



Worship Resource Week 4

Sermon Title: Believe

Scriptures:

John 12:44-47 (The Voice)

Jesus (crying out before the people): 44 Anyone who believes in Me is not placing his faith in Me, but in the One who sent Me here. 45 If one sees Me, he sees the One who sent Me. 46 I am here to bring light in this world, freeing everyone who believes in Me from the darkness that blinds him. 47 If anyone listening to My teachings chooses to ignore them, so be it: I have come to liberate the world, not to judge it.

John 14:15-17 (The Voice)

15 If you love Me, obey the commandments I have given you. 16 I will ask the Father to send you another Helper, the Spirit of truth, who will remain constantly with you. 17 The world does not recognize the Spirit of truth, because it does not know the Spirit and is unable to receive Him. But you do know the Spirit because He lives with you, and He will dwell in you.

Worship Promo:

More than anything, Jesus' ministry in the Gospel of John is about belief—in God, in Jesus as God's son, in God's promises to send the Holy Spirit of truth to the disciples even after Jesus is gone. Belief isn't always easy. But this week in worship, we will explore how the gift of the Holy Spirit helps us to believe in Jesus' message.

Desired Outcome:

The community will explore how the gift of the Holy Spirit helps us to believe in Jesus' message especially in the midst of the personal modern-day struggles.

Reflection Question:

How has the Holy Spirit helped you to believe when you struggled to trust in freedom, love, or relationship?

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greater things

SPIRIT-LED INNOVATION

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Sermon-Building Key Points (including any references for exegesis)

- The Greek verb pisteúō (πιστεύω, pronounced pist-yoo'-o), translated as “believe” occurs dozens of times throughout the Gospel of John, far more than the other three Gospels. (See Strong’s G4100.)
 - Pisteúō means to have faith in, to give credit to, to entrust, or to trust.
- Over and over throughout John’s Gospel, Jesus invites people and the reader to believe. To believe him. To believe in him. To believe with him. And ultimately, to believe even beyond him.
 - To believe Jesus means to believe that God dwelled in him.
 - To believe in Jesus means to believe that God worked through him.
 - To believe with Jesus means to believe that by being in relationship with Jesus, one could experience God incarnate.
 - And to believe beyond Jesus means to believe that even though Jesus died and the incarnate experience of God in him ended, that humanity could still be in relationship to the Risen Christ and God through the Spirit.
- To be a disciple of Jesus means to believe in all these ways, to trust Jesus, his ministry, and his promises for even after his death.
- Consider someone in your life who you trust or believe in. Imagine how you might go about passing on that legacy of trust and belief to someone who has never met that person. This was the task of belief the disciples have been asked to undertake in John’s Gospel.
- In the two passages for today, we hear Jesus summarizing his ministry in his own words.
- In John 12:44-47, Jesus emphasizes that his ministry is about connecting people to God, the One who sent him. Jesus’ entire ministry flows from God’s grace and love through him for purposes of liberation.
- In John 14:15-17, Jesus offers his disciples guidance for continuing his ministry even in his absence. He promises that God will send the “Spirit of truth” that will dwell within the disciples, just as God has dwelled within Jesus.
- As Christians today, we understand the Holy Spirit as the third part of the Trinity and our dynamic connection to the Divine, a Spirit of Truth that guides us in the ways of Jesus’ ministry of love, freedom, trust, and relationship.
- It is with this Spirit of Truth that disciples of Jesus throughout the ages have continued to bear witness to participate in and share Jesus’ message and to be in relationship with God the Creator and with Jesus, who died over 2000 years ago.
- And so, it is not by ourselves that Jesus expects us to do “greater things” than he. But aided by a Spirit of Truth, we can truly come to believe in and trust Jesus and to continue his ministry of freedom, love, grace, trust, and relationship.
- Jesus’ expectation that his disciples will do “greater things” extends to us today. The Holy Spirit is here, ready when we are to continue Jesus’ ministry.

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greater things

SPIRIT-LED INNOVATION

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Week 4 Daily Prayer

God of Greater Things, help me to believe in your ability to show up in my life. Through Jesus, I believe that you meet us where we are: as humans seeking to live lives of wholeness. Guide me as I seek to meet you today, and as I seek to allow others to meet you through me, too. Amen.

Small Group Discussion Starters

- How has your understanding of what it means to believe changed throughout your life?
- What makes belief easy? What makes it difficult?
- How do the presence of freedom, love, and relationship impact your capacity for belief?

Bibliography / References / Further Reading

- Dunn, Ryan, *The Holy Spirit at work in your life*, UMC.org, <https://www.umc.org/en/content/the-holy-spirit-at-work-in-your-life>
- John Wesley's *The Witness of the Spirit*, Discourses I and II

Contemporary Music Recommendations

- This I Believe (The Creed)
- Oceans (Where Feet May Fall)
- One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)
- Believer

Traditional Music Recommendations

- UMH #464 - "I Will Trust in the Lord"
- UMH #388 - "O Come and Dwell in Me"
- UMH #333 - "I'm Goin' a Sing When the Spirit Says Sing"
- UMH #410 - "I Want a Principle Within"

Kids Connection Thought Starter

- As children come up, have a small task they can help with (move a table or bench).
- Thank them and let them know what great helpers they are.
- Today, adults are learning about the helper that Jesus promised would come: the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit is a very special helper—a part of God that helps us to make good decisions, to show kindness and love, and to speak up when people are being bullies.
- Have you ever felt the Holy Spirit help you? What was it like?

Liturgical Elements

- Litany: [We Have Not Been Orphaned](#) by Lutheran Julia via re: Worship
- Benediction / Sending Forth: [Benediction](#) by Nathan Nettleton via re: Worship