

# I Believe in Jesus

by George Verwer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing Christ and His resurrection, the deity of Jesus Christ, and the need for intellectual foundation and sound doctrine in our faith.*

**Duration:** 35:21

**Scripture:** Luke 9:58, Luke 10:37, Acts 4:31-33, Ephesians 2:7-10

**Topics:** "Jesus"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living a simple lifestyle, as exemplified by Jesus Christ. The speaker also highlights the significance of Jesus' life, compassion, witness, balance, and concern, as well as his death as an atonement for our sins. The resurrection is presented as a transformative experience that allows believers to have a new life and bear fruit. The sermon encourages believers to become bold witnesses for God, overcoming laziness and indifference through the power of the Holy Spirit. The speaker references Philippians 4:7 and quotes Stephen Olford to emphasize the urgency and demand of evangelism.

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## Transcript

Now, in Philippians chapter 4, we have these very, very strong words, or 10 to 3, I'm sorry, where we read in verse 7, a testimony of the Apostle Paul, where he says, But what things were gained to me, those I counted lost for Christ. Yea, doubtless I count all things but lost, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse," these are strong words, count them but refuse that I may win Christ, that I may know Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death.

If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead, not as though I had already attained, either was already perfect, but I follow after. If that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended or arrived, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Very, very strong words. And then back into the book of Acts to chapter 4. Acts chapter 4, we have that famous verse, Acts 4.31, And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled

together, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of those that believed were of one heart and of one soul, neither said any of them that any of the things which he possessed were his own, but they had all things common.

And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. And you'll find this emphasis throughout the whole book of Acts. They preached not only the death of Christ, they preached the resurrection of Christ.

And even today, this is often neglected. Now let's review some very, very basic facts about Christ. Because one of the purposes of this seminar was for younger Christians or people that have not had a lot of teaching in doctrine.

In the last couple of days, we've shared some things that perhaps were a little heavy for some about the reality of not only the historical event of Christ on the cross, but how we can know the reality of the crucified life. And I pray you will hunger and thirst to know that reality in your daily life. But I'd like to go back a little bit, and just in the way of review, but also touching a few new issues, speak about some of the basic things we know about Jesus Christ.

One of the marks of occult, one of the marks of extremism, is often that they deny the deity of Jesus Christ. This is the most basic teaching of the Jehovah Witnesses. It's the most basic teaching of quite a few groups.

And we see from Scripture, we've already looked at a few of those Scriptures, maybe we could just look at a few more, our time is very limited, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. One of the best places to notice this is right there in the Gospel of John, also in Philippians chapter 2. But let's look at the Gospel of John, chapter 1. John's Gospel, chapter 1, verse 1. In the beginning was the Word. This is referring to Logos.

This is why we named our first ship Logos. It actually means Christ. In the beginning was the Logos.

And the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God. And the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shined in darkness, and the darkness overcame it not. And then it speaks about John the Baptist.

I hope that you will make a study on the deity of Christ, and come to a full understanding that Christ was God, and yet Christ also became a man, the Incarnation. How desperately we need people today who know their Bibles. There is such an increase of extremism, such an increase of the cult, that there is a desperate need for people who really know their Bibles.

And they know how to present from the Word of God this great truth about the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ accepted worship. I read a book called Science Speaks that helped me as a young Christian.

And I think it's good for us as Christians, and young Christians, to get plenty of intellectual foundation. It's amazing how Christians swing one way to the other. In one of our other sessions we very strongly emphasized balance in the life of Christ, and we spoke of Him as the man of steel and velvet.

And we saw how Jesus Christ was so decisive. And we saw the Lord Jesus Christ in the temple. And we saw the Lord Jesus Christ accomplishing great things.

He was a man of action as revealed in Matthew 9. But also we see Him as the one who was so gentle, so compassionate, so loving. The one who gave us that story of the Good Samaritan and then said, Go ye and do likewise. And we see a beautiful balance in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we need that balance. We desperately need the kind of balance we see in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm amazed as I take surveys among God's people of how little they have actually studied the Gospels and the life of Christ, even though some Bibles actually mark all of His words in red.

I'm amazed that so many do not memorize God's Word. When I was first converted, I, number one, started to take some correspondence courses. And there are some excellent correspondence courses you can take in your own home.

You may say, well, why is that necessary? One thing is a correspondence course in which you have to answer some questions and send in some papers, just to help create a little more discipline. So many of God's people, they don't set goals. I ask people, what goals do you have in evangelism? What goals do you have for your prayer life? What goals do you have in the area of memorizing, Bible reading? And I've gone through many, many correspondence courses, especially the courses of William McDonald.

And they've been a great help in laying a foundation in my own life. But I was mentioning how the Lord Jesus Christ accepted worship. And one of those books I was referring to, they pointed out and they proved, and it really helped me intellectually, because I had a lot of questions as a young Christian.

And I went to an unbelieving university, and then I studied in the University of Mexico under a communist. And I had plenty of questions. And in this one book, and there are a number of books that do this, we could see logically that Jesus Christ was either a liar or a lunatic or Lord of all.

It's one of those three. There's no way that we can accept the written evidence of Christ in the New Testament and just say that he was a good man. You can't do it, not if you accept the evidence of what the Lord Jesus Christ said.

I would love to speak for a long time on why I believe the Bible is the Word of God. I can't do that, but I can recommend books like Josh McDowell's book, Evidence That Demands a Verdict, and then his larger book, More Evidence That Demands a Verdict. Also, the writings of Michael Green about Christ are just excellent.

The writings of John Stott, like Basic Christianity, are excellent. I once produced a list of over 200 books that present the intellectual reasons for our Christian faith. I was mentioning how some people tend to emphasize mainly the emotional, others emphasize the will and discipline.

I guess I'm perhaps heavily in that camp. But then there are those that God gives the Church who emphasize the intellectual side, and we need those men. And we should never belittle theology or Bible doctrine because it's just the Bible in a way that we can understand it.

You may not agree with systematic theology. Well, study the Bible whatever way you want. But in fact, we see right back from the earliest Church that there had to be such a thing as sound doctrine.

And if we don't have our doctrine about Christ sound and correct, everything else will begin to go off. The Lord Jesus Christ accepted worship because He was God. In many ways, a great mystery.

Dale Rotund, he and I have been in the work together for about 23 years, has written a book especially for Muslims. More and more in England, you're going to be in contact with Muslims. We have a full-time team in London.

All they do is work among Arabs. England, or London especially, is one of the best places in the world to work among Arabs. Now we have many Iranians.

We can reach people in Britain who eventually return to their nations all over the world. In London, we reach every single Arab country, including the closed countries. And the greatest stumbling block in trying to witness to a Muslim, and this is true of some other groups as well, is the Trinity.

And if you want to get into that, I would recommend Dale Rotund's book called *The Logic of Faith*. This is written for Muslims. If you're interested in witnessing to Muslims, there's also a book by Charles Marsh called *How to Share Your Faith with Muslims*.

We've also produced a catalogue of about 30 or 40, I don't know how many books, that can be used in reaching Muslims for Christ. One out of every seven people in the world is a Muslim. And many of them are in Britain, hundreds of thousands of them now, and yet the average Christian is unable to present his faith to a Muslim, because often he doesn't know his own faith.

I have to confess that I have been embarrassed in the past trying to speak even to a Jehovah Witness. Many of them know their Bibles, they have their verses, even though they're out of context, and they can bring you into a rather embarrassing situation. I want to ask you, because we just had such a short time, do you know your Bible? Are you trying to really know your Bible? We've also tried to emphasize, and let us re-emphasize it again, that we don't want to just dwell on the death and the resurrection of Christ, but also on the life of Christ.

I've been trying to finish reading that amazing book, I noticed a big pile of them downstairs, called *Rich Christians in a Hungry World*. An amazing book. Praise God, even in the Lausanne Congress on Evangelism, in the covenant that was drafted up by men like John Stott and others, they finally brought into the heart of biblical faith the fact that we should represent a simple lifestyle.

That has been covered in another seminar. But as we study the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, this man who had nowhere to lay his head, we will discover that we have a beautiful example of how to live and how to walk on this earth. Society is more complicated, but I believe there are ways that we can, in a balanced way, pattern our life more after the Lord Jesus Christ.

The crucifixion of Christ, His death on the cross for our sins, of course, is the heart of the Gospel. And I want you to look at the book of Ephesians, chapter 2. Ephesians, chapter 2. I'd love to read the whole chapter, but let's just look at verse 7. That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved, for by grace are ye saved, through faith, and not of yourselves.

It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. You see, these are the kinds of passages which in my mind, forgive me if I'm extreme on this, every Christian

should memorize.

To think of being a couple years old in Christ and not having memorized Ephesians 2, 8, and 9 is difficult for me to understand. But you know one of the greatest problems we face today in the church? It's the problem of the lazy mind. Right behind it is the problem of the lazy body.

Why is it that so many Christians are not in condition physically? Because that doesn't happen automatically. It doesn't happen sitting in church singing the same chorus you've been singing for six years. It happens through the kind of reality that Paul knew because he knew resurrection living.

And so Paul was able to say in 1 Corinthians chapter 9, I buffet my body and bring it into subjection lest after preaching to others I become a reprobate. Just in the past 24 hours, the number of Christian leaders who have come up to me and just thanked me for this emphasis on discipline is indicative to me that there are more and more people that realize that without discipline, without a little buffeting of the body, all that we hear, all that we receive in these days will be of little value. And you might want to get that book by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and just read that little quotation I shared in the meeting last night because it's so unbelievably strong.

Salvation is by grace through faith. But if we have experienced true salvation, if there has been a real work of grace in our hearts and lives, then there will be the good works. We're not saved by the works, but if we're saved, the works will be there.

And if there's no works, if there's no light, if there's no fruit on the tree, we have good reason to question whether there has ever been a true conversion. Decisions are not conversions. We see, and maybe it would be good to look at this, in Acts chapter 6, that it doesn't say decisions, verse 1, Acts 6, verse 1. And in those days when the number of disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

Notice verse 7. And the world got increased and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem. When I was a very young Christian, I was very strong on quote, soul winning. And people made decisions for Christ when I witnessed to them whether they wanted to or not.

I used to go into the bus station and just determine I wasn't going to leave the bus station, the coach station, until someone in there came to Christ. And I learned very early in leading many people supposedly to Christ that a decision was not necessarily a conversion. It's alright to say, well, so many people professed the Lord or so many prayed for salvation.

And then make a qualifying statement. Let's pray that many of these will be real. Something like that.

It's a great concern to me that Christians are so quickly found exaggerating. So that now they have a term for exaggeration. It's called evangelically speaking.

They say 300 people were in the meeting, then somebody clarifies it, evangelically speaking. In other words, there are probably 200 there. This is not right.

I was reading a tremendous book by the Navigators, Morality, Honesty and Conscience. A book recently published. And I feel, I feel that the whole area of ethics, the whole area of honesty is so important.

And as we look at the life of Jesus Christ, we have the perfect example of compassion and ethics, of spiritual balance. And as we look at passages like Ephesians 2, and many even our favorite, John 3.16, For God so loved the world, He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him and does good works shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Is that what your Bible says? You may think this is a minor issue, but so many people that we counsel don't have assurance of their salvation because they think it's faith and works.

Whereas the Bible clearly teaches that salvation is by faith, but if there has been an experience of saving faith, true conversion, Matthew 18, except you be converted and become as a little child, you shall never enter the kingdom of God. Romans, where it says if you do not have the Spirit of Christ, then you do not have Christ. Conversion.

One of the greatest enemies today in the spreading of the Gospel is easy-believism. We do not find that in the teachings of Jesus Christ. Though if we don't know our Bibles, and if we don't spend time in God's Word, and we just look at certain verses out of context, that can come in.

We had a horrible situation in America a few years ago. There was a great pioneer of easy-believism. Boy, he just went to anybody, you know.

Give them a couple of Bible verses. Do you believe in Jesus? Yes, you're saved. Praise the Lord, brother, you're saved.

And he would just win so many to Christ. And he had the largest Bible school in America. And this was his doctrine.

And he used to frighten. And then one day on the tennis court, there was a little cutie on the other side of the net. He, quote, fell in love with her, divorced his wife, ran off with his girl in adultery, and all he left for 1,000 Bible students was a tape saying that he was quitting as president of the school and running off with his girl he met on the tennis court.

Talk about total warfare. So his easy-believism didn't work. I wish I had hours to speak on this whole area of spiritual power.

Easy-believism, on one hand, twisting the message of Jesus. Legalism, on the other hand, the law so clearly condemned in the book of Galatians. I had the privilege as a young believer listening to a series of tapes.

Actually, it was on a record of that great Presbyterian. He used to preach at Keswick. Boy, he upset them up there.

Donald Ray Barnhouse, one of the most godly Presbyterians perhaps this world has known. And I remember going through Galatians. And if ever I had any leaning toward legalism, Donald Ray Barnhouse certainly smashed them in his exposition of the book of Galatians.

And then, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's just talk for a moment about the historicity of this great event. Have you read the book Who Rolled the Stone? Have you ever found someone who doubts the resurrection? A great skeptic, you give them that book Who Rolled the Stone.

There are other similar books. Val Grieve just happens to be the chairman of our board of directors that helps run these trips. Some of you, I'm sure, have heard Val Grieve speak.

He's a lawyer in Manchester. One of the busiest men I know in all of Britain. And he's written a book on the resurrection from the lawyer's viewpoint.

And it's very, very exciting. Actually, the man who wrote Who Rolled the Stone started out to do research to disprove Christianity and he ended up becoming a follower of Jesus Christ. The resurrection, the events of the resurrection, the proofs concerning the resurrection are one of the great intellectual foundation stones of our whole faith.

And every Christian needs to know something about the historical facts in connection with the resurrection. I once picked up a book called Facts and Mysteries, actually in Spanish. I was reading H.O.C. Mysterios and it surprised me.

But it was a beautiful message as it brought out that certain things in our faith are facts. The death of Jesus Christ is a fact. But His atonement for our sin is a mystery.

We'll never fully understand how Jesus Christ atoned for our sin. He paid the penalty for our sin on the cross once and for all. The resurrection is a historical fact.

As Dr. Schaeffer said, it took place in time, space and history. He says if you were at the cross and you ran your finger down you'd get a splinter. It was real.

It's not just some existential experience. This is important because with the increase of Eastern mysticism and if you want to read a good book on that pick up Ravi Maharaj's book. Anyone remember the title of that? I just had supper with him.

Death of a Guru. What a book! Because again we are seeing the invasion of Eastern mysticism into the church. This again is being covered in another seminar.

And we need to understand that we are very different from Hindus. I think it was Mahatma Gandhi who said it doesn't matter whether Krishna existed or not in history. It's not important.

It's the essence. It's the experience you can have now with Krishna. And he more or less went on to say about the same thing about Jesus.

It doesn't matter. Gandhi actually was greatly affected by the New Testament. Greatly affected by Tolstoy.

He brought a reformation to Hinduism with Christian doctrines but he would not surrender to Christ. And he would say it didn't matter whether he actually existed in history. I think he believed that he did.

For a Christian we have the fact he existed. He was an actual person. He lived.

He was born of Mary. These events in the New Testament actually took place. Don't be shattered when you read things in the Bible that you don't understand.

God has brought the Bible in human language. He has used earth and vessels to bring forth His Word. He has protected it.

It is His Word. But God has so ordained that it is not easy to understand something. And this is why it is such a challenge to get to know your Bible.

Yes, these are facts. But also there are mysteries. And the fact that we can now live a resurrection life that's a mystery.

That's a mystery. That I can experience conversion by coming and trusting Christ as my Lord and Savior. And then by the indwelling and the filling of His Holy Spirit know that same resurrection power.

So that in fact I have crossed from death unto life. Beloved, these are not just words. This is not just that theology.

This can be your reality. You can be a resurrection Christian. That's why these people were so bold in their witness.

That's why these people could not keep their mouths shut. And if you possibly can in this next week and you can have your own harvest festival or spring harvest every week of the year with books and tapes and above all else your Bible. I am actually a natural backslider.

God has to deal with me every day. Yesterday doesn't get me through tomorrow. Maybe some of you are naturally spiritual.

You just naturally go uphill. You naturally drift into prayer meetings. You naturally get up early in the morning and seek the Lord.

You naturally love to go and pray and fast. You naturally love to go out in the streets and witness or bang on doors from house to house and lead people to Christ. If any of you are that kind really I would love to meet you after the meeting.

Maybe some of it could rub off on this little earth and that's all. I find that I have to deny self daily and follow Christ. I find that I have to fall into the ground daily.

I find that I need that daily renewal so that this resurrection power is a reality in me. It's so easy to get our heads filled with truth. And that's what always scares me about a week in meetings like this.

That's what always scares me when little Johnny comes up and says I'm going to study at so and so theological seminary. Because I've seen so many. I'm not totally against it.

Don't misunderstand me. I once talked to a man who studied in a liberal seminary and I said how did you ever make it through that place? And he said two hours on my knees every day. Uh huh.

Then I understood. But it's so easy for us to take in more and more and more and our heads get bigger and bigger and bigger and more and more and more theology and our hearts get smaller and smaller and smaller and we have to get a microscope to find anything. And if we could only find the balance in that area and I think you'll find that balance in the life and in the teaching in the death and in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

I want to ask you as we bring this to a close are you living in resurrection reality? One of my favorite verses is in Galatians. I'm sure you've at least tried to memorize that one. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, temperance, means self-control, meekness.

Against such there is no law. Resurrection life means the fruit of the Holy Spirit. And one of the great tricks of the enemy is to get us as Christians arguing over vocabulary.

There's already been some tension at this particular week as different people have different methods of counseling people. And they use different, perhaps different ways of presenting basic truth. And some are confused by this.

I know if you're a young Christian you probably will get confused at times through the different presentations about the Holy Spirit or about sanctification or about the victorious life. I pray that you may always allow God to be bigger than the vocabulary. In Ephesians it says be filled with the Spirit.

Be filled with the Spirit. And then it talks about the Spirit controlled life. In Colossians it says let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly and then you have the exact same description.

Just compare Ephesians 5 with Colossians chapter 3. The Holy Spirit is not even mentioned in Colossians. God works in different people in different ways. You can know the resurrection life without ever having attended a meeting to study the resurrection.

Because in simplicity and oh beloved in these days we need at times to keep it simple. As we yield ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ and walk by faith I love that little chorus, trust and obey and there's no other way we will know resurrection power regardless of the vocabulary. Don't judge someone else because he doesn't have your vocabulary.

Maybe he hasn't been to your denomination. Maybe he hasn't been to your favorite conference. Maybe the Holy Spirit worked in a different way in his life.

But one thing for sure, where there's reality, where there's resurrection life, there's the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Are you living in resurrection power? What about this area of witnessing? Because they were witnesses to his resurrection and they experienced the power of the Holy Spirit. It says again and again in the book of Acts, they went forth and spoke the word of God with boldness.

You know, there are, again, some beautiful books on this subject. I have some wonderful feedback today. Somebody went to our book table and said, please tell that speaker, thank him so much for the book reviews.

I tell you, that really helped me. And I'm convinced in the long run, beloved, what people have received from these outstanding literature tables will be as great as the ministry that has come across from the pulpit. Because some of these books are written by some of the most knowledgeable, anointed men of God that have ever walked.

Many of whose shoelaces I can tell you I'm not worthy to tie. And one of the reasons there is such a great Christian heritage in Britain compared to other countries, and there's a foundation to build on, not always anymore because there are many straightforward pagans, but at least most people have read such things as Pilgrim's Progress and most people know something about Holy God. There are some who don't.

There are some who don't. The situation is that bad in some places. When you go out to a place like India, you talk about sin, you talk about God, they don't know what you're talking about.

You have to spend a long time just defining your terms and at times you do here as well. And I just feel with all my heart that God wants to take that which we have received in our minds and in our hearts and in our heads and convert us into bold witnesses for Him. Stephen Alford said this.

Oh, how powerful it is. It is characteristic of our natural sluggishness and laziness to put off the work of evangelism. By cunning calculations and clever rationalization we talk ourselves out of the urgency of the task and the demand upon our talents and tithes.

How we need to ask the Holy Spirit to rid us of prejudice, indifference, unbelief and hard heartedness. I will tell you Stephen Alford is one of the most anointed Englishmen I have ever heard preach in all my Christian life. Resurrection reality is your privilege just as the crucified life is your privilege just as living the simple compassionate active lifestyle of Jesus Himself is your privilege and I pray that you may appropriate it and go forth in His name.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father we thank You for Your Word. We thank You for what we have learned together about Your Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

About His life. About His compassion. His witness.

His balance. His concern. About His death as an atonement for our sins that we may know that truly we belong to Him and are saved and are on the way to Heaven and about this great resurrection that we have a new life that we have passed from death unto life.

The stone of our sin has been rolled away by Thy power and now we can go forth in newness of life bringing forth fruit and we thank You Lord that by the power of Your Holy Spirit this can go from head knowledge to heart reality to foot action that we may know the foot full gospel from the head right down through our whole body even to our feet and we often think Lord of Your words blessed are the feet of those who share the gospel. Lord meet us in this place. Fill us afresh with Your Holy Spirit that we may go from here as fervent witnesses not only in England but across the world as it was even in the early church for we pray in Jesus name Amen.

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