

I'm Better Off Believing!

1. **There was a father... "I believe. Help my unbelief!"**
 - a. The father could admit...
 - b. Can I be real this morning? Believers can struggle with unbelief...
 - c. Unbelief is an absence of faith...
2. **So I just came to see if I have any honest Christians... "I believe. Help my unbelief!"**
 - a. And maybe you didn't say it like that... "Lord, help me!" (grief, bills, family)
 - b. If that is you this morning, I came to encourage you even in your unbelief.
 - c. Jesus says in Mark 9, "everything is possible..."
3. **So I'm Better Off Believing!...**
 - a. Because Greater is He...
 - b. Because Eyes have not seen...
 - c. Is there anybody else who can say...

And even if we don't know it for ourselves or in our personal lives, we can look at this passage where there is a perfect picture of why I'm better off believing.

1. **At this point in Jesus' ministry, he has reached popularity and success...**
2. **Yet at the height of his fame, Jesus goes to see about his folks...**
 - a. **But when he gets to Nazareth he finds that the people who are most familiar with him have the least faith in him.**
 - b. I already told you that "Believers can struggle with unbelief, but let me be clear about the type of believers."
 - c. Often, we associate unbelief with "babes in Christ" yet in our text...
 - d. Just because you are a disciple does not mean you won't experience moments of doubt.
 - e. And that's why we pray in our prayer closets and not on prayer pedestals...
 - f. Somebody here understands that it's not a matter of IF I doubt, it's a matter of WHEN I doubt WHO am I taking my doubt too?
 - g. "Cast all your cares on him for he cares for you"!
3. **Jesus goes to Nazareth and finds that... and so the scripture tells us that "he did not do..."**
 - a. Somebody say: "I'm better off believing!"

I'm better off believing because God can interrupt our situations.

- 1. The first thing the text tells us Jesus does when he arrives is go and teach in their synagogue...**
 - a. Their synagogue is our church
 - b. Jesus interrupts church service to teach them a lesson. He interrupts to instruct.
- 2. The interruption was instructional!**
 - a. It used to be that you didn't understand why...
 - b. But as time went on and God revealed himself...
 - c. Is there anybody who can get happy about the fact that God interrupted you
- 3. God interrupts the Nazarenes to instruct them, but the Nazarenes take issue with his interruption!**
 - a. While Jesus is teaching, they are talking... Why am I talking...
 - b. And that is the danger of distraction...
 - c. Because while you are... God is...
 - d. I don't know about you, but I don't want to be too distracted when...
 - e. **And so my prayer should be... "remove all distractions lord!"**

Not only am I better off believing because God interrupts our situations, but also because God introduces us to new possibilities.

- 1. The text tells us that the Nazarenes are astonished...**
 - a. They could not believe... And so they start asking questions...
 - b. V. 57 tells us that they take offense at Jesus, and even if it didn't tell us we would know that to be true because...
- 2. So they aren't wondering, they are whining.**
 - a. Jesus is introducing them to new possibilities, but instead of laying their doubt before the Lord they are whining
 - b. Whining about... Maybe they're whining out of fear, jealousy, insecurity.
 - c. I'm less interested in why they why and more interested in when they whine... They are whining after...
- 3. Why am I whining when I should be worshipping?**
 - a. Jesus is performing deeds of power... introducing new possibilities...
 - b. Because in worship all you can think about is the goodness of Jesus...
 - c. In worship you "forget about yourself... and concentrate!"
 - d. Too busy... magnifying, lifting holy hands, blessing the name
- 4. And I don't know about you but when God is... I don't want to be so busy whining that I forget to worship the living God!**
 - a. I don't want to be caught whining, I want to be caught worshipping...
 - b. Worship is my strength...

- c. Is there anybody who can say when God introduces me to something new, I am offering God a sacrifice of worship!!!

I'm better off believing, not only because God interrupts our situations and introduces us to new possibilities, but because God includes us in His plan.

- 1. Jesus responds to the Nazarenes unbelief by offering a proverb of the day!**
 - a. He says, "Prophets..."
 - b. The proverb describes how those who are called are often cursed...
 - c. If prophets would be rejected, how much more...
- 2. Yet regardless of his expectation, Jesus does not exclude the Nazarenes.**
 - a. I'd venture to say many of us know the sting of exclusion...
 - b. Black Americans...
 - c. Women... women in ministry...
- 3. Yet Jesus does not exclude the Nazarenes! Rather Jesus goes out of his way to include them!**
 - a. And the good news about being included is that when Jesus includes you it's not about reaching a diversity quota... it's not so that Jesus can boast about how many black people he has in the Kingdom of god...
 - b. Is there anybody who can get happy that God included you!
 - c. When society, my own family, excluded me God included me!... come on in... there's plenty good room.

As I close, I have one more reason why I'm better off believing.

- 1. I've given plenty of reasons why it's better to believe, but I saved the best reason for last.**
 - a. The scripture seems to end on a somber note. V. 58 tells us that "he did not do..."
 - b. ...made me sad, but...
 - c. Text says, "he did not do **many...**"
- 2. But just because he didn't do many, that does not mean that he didn't do any!**
 - a. Can I tell you about that one good work!
 - b. What one work am I talking about? I'm not talking about what he did today. I'm not even talking about what he did yesterday.
 - c. I'm talking about when Jesus carried his cross to Calvary for the sins of the world, they hung...
 - d. But early Sunday morning...
 - e. And b/c he lives....
 - f. I'm better off believing b/c God is able to do...