you live your life.

If your life ended tomorrow, what would people remember of you? Be honest!

Would you be remembered for how many hours you put in at work, for your job, your honesty, your ability to play sports or how you lived your life?

You see, I believe even after we are gone, we leave a legacy behind and that can be either good or bad!

Most if not all of you have heard and remember the space shuttle Columbia's disaster on February 1, 2003 at about 8 AM CST, only some 16 minutes from their touchdown in Florida. It was a horrific site to see as Columbia exploded upon re-entry and what a sad ending to the lives of those seven astronauts.

As tragic as this is, at least two of those seven astronauts were devoted Christians who spoke openly about their faith.

Rick Husband who was the mission commander for Columbia and Michael Anderson who was the payload commander for Columbia. Both attended the same church, Grace Community Church in suburban Houston, Texas.

President George Bush, just hours after these tragic events took place, said this to the grieving families, this grieving nation and this grieving world,

My fellow Americans, this day has brought terrible news and great sadness to our country. At 9:00 AM this morning, Mission Control in Houston lost contact with our Space Shuttle Columbia. A short time later, debris was seen falling from the skies above Texas. The Columbia is lost; there are no survivors.

On board was a crew of seven: Colonel Rick Husband; Lt. Colonel Michael Anderson; Commander Laurel Clark; Captain David Brown; Commander William McCool; Dr. Kalpana Chawla; and Ilan Ramon, a Colonel in the Israeli Air Force. These men and women assumed great risk in the service to all humanity.

In an age when space flight has come to seem almost routine, it is easy to overlook the dangers of travel by rocket, and the difficulties of navigating the fierce outer atmosphere of the Earth. These astronauts knew the dangers, and they faced them willingly, knowing they had a high and noble purpose in life. Because of their courage and daring and idealism, we will miss them all the more.

All Americans today are thinking, as well, of the families of these men and women who have been given this sudden shock and grief. You're not alone. Our entire nation grieves with you. And those you loved will always have the respect and gratitude of this country.

The cause in which they died will continue. Mankind is led into the darkness beyond our world by the inspiration of discovery and the longing to understand. Our journey into space will go on.

In the skies today we saw destruction and tragedy. Yet farther than we can see there is comfort and hope. In the words of the prophet Isaiah, ***"Lift your eyes and look to the heavens. Who created all these? He who brings out the starry hosts one by one and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing."*** [Isaiah 40:26].

The same Creator who names the stars also knows the names of the seven souls we mourn today. The crew of the shuttle Columbia did not return safely to Earth; yet we can pray that all are safely home.

May God bless the grieving families, and may God continue to bless America.

- President George Bush, February 1, 2003

What we have here are words of comfort and hope from our President from the Scriptures.

Now prior to the launch, just prior to their quarantine for this mission, their church prayed for these men and their mission and Michael Anderson said this: ***“I’m asking you to pray for us that, above and beyond the purpose of the mission, God will use our faith, our belief, our testimony for Him in ways that we don’t know.”***

Guess what? God is doing that now!

Rick Husband, the commander of the shuttle Columbia, said this at his church before the start of this mission,

“And I got to thinking about it and I thought, well, if I ended up at the end of my life having been an astronaut but having sacrificed my family along the way, or living my life in a way that didn’t glorify God, then I would look back on it with great regret, and having become an astronaut would not really have mattered all that much.

And I finally came to realize that what really meant the most to me was to try and live my life the way God wanted me to, and to try and be a good husband to Evelyn and to be a good father to my children, and to do everything that I possibly could to make sure that they knew who Jesus was, and that they had every opportunity to make a choice themselves for Jesus.

And it was like a light came on all of a sudden, where I finally realized that this thing about being an astronaut was not as important as, as I thought it was.

And finally came to the point where I said, ‘OK, Lord. I don’t care what I go do, or where You send me; I just want to try and do those things, I just want to be somebody who lives a life that glorifies You. I want to be a good husband, I want to be a good father, and come what may – as far as the rest of it goes.’”

He surrendered his life to God and what a great thing to do. What was most important to these men? Jesus was the most important thing in their life and as their pastor, the Reverend Steve Riggle said: “And I believe that in their death, Rick and Mike – their story, their testimony, their faith will probably do more for the kingdom than if they had continued living.”

Only God knows that, but I will say this, He has a plan, a purpose and out of tragedy will come good! Their life is not over, they just moved, they are with the Lord but their faith, their testimony lives on!

Their pastor said that after this tragedy, that following Sunday, the church was full of people, reporters from around the nation and more than 200 people requested more information in regard to the Gospel message.

As Riggle came back into the church sanctuary that Sunday morning he saw two women waiting to talk with him. They explained to him that they had worked with Rick Husband at NASA and that he often invited them to church but they always declined. Then, finally, on February 2nd they accepted Husband’s invitation, they came to church because of what transpired the day before, and they responded to the Gospel presentation!

As Rick Husband committed his life to the Lord, He tells us of some of the struggles he went through, how he lied on the physical by wearing contacts and because of it, he was rejected even though he did pass the physical.

He said:

. . . Over the next three years, I read the Bible, studied more and learned about God and how He wants me to live my life. I discovered Psalm 37:4 which says, “Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart” (NIV).

I felt that God was asking me, “What are the desires of your heart?”

And immediately I thought, “Well, I want to be an astronaut.”

But as I listened more to God, He seemed to say, “No, really. What are the real desires of your heart?”

I started to think about it more. I came to realize what was more important than being an astronaut – my relationship with God and living my life as a godly man, as a godly husband and as godly father. I wanted my wife and me to do everything possible to teach our kids about Jesus and to bring them to the point that they would accept Jesus as their Savior.

When it came time for me to fill out the application for the fourth time, I felt the strongest prompting from God to tell the truth. In studying the Bible more, I had come across Proverbs 3:5-6 that says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight” (NIV).

It was as if God was saying, “Just trust me! You lied last time and didn’t make it. Try telling the truth this time and see what happens.” Finally, I had come to the point where I understood what it meant to give my life to God and to trust Him. I said, “OK, Lord. I want to do what You want me to do, and it doesn’t matter if I’m an astronaut or something else.”

I filled out the application truthfully, came to Houston and interviewed. I passed the physical and was hired to be an astronaut. God says that we can trust Him, and we can.

What is the focus of your life?

What are you leaving behind as a testimony of your faith in Jesus?

These men left a powerful witness behind that continues to affect people even after their death, after they went to be with their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

You see, what you believe will be manifested in your life!

If you truly trust in the Lord, you will hold onto Him, and if you don't, you will let go!

Paul tells us in Hebrews 12:1-4, **“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.”**

Keep your eyes focused on Jesus and to do that you need to be walking with Him, in fellowship with Him.

If you do that, you will leave a blessing behind; someone will be touched by your faith!

For Rick Husband and Michael Anderson, they were sold out to the Lord and that should be our hearts desire.

In a document that Husband had to sign before going on this mission, in case something happened to him, he left these words on the bottom of the page, on the bottom of this document:

“Tell them about Jesus. He means everything to me.”

Folk's that is what I am telling you, Jesus means everything to me, and I pray He means everything to you.

He loves you more than you will ever know, thus, won't you live for Him, impact your family, your friends, your co-workers for Jesus and when it is time to go, that you may leave behind a powerful testimony of your faith.

Let me share these words with you from a man whose life was coming to an end, and he fought the good fight, he finished the race, and he is admonishing us to do the same.

Paul said in II Timothy 4:6-8, **“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”**

I pray this morning that you do believe, and your belief leads to godly living, a testimony of Jesus to others!

The question is, ***“Do you believe?”***

Let me close with these words from Warren Wiersbe who sums this up for us.

He wrote,

We must not look at Thomas and the other disciples and envy them, as though the power of Christ's resurrection could never be experienced in our lives today. That was why John wrote this Gospel - so that people in every age could know that Jesus is God and that faith in Him brings everlasting life.

It is not necessary to “see” Jesus Christ in order to believe. Yes, it was a blessing for the early Christians to see their Lord and know that He was alive; but that is not what saved them. They were saved, not by seeing, but by believing. The emphasis throughout the Gospel of John is on believing. There are nearly 100 references in this Gospel to believing on Jesus Christ.

You and I today cannot see Christ, nor can we see Him perform the miracles (signs) that John wrote about in this book.

But the record is there, and that is all that we need. “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom 10:17; and note 1 John 5:9-13).

As you read John’s record, you come face to face with Jesus Christ, how He lived, what He said, and what He did. All of the evidence points to the conclusion that He is indeed God come in the flesh, the Saviour of the world.

The signs that John selected and described in this book are proof of the deity of Christ. They are important. But sinners are not saved by believing in miracles; they are saved by believing on Jesus Christ.

Many of the Jews in Jerusalem believed on Jesus because of His miracles, but He did not believe in them! (John 2:23-25) Great crowds followed Him because of His miracles (John 6:2); but in the end, most of them left Him for good (John 6:66). Even the religious leaders who plotted His death believed that He did miracles, but this “faith” did not save them (John 11:47 ff).

Faith in His miracles should lead to faith in His Word, and to personal faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Jesus Himself pointed out that faith in His works (miracles) was but the first step toward faith in the Word of God (John 5:36-40). The sinner must “hear” the Word if he is to be saved (John 5:24).

There was no need for John to describe every miracle that our Lord performed; in fact, he supposed that a complete record could never be written (John 21:25).

The life and ministry of Jesus Christ were simply too rich and full for any writer, even an inspired one, to give a complete record. But a complete record is not necessary. All of the basic facts are here for us to read and consider. There is sufficient truth for any sinner to believe and be saved!

The subject of John's Gospel is "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."

He presented a threefold proof of this thesis: our Lord's works, our Lord's walk, and our Lord's words. In this Gospel, you see Jesus performing miracles; you watch Him living a perfect life in the midst of His enemies; and you hear Him speaking words that nobody else could speak.

Either Jesus was a madman, or He was deluded, or He was all that He claimed to be.

While some of His enemies did call Him deranged and deluded, the majority of people who watched Him and listened to Him concluded that He was unique, unlike anyone else they had ever known. How could a madman or a deluded man accomplish what Jesus accomplished? When people trusted Him, their lives were transformed! That does not happen when you trust a madman or a deceiver.

He claimed to be God come in the flesh, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. That is what He is!

John was not content simply to explain a subject. He was an evangelist who wanted to achieve an object. He wanted his readers to believe in Jesus Christ and be saved! He was not writing a biography to entertain or a history to enlighten. He was writing an evangel to change men's lives.

Remember, **“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.”** John 3:36.

The evidence is overwhelming to believe, and that is why John wrote this Gospel –

THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE!

Thus – ***DO YOU BELIEVE?***