

## BELIEVING WITHOUT SEEING

### Romans 10:17 (NKJV)

17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

### 1 Corinthians 1:21 (NKJV)

21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

There is POWER in the inspired apostolic testimony as recorded in the Scriptures. There is power there because of the ministry of the Spirit. The living Spirit of God takes the inspired living Word of God and makes it come alive in the hearts of people (Heb. 4:12). There is nothing more powerfully convincing than this.

### 1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV)

2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

### 1 Corinthians 2:4–5 (NKJV)

4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,  
5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

### Romans 1:16 (NKJV)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

“Doubting Thomas” upon seeing “believed” but Jesus then told him that those who believe without seeing are “blessed”.

### John 20:29 (NKJV)

29 Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

**Blessed** (Gk. *makarios*) means happy, but it also denotes one that the favor of God rests upon – one that is acceptable to God (Jn. 20:29). Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6). But faith in the eyewitness apostolic testimony is God-honoring faith that pleases God.

A skeptic might say, “***If I could just see a miracle I would believe.***” But that is not true. There were many people who saw Jesus do all kinds of miracles and yet did not believe (cf. Jn. 4:48; 12:37; Lk. 16:31).

“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 11:47ff).” – ***Warren Wiersbe***

“Those today who crave miracles and signs are out of line with the Lord’s method in this age of people’s faith being based solely on God’s word.” – ***John Phillips***

I think this is the exact point Jesus was highlighting in John 20:29 when He said, “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed.”

In John 20 note that the flow of thought regarding the confession of Thomas and how it connects with the purpose statement in John 20:30-31. The testimony of Thomas in saying, “My Lord and my God!” (Jn. 20:28) illustrates WHY John wrote the book – namely so we might come to believe in the same way that Thomas came to believe and thereby have life.

In the book John uses the word “***signs***” for miracles. The miracles that Jesus did were SIGN-MIRACLES that pointed to the reality of WHO He truly is. Jesus didn’t do miracles just for miracles’ sake. They had SIGN value – pointing to Who He was as Messiah-God. John was selective – highlighting only a few select sign-miracles to make the point.

But note the emphasis that these were signs that Jesus did “***in the presence of His disciples***”. These were signs performed before special apostolic eyewitnesses who then shared them with us so that we might believe on that basis.

If you really think about the power of the collective apostolic witness it is amazing. Here was a group of men convinced against their will, who to a man, once convinced, were willing to die for their faith.

And there was NO wavering in the group – ever! Not a single one ever changed their story even a little bit. There was total consistency for many decades until each one sealed their testimony in death!

There were many other sign-miracles that Jesus performed but these selected ones are sufficient to bring a person to faith. John chose to highlight those in the book culminating in the resurrection appearances to the apostles to bring his readers to the exact same type of faith articulated by Thomas which was then affirmed by Jesus as BELIEF!

**John 20:31 (NKJV)**

**31** but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

God's method is not just to perform ongoing sign-miracles, but rather to have apostolic eyewitnesses record them – to have them written down so that we might believe on that basis. The sign-miracles in John are written so that we might BELIEVE that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. This is the stuff of saving faith. This is what we must believe in order to have eternal life.