

“Believing for Life”

John 6:41-51

Hello friend and welcome to *Hope for Today*. My name is J. Mark Horst; I’m your friend and Bible teacher. The program you’re listening to is produced by Heralds of Hope, an international Gospel radio and literature ministry.

Each week the Bible teaching broadcasts of *Heralds of Hope* circle the globe in English and 21 other major languages. And thousands tune in each week to hear those broadcasts.

If you’re tuning in for the first time today, we are currently being led through the Gospel of John by the teaching of the late, Dr. J. Otis Yoder. He was the founder, first president, and Bible teacher for *Hope for Today*. He went home to be with the Lord in the year 2003.

But his method of teaching the Bible was such that it never goes out of date. And so, we are rebroadcasting his teaching from John’s Gospel. We are confident that, if you tune in each week, you will be blessed by the clear, simple presentation of biblical truth.

In just a few moments, Dr. Yoder will come to share his teaching, “Believing for Life.” But before he does that, let’s pray.

Gracious God our Heavenly Father, we come to you in the precious name of Jesus. It is alone through Him that we have access into your holy presence. His blood, shed on the cross at Calvary, is the only sacrifice that is acceptable to you to wash away our sin.

And now, Father, as Dr. Yoder comes to teach us from the Word, open our hearts to receive your truth. Help us to learn how to believe for life. This I ask in Jesus’ name, Amen.

As people we are able to sort out what we accept. We can choose; we were made like that. That is both a personal right and a personal responsibility. It is our right to think for ourselves. It is our responsibility because we must live with the results of our choices.

Both the mind and the will are involved in the choices we make. These must be properly balanced. When it comes to believing, the will is important; especially when Jesus is the subject. He once said to the people around Him, “You will not come to me that you might believe.” That is why I say the will is very important, especially when Jesus is the subject of belief.

I want you to think with me on this topic: BELIEVING FOR LIFE. I invite you to read from John 6:41-51 as follows.

- 41 *The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.*
- 42 *And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?*
- 43 *Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.*
- 44 *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and will raise him up at the last day.*
- 45 *It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*
- 46 *Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he, which is of God, he hath seen the Father.*
- 47 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.*
- 48 *I am that bread of life.*
- 49 *Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead.*
- 50 *This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.*
- 51 *I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*

These verses provide us with several direct INSIGHTS into what it means to believe for life.

The first is **The Critical Examination.**

I want you to weigh this with care like they did. They weighed the whole situation very carefully. They made a critical examination of who Jesus was. They knew Him, you see. They knew He grew up in the city of Nazareth. They understood who His parents were, at least they thought they did. They were acquainted with His community. They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?” They had the right to ask some very hard questions. They were making a critical examination of what it means to believe in this One who said, “I am the bread which came down from heaven.”

Now I invite you to make a critical examination of who Jesus is. Don't take other people's words for it. Listen to what He is saying here in this text. See how those around Him were also asking some very hard questions. He was among them as one of them, which, indeed, He was. He was born of the virgin Mary and Joseph was His father in a real sense, because Mary was Joseph's wife. He took her to him as his wife after she was with child.

So you see, they had the right to make a critical examination and you do too. I invite you to make a critical examination of who Jesus is, but as I say, take His word for it, not those of someone else.

There is another insight I want you to see: **The Careful Exception.**

Jesus said this, "No man can come to me unless the Father who has sent me draw Him". That's a very careful exception: no other way. There is here a very definite unity between the Father and the Son. Jesus said His Father must draw whoever comes to Him. There is that activity of the Father in coming to Jesus. That unity is inseparable and, I should say, you cannot refute it from the words of Jesus. It is absolutely clear that there is this careful exception: you cannot come to God anyway you want to. You'll come as the Father has outlined it.

He said, "He who has known me has known the Father. Every man, therefore, who has heard and has learned of the Father comes to me." Now that's something, isn't it? Some people claim to know God the Father but they do not recognize Jesus the Son. Here Jesus makes that absolutely plain, you see: to know God is to know Jesus.

I prefer to say that no one else has seen God at all except the One who has come from God. I must insist, my friend, that your own way cannot work. Jesus made a very careful exception. He set the bounds.

The third insight I want you to see: **The Certain Expectation.**

He said, "Whoever believes on me has everlasting life." That is a present reality. Do you know that when you believe on Jesus Christ your everlasting life begins right at that moment? That's right. Jesus said he has it, "Whoever believes on me has everlasting life". But even more, there is a future to it because Jesus went on to say, "A man will not die if he eats the bread that comes down from heaven."

Jesus explained, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever.” Just praise the Lord! Everlasting life is a present reality and everlasting life is a future certainty! Then His sacrifice was totally necessary for you and me to have life. He said, “The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” That is a kind of exchange. Do you understand? He gave His life so that we might have life and that is a certain expectation.

I offer you this same expectation in a present reality and a future certainty. You can be just as sure of it as Jesus’ own word. My friend, no test is more demanding. If you want life you must believe in Jesus Christ. It is not wrong for you to make a critical examination of His claims. But here is what He said, “No man can come to me, except the Father...raise him up.” We know that belief in Him puts quality in your expectation.

Thank you, Dr. Yoder for teaching us from this portion of Holy Scripture. My friend, have you considered the claims of Jesus on your life? Have you thought about the consequences of rejecting His offer of salvation? Life is short, death is certain. The choices you make now will affect your eternal destiny.

Now, were you blessed by this teaching by Dr. Yoder? If so, you can request an audio CD or a printed copy of this complete teaching, just request it by its title, “Believing for Life.”

The quickest way for you to contact me is to send an e-mail to mail@heraldsofhope.org. That email address again is, m-a-i-l@heraldsofhope.org. Or you may write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember, you can request a printed manuscript or an audio CD of this teaching, “Believing for Life.” I’d be happy to send one to you.

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Now friend, I urge you to tune in next week as we continue our study in John’s Gospel. And until then, keep looking for that blessed HOPE.