



**BELIEVE**  
Kids' Edition



SELECTIONS FROM THE  
NEW INTERNATIONAL READER'S VERSION



BELIEVE  
Kids' Edition

GENERAL EDITOR  
RANDY FRAZEE

 ZONDER**kidz**

ZONDERVAN

*Believe: Kids' Edition*

Copyright © 2015 by Zondervan

Requests for information should be addressed to:

Zondervan, 3900 Sparks Drive SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49546

ISBN: 978-0-310-74601-0

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from The Holy Bible, *New International Reader's Version*®, *NIRV*®. Copyright © 1995, 1996, 1998, 2014 by Biblica, Inc.®  
Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Any Internet addresses (websites, blogs, etc.) and telephone numbers in this book are offered as a resource. They are not intended in any way to be or imply an endorsement by Zondervan, nor does Zondervan vouch for the content of these sites and numbers for the life of this book.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher.

*Cover design: Macky Pamintuan*

*Printed in the United States of America*

# Table of Contents

Preface | 7

## THINK

### What Do I Believe?

- Chapter 1. God | 11
- Chapter 2. Personal God | 22
- Chapter 3. Salvation | 30
- Chapter 4. The Bible | 42
- Chapter 5. Identity in Christ | 52
- Chapter 6. Church | 63
- Chapter 7. Humanity | 74
- Chapter 8. Compassion | 85
- Chapter 9. Stewardship | 96
- Chapter 10. Eternity | 106

## ACT

### What Should I Do?

- Chapter 11. Worship | 119
- Chapter 12. Prayer | 130
- Chapter 13. Bible Study | 140
- Chapter 14. Single-Mindedness | 151
- Chapter 15. Total Surrender | 162
- Chapter 16. Biblical Community | 173
- Chapter 17. Spiritual Gifts | 184
- Chapter 18. Offering My Time | 194
- Chapter 19. Giving My Resources | 205
- Chapter 20. Sharing My Faith | 216

## Who Am I Becoming?

- Chapter 21. Love | 229
- Chapter 22. Joy | 238
- Chapter 23. Peace | 247
- Chapter 24. Self-Control | 256
- Chapter 25. Hope | 265
- Chapter 26. Patience | 275
- Chapter 27. Kindness/Goodness | 284
- Chapter 28. Faithfulness | 294
- Chapter 29. Gentleness | 304
- Chapter 30. Humility | 313
- Epilogue | 323
- List of Bible Excerpts | 325

# Preface

Imagine it: the people of Israel don't believe in God or worship him. They have forgotten him. Then they crown as king a boy named Josiah, and everything changes. Josiah was only eight years old when he became king. (They made him a special throne so his feet could reach the floor when he sat!)

Josiah may have been young, but he was wise enough to love God very much. One of the king's men read God's Word to Josiah. God's people were not living the way God wanted them to. This made Josiah so sad that he started to cry. He wanted his people to love God again. Young King Josiah gathered the people to hear God's Word as he had. The people promised to follow God again. Then Josiah burned everything in the nation that did not honor God.

Second Kings 23:25 tells us: "There was no king like Josiah either before him or after him. None of them turned to the LORD as he did. He followed the LORD with all his heart and all his soul. He followed him with all his strength." You can be a mighty leader for God, just like King Josiah. No one is too young to lead others to God. But you have to follow him with all your heart, soul and strength. And to do that, you have to explore his Word. This book will help you with that. It is filled with true stories from the Bible and additional notes to help you. (The words printed in *italics like this* are not Bible text but are transitions to help you navigate what you are reading.)

My prayer for you is that you will know that God knows you by name and loves you deeply. May you read this book and have the courage and faith to believe and follow him!

## **To be read by the parent or teacher:**

One of the greatest needs in a child's life is for parents, extended family, and leaders and teachers to pass on the Christian faith to them. Each child should clearly know what they believe and why. They should know how to practice their faith and have an understanding of God's vision for them. *Believe* is designed to assist you in accomplishing this heartfelt objective.

The first ten chapters contain the core beliefs of the Christian life. Together they answer the question, “What do I believe?”

The second ten chapters contain the core practices of the Christian life. Together they answer the question, “What should I do?”

The final ten chapters contain the core virtues of the Christian life. Together they answer the question, “Who am I becoming?”

Each chapter includes a key Old Testament and New Testament story to teach and reinforce the core idea.

Here are a few simple tips:

1. Read each chapter with the child. Older children may want to read independently, but be available for questions.
2. Encourage the child to ask you questions or make comments and observations about what they have read or heard.
3. Discuss the questions at the end of the chapter.
4. Pray with the child at the end of your study time.

Remember that *believe* is an action word. God is watching over you and this child as you embark together on this journey. He doesn't want you or this child to just believe in your head that his Word is truth; he wants you to believe with your whole heart that his Word is the operating system for your life. He wants to transform your life and the life of this child. He wants to put the “extra” in your “ordinary” so you can live an “extraordinary” life in Christ. The possibilities are limitless with God for those who simply BELIEVE!

— Randy Frazee  
*General Editor*

The *Believe* project is a comprehensive Bible engagement plan for an entire family or church. To check out all the available resources, go to [www.believethestory.com](http://www.believethestory.com) for more information.

THINK



## What Do I Believe?

Your heart will be where your riches are.

*Matthew 6:21*

**W**hat you believe in your heart defines who you become. God wants you to become more like Jesus. In fact, this is who he created you to be! *Becoming* more like Jesus begins with *thinking* like Jesus.

The following ten chapters are about the key beliefs of what it means to follow Jesus. These beliefs were taught and modeled by Jesus when he lived on earth. Each chapter contains passages of the Bible about a particular belief. You will discover what God wants you to know and believe about each topic. Understanding these truths in your mind *and* heart is the first step to becoming like Jesus so that you can say, “I believe . . .”

1. The God of the Bible is the only true God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. God is involved in and cares about my daily life.
3. A person can have a relationship with God by God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ.
4. The Bible is God’s Word and it guides my beliefs and actions.
5. I am significant because I am a child of God.
6. God uses the church to bring about his plan.
7. All people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.
8. God calls all Christians to show compassion to people in need.
9. Everything I am and everything I own belong to God.
10. There is a heaven and a hell and Jesus will return to establish his eternal kingdom.



# 1

## God

 **KEY QUESTION:**  
Who is God?

 **KEY IDEA:**  
I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God —  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

 **KEY VERSE:**  
May the grace shown by the Lord Jesus Christ be with you  
all. May the love that God has given us be with you. And  
may the sharing of life brought about by the Holy Spirit be  
with you all. *2 Corinthians 13:14*

*Everything starts with God. He has always existed. This might be hard to understand, but it's a fact. If we want evidence, all we have to do is look at the birds and the trees, the mountains and the oceans. We can see evidence of God in his creation. How could anyone not believe?*

### **God Is Real: The Evidence**

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

The heavens tell about the glory of God.

The skies show that his hands created them.

Day after day they speak about it.

Night after night they make it known.

But they don't speak or use words.

No sound is heard from them.

Yet their voice goes out into the whole earth.

Their words go out from one end of the world to the other.

God has set up a tent in the heavens for the sun.

Ever since the world was created it has been possible to see the qualities of God that are not seen. I'm talking about his eternal power and about the fact that he is God. Those things can be seen in what he has made. So people have no excuse for what they do.

### **God Is the Only God**

*Sometimes people believe in pretend gods, but there is only one real God. And God does not change. God showed everyone that he is the one real God when he rescued the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt. Once they were free, Moses, their leader, had to lead them and teach them about God. He urged them to worship and obey the one true God, the same God their parents and grandparents had believed in—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*

The LORD your God has directed me to teach you his commands, rules and laws. Obey them in the land you will take over when you go across the Jordan River. Then you, your children and their children after them will honor the LORD your God as long as you live. Obey all of his rules and commands I'm giving you. If you do, you will enjoy long life. Israel, listen to me. Make sure you obey me. Then things will go well with you. The number of your people will increase greatly in a land that has plenty of milk and honey. That's what the LORD, the God of your parents, promised you.

Israel, listen to me. The LORD is our God. The LORD is the one and only God. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your strength. The commandments I give you today must be in your hearts. Make sure your children learn them. Talk about them when you are at home. Talk about them when you walk along the road. Speak about them when you go to bed. And speak about them when you get up. Write them down and tie them on your hands as a reminder. Also tie them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses. Also write them on your gates.

*When Moses died, Joshua took his place as leader. God had promised the Hebrews (also called Israelites) a special land that would be their new home. It was Joshua's job to lead the Israelites into this promised land. Before Joshua died, he gathered the people and reminded them how much God had*

*proven himself to them over the years. Joshua begged the people to always serve the only real God. They promised that they would.*

Joshua spoke to all the people. He said, “The LORD is the God of Israel. He says...

“When I brought your people out, they came to the Red Sea. The people of Egypt chased them with chariots and with men on horses. They chased them all the way to the sea. But your people cried out to me for help. So I put darkness between you and the people of Egypt. I swept them into the sea. It completely covered them. Your own eyes saw what I did to them. After that, you lived in the desert for a long time.

“I brought you to the land of the Amorites. They lived east of the Jordan River. They fought against you. But I handed them over to you. I destroyed them to make room for you. Then you took over their land. Balak, the son of Zippor, prepared to fight against Israel. Balak was king of Moab. He sent for Balaam, the son of Beor. Balak wanted Balaam to put a curse on you. But I would not listen to Balaam’s curses. So he blessed you again and again. And I saved you from his power.

“Then you went across the Jordan River. You came to Jericho. Its people fought against you. So did the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites and Jebusites. But I handed them over to you. I sent hornets ahead of you. They drove your enemies out to make room for you. That included the two Amorite kings. You did not do that with your own swords and bows. So I gave you a land you had never farmed. I gave you cities you had not built. You are now living in them. And you are eating the fruit of vineyards and olive trees you did not plant.’

“So have respect for the LORD. Serve him. Be completely faithful to him. Throw away the gods your people worshiped east of the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD.”

*The Israelites broke their promise to Joshua. They did not always follow God. They were disobedient. So God divided them into two kingdoms: Israel and Judah. Israel had one wicked king after another for 200 years. King Ahab of Israel was very wicked.*

*He told the people to worship Baal instead of the one true God. But God sent Elijah to set people straight. And later he would send Jesus, to remind the people again to turn back to God.*

Elijah said to them, "I'm the only one of the LORD's prophets left. But Baal has 450 prophets. Get two bulls for us. Let Baal's prophets choose one for themselves. Let them cut it into pieces. Then let them put it on the wood. But don't let them set fire to it. I'll prepare the other bull. I'll put it on the wood. But I won't set fire to it. Then you pray to your god. And I'll pray to the LORD. The god who answers by sending fire down is the one and only God."

Then all the people said, "What you are saying is good."

Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one of the bulls. There are many of you. So prepare your bull first. Pray to your god. But don't light the fire." So they prepared the bull they had been given.

They prayed to Baal from morning until noon. "Baal! Answer us!" they shouted. But there wasn't any reply. No one answered. Then they danced around the altar they had made.

At noon Elijah began to tease them. "Shout louder!" he said. "I'm sure Baal is a god! Perhaps he has too much to think about. Or maybe he has gone to the toilet. Or perhaps he's away on a trip. Maybe he's sleeping. You might have to wake him up." So they shouted louder. They cut themselves with swords and spears until their blood flowed. That's what they usually did when things really looked hopeless. It was now past noon. The prophets of Baal continued to prophesy with all their might. They did it until the time came to offer the evening sacrifice. But there wasn't any reply. No one answered. No one paid any attention.

Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." So they went to him. He rebuilt the altar of the LORD. It had been torn down. Elijah got 12 stones. There was one for each tribe in the family line of Jacob. The LORD's message had come to Jacob. It had said, "Your name will be Israel." Elijah used the stones to build an altar to honor the LORD. He dug a ditch around it. The ditch was large enough to hold 24 pounds of seeds. He arranged the wood for the fire. He cut the bull into pieces. He placed the pieces on the wood. Then he said to some of the people, "Fill four large jars with water. Pour it on the offering and the wood." So they did.

“Do it again,” he said. So they did it again.

“Do it a third time,” he ordered. And they did it the third time. The water ran down around the altar. It even filled the ditch.

When it was time to offer the evening sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward. He prayed, “LORD, you are the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel. Today let everyone know that you are God in Israel. Let them know I’m your servant. Let them know I’ve done all these things because you commanded me to. Answer me. LORD, answer me. Then these people will know that you are the one and only God. They’ll know that you are turning their hearts back to you again.”

The fire of the LORD came down. It burned up the sacrifice. It burned up the wood and the stones and the soil. It even dried up the water in the ditch.

All the people saw it. Then they fell down flat with their faces toward the ground. They cried out, “The LORD is the one and only God! The LORD is the one and only God!”

## **The Trinity**

*Rain is water. Ice is water. Steam is water. All three forms of water are still water. Similarly, God is God. Jesus is God. The Holy Spirit is God. God is actually three persons. We call this the “Trinity.” We see clues to the Trinity early in the creation story. The second verse of the Bible tells us the Holy Spirit was already on the scene. And Genesis 1:26 tells us that God said, “Let us make human beings so that they are like us.” Who is “us”? The Trinity! We read in the New Testament that John called Jesus “the Word of God” (Revelation 19:13). John wrote, “In the beginning, the Word was already there” (John 1:1).*

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth didn’t have any shape. And it was empty. There was darkness over the surface of the waves. At that time, the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light. God saw that the light was good. He separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day.” He called the darkness “night.” There was evening, and there was morning. It was day one.

God said, "Let there be a huge space between the waters. Let it separate water from water." And that's exactly what happened. God made the huge space between the waters. He separated the water under the space from the water above it. God called the huge space "sky." There was evening, and there was morning. It was day two.

God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered into one place. Let dry ground appear." And that's exactly what happened. God called the dry ground "land." He called all the water that was gathered together "seas." And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, "Let the land produce plants. Let them produce their own seeds. And let there be trees on the land that grow fruit with seeds in it. Let each kind of plant or tree have its own kind of seeds." And that's exactly what happened. So the land produced plants. Each kind of plant had its own kind of seeds. And the land produced trees that grew fruit with seeds in it. Each kind of tree had its own kind of seeds. God saw that it was good. There was evening, and there was morning. It was day three.

God said, "Let there be lights in the huge space of the sky. Let them separate the day from the night. Let the lights set the times for the holy celebrations and the days and the years. Let them be lights in the huge space of the sky to give light on the earth." And that's exactly what happened. God made two great lights. He made the larger light to rule over the day and the smaller light to rule over the night. He also made the stars. God put the lights in the huge space of the sky to give light on the earth. He put them there to rule over the day and the night. He put them there to separate light from darkness. God saw that it was good. There was evening, and there was morning. It was day four.

God said, "Let the seas be filled with living things. Let birds fly above the earth across the huge space of the sky." So God created the great sea creatures. He created every kind of living thing that fills the seas and moves about in them. He created every kind of bird that flies. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them. He said, "Have little ones so that there will be many of you. Fill

the water in the seas. Let there be more and more birds on the earth.” There was evening, and there was morning. It was day five.

God said, “Let the land produce every kind of living creature. Let there be livestock, and creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals.” And that’s exactly what happened. God made every kind of wild animal. He made every kind of livestock. He made every kind of creature that moves along the ground. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let us make human beings so that they are like us. Let them rule over the fish in the seas and the birds in the sky. Let them rule over the livestock and all the wild animals. And let them rule over all the creatures that move along the ground.”



## Jesus' Baptism

*We also get a beautiful glimpse of the Trinity at Jesus' baptism. Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River. He was baptized by his cousin John the Baptist, a great man of God. When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit came on him in the form of a dove, and God spoke from heaven.*

The people were waiting. They were expecting something. They were all wondering in their hearts if John might be the Messiah. John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I am will come. I'm not good enough to untie the straps of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His pitchfork is in his hand to toss the straw away from his threshing floor. He will gather the wheat into his barn. But he will burn up the husks with fire that can't be put out." John said many other things to warn the people. He also announced the good news to them.

When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened. The Holy Spirit came to rest on him in the form of a dove. A voice came from heaven. It said, "You are my Son, and I love you. I am very pleased with you."

## The Trinity in Our Lives

*God sent his Son, Jesus, to earth to live a perfect life and to die on the cross. Because of this, we can be forgiven of our sins and live forever with God. When we trust Jesus as our Savior, he gives us the Holy Spirit to help us live in a way that pleases God. This is all good news, right? That's why we call it the "gospel," which is Greek for "Good News"! Once we hear the Good News, we can share it with others. In New Testament times, a man named Paul shared the Good News with many, many people.*

Paul was waiting for Silas and Timothy in Athens. He was very upset to see that the city was full of statues of gods. So he went to the synagogue. There he talked both with Jews and with Greeks who worshiped God. Each day he spoke with anyone who



happened to be in the market place. A group of Epicurean and Stoic thinkers began to argue with him. Some of them asked, "What is this fellow chattering about?" Others said, "He seems to be telling us about gods we've never heard of." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus. He was telling them that Jesus had risen from the dead. They took him to a meeting of the Areopagus. There they said to him, "What is this new teaching you're giving us? You have some strange ideas we've never heard before. We would like to know what they mean." All the people of Athens spent their time talking about and listening to the latest ideas. People from other lands who lived there did the same.

Then Paul stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus. He said, "People of Athens! I see that you are very religious in every way. As I walked around, I looked carefully at the things you worship. I even found an altar with TO AN UNKNOWN GOD written on it. So you don't know what you are worshipping. Now I am going to tell you about this 'unknown god.'

"He is the God who made the world. He also made everything in it. He is the Lord of heaven and earth. He doesn't live in temples built by human hands. He is not served by human hands. He doesn't need anything. Instead, he himself gives life and breath to all people. He also gives them everything else they have. From one man he made all the people of the world. Now they live all over the earth. He decided exactly when they should live. And he decided exactly where they should live. God did this so that people would seek him. And perhaps they would reach out for him and find him. They would find him even though he is not far from any of us. 'In him we live and move and exist.' As some of your own poets have also said, 'We are his children.'

"Yes, we are God's children. So we shouldn't think that God is made out of gold or silver or stone. He isn't a statue planned and made by clever people. In the past, God didn't judge people for what they didn't know. But now he commands all people everywhere to turn away from their sins. He has set a day when he will judge the world fairly. He has appointed a man to be its judge. God has proved this to everyone by raising that man from the dead."

They heard Paul talk about the dead being raised. Some of them made fun of this idea. But others said, “We want to hear you speak about this again.” So Paul left the meeting of the Areopagus. Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed in Jesus. Dionysius was one of them. He was a member of the Areopagus. A woman named Damaris also became a believer. And so did some others.

*Paul made a smart decision when he gave his life to Jesus. We can make that same decision today. We can recognize that God is the only real God. We can say that we believe in him. We can believe in God even if we still have questions about him. When we believe in him, he works through us to do incredible things! When we follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit changes us from the inside out.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What is your favorite part of creation? What is the most beautiful thing you’ve ever seen in nature? Did that sight make you think of God? Why or why not?
2. Which person of the Trinity do you think is the easiest to understand: God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit? Which do you think is the hardest to understand? Why?
3. Have you trusted Jesus as your Savior? Have you told anyone about your decision?