



The Planter

“The seed is the word of God”, Luke 8:11



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Why Believe in God? Pt. 4 Tyler King

According to research conducted by Barna, PewResearch, and Gallup there is a rapid reduction in America's belief in God. In the last 14 years, there has been a 15% decline in those who say “religion is very important” in their life, and a 17% increase in individuals who say “religion is NOT important at all in their life.” Perhaps the most staggering statistic is the recession of those who believe God exists. In 2011, 92% of U.S. adults said they believe in God. Just 11 years later, that number dropped to 81%. To put that in more perspective, 81% of Americans believing in God is the lowest percentage it has ever been, since the data began being collected in 1945.

There are many reasons why people surrender their belief in God. Some get burned and hurt by the church they are a part of and that pushes them away entirely. Some get comfortable with their circumstances in life and do not find a need for God. Others simply have not pursued or engaged a conviction in God's existence due to lack of necessity.

The resurrection of Jesus, for many, is the turning point in their conviction. When an individual journeys from the foot of the cross to the uninhabited tomb, they move from compassion to conviction. Why should someone look to the resurrection to believe in God?

The Resurrection was Popular — Paul confirms in the letter written to the Corinthians, in 15:5 by saying “...then he appeared to more than 500 brothers at one time.” There was a large majority of people who witnessed the resurrected Christ. Moreover, consider how the gospel writer, Luke, gathered his documents (in addition to divine inspiration of course). “Just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you.” Perhaps most significant of all, consider how MANY religions have resulted from the very fact of Jesus'

existence. While it is unfortunate to see religious confusion by way of thousands of Christian denominations, it remains impressive to me that people from all around the world believe in the story of Jesus.

The Resurrection Was Personal — When faced with an opportunity to speak in the presence of king Agrippa, Paul tells his personal encounter with Jesus (Acts 26). John recounts his experience of Jesus as he concludes his gospel account, “this is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that this testimony is true.” When Jesus rose from the tomb, it was not merely a public spectacle; it was a personal invitation to believe in Him. And those who believed in Him could not help but proclaim Him.

The Resurrection Is Powerful — As mentioned earlier there have thousands, albeit millions who have come to believe in Jesus' resurrection. One of the most powerful displays of this belief is seen through how individuals shape their life once convicted of the truth. Writings from Justin Martyr, Ignatius, Tertullian, and other second, third, and fourth century writers have all demonstrated how Jesus becomes the utmost priority even when they face unruly death in coliseums. Take also into consideration how nearly 2,000 years later, people all around the world are STILL talking about the Christ and His life. Christianity has been under a hostile magnifying glass by antagonists of every background, yet Christianity remains. There is eternal power in a risen Lord. Paul passionately wrote, “that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection” (Ph. 3:10).

January 26, 2025

Sunday Morning

Opening Prayer Dallas York
Closing Prayer Joey Jones

Scripture Reading Jerry Reaves

Sunday Evening
Opening Prayer Tim York
Closing Prayer Bo Eubanks

Remember in prayer:

Benny Sprayberry is awaiting immediate surgery.

Janice Logan had a procedure yesterday and will have kidney stones removed Monday.

Steve Fletcher will have surgery on his shoulder Wednesday

Liz Jones, Zach Vaughn, Heidi Street, Don Duncan, Randall Glaze, Joe Chambers, Bill and Billie Nolen, Carrie Price, Stefan Hoglund

Oak View Nursing Home: Betty Floyd, Jane Bishop, Jane York.

Please check **The Challenge** supplies list on the bulletin board.

Next Sunday we will have our **Fellowship Meal** after our morning services; Our Kid's Sing and Devotion will be at 1:00 pm

Worship Service Assignments for February

Announcements: Justin Glaze

Lord's Supper: Adam Cordell

Rhyan Dishroom Payton Payne Dallas York

Record for the week of January 19, 2024

10:00 am	11:00 am	5:00 pm	Wed.	Contribution
91	87	77	69	\$3253.39

Weekly Assemblies

Sunday:

Morning Worship: 10:00 a.m.

Bible Study: 11:00 a.m.

Evening Worship: 5:00 p.m.

First Sunday 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

An insightful quote often attributed to Hiroyuki Sanada says: "There are those who want a swimming pool in their home, while those who have it barely use it. Those who have lost a loved one miss them deeply, while others who hold them close often complain about them. Who doesn't have a partner longs for it, but who has it, sometimes doesn't value it. He who is hungry would give everything for a plate of food, while he who has plenty complains about the taste. The one who doesn't have a car dreams it, while the one who has it always looks for a better one. The key is to be grateful, to stop looking at what we have and to understand that, somewhere, someone would give everything for what you already have and don't appreciate."

Sanada's quote offers profound wisdom on the human tendency to overlook blessings in pursuit of something "better." Whether it's a home, a loved one, or even something as simple as a meal, we often fail to appreciate the blessings we have right in front of us. This mirrors the biblical truth that God continually reminds us: contentment and gratitude are key to living a life of joy and peace.

The Apostle Paul understood the secret of contentment. In Philippians 4:11-12 (NIV), he writes, "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty." Paul's contentment wasn't based on material possessions but on his relationship with Christ.

Similarly, 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIV) instructs us to, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." Gratitude shifts our focus from what we lack to what we have, fostering a spirit of thankfulness that honors God.

Finally, Hebrews 13:5 (NIV) reminds us to "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'" This verse emphasizes that our ultimate source of fulfillment and security should be in God's presence, not in material things.

Let us take a moment today to reflect on our lives. Are we overlooking the "swimming pools" we already have? Are we appreciating our loved ones, our daily bread, and the simple joys of life? Remember, someone else is praying for the very things we might be taking for granted. Thank God for what you have, no matter how small it may seem. Gratitude turns what we have into being enough.

Looking for Something Better

Ben Davidson