



13



Faith: is just believing what God said He will do

Delicious Bible sandwiches

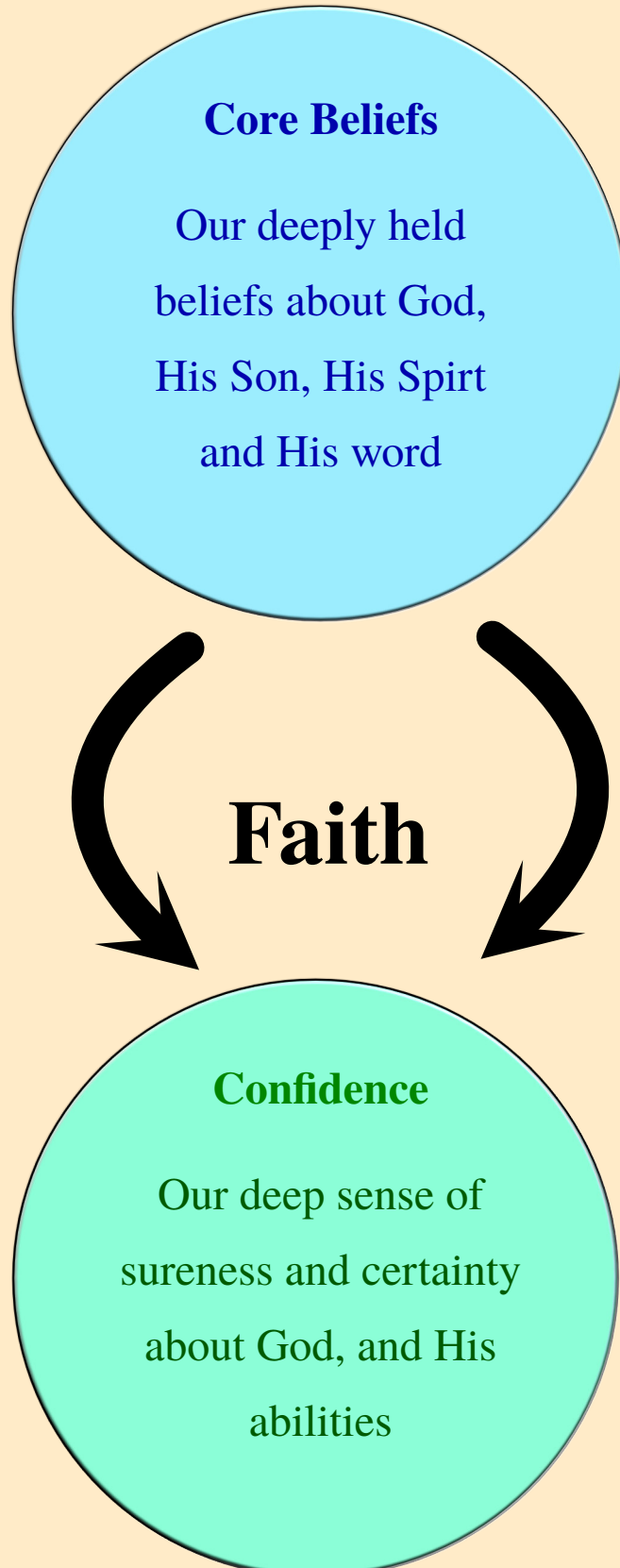


Food that remains into eternal life

Faith in the only Bible book dedicated to why we should believe

The most famous quote about faith-

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, being convinced of what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1).



Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

2/13

Word meanings are taken from [Abarim Publications](#)



Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

3/13

[Word meanings are taken from Abarim Publications](#)



Introduction

This 13th *Sandwich* paper centres on the fourth Gospel, which is an inclusio, that starts and ends with belief in the Son of God (John 1:12, 20:31), and a whole lot of references in between. I want to examine faith in the only Bible book dedicated to why we should believe. Firstly, those first and last references.

He came to what was his own, and his own did not receive Him. But to all who received Him, who *believed* in his name, He gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God (John 1:11-13).

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may *believe* that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through *believing* you may have life in his name (John 20:30-31).

John 1:11-13

Now let's take a closer look at the first reference to believe in John.

He came to what was his own, and his own did not hold Him close. But to all who took possession of Him, who *believed* in his name, He gave authority to become children of God, who were born, not out of blood or out of the will of the flesh or out of the will of man, but out of God.

Received Him

"Received" in our English can be perceived as passive, but with John, it was active. So, taking Him near, taking possession of Him, or holding Him close conveys the positive sense as a willing and enthusiastic action.

Believed

By putting "received" and "believed" together, John has made them synonyms. The enthusiastic action of taking possession of Him gives the meaning of what it is to believe. This is no head knowledge, or intellectual judgment, which is why John uses the verb or action aspect almost 100 times in his book, and never the abstract, static noun form (Net Bible Notes). Believing is what people do.

His name

If you believe, you have to believe in something. In John, that is in His name. What is His name? "Jesus" is used over 200 times in the third person to identify Him, but never once did Jesus say my name is Jesus, although He recognised it as His personal name.

However, a person's name conjures up meaning beyond the name. The name is shorthand for identity, reputation, character, titles and status. So, if we focus on identity from John 1:1-13, the descriptors of Jesus are Word, the intelligent and articulate expression of God, He is God the Supreme Deity, the Creator, the Life and the Light of mankind. All of that, John says in these early verses, we have to have a deep sense of sureness and certainty that it's true of Jesus as a prerequisite to becoming God's children.

New family relationship

For those who do so, they have the authority to become the offspring or posterity of God. Their origin as children is not out of flesh and blood, which are the constituents of humanity (Hebrews 2:14), nor are they the product of what a man wants, but it's all of God.

Now let's look at the last reference to believe in John.

Now Jesus did many other **signs** in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may **believe** that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through **believing** you may have life in his name (John 20:30-31).

Signs

A sign (*semeion*) could be a marker on a border, grave or monument, a signalling flag, a figurehead on shields, even a password. The medical profession used *semeion* to describe representative symptoms of a certain disease. But what really did the Jews mean by it? Jesus put His finger on it here:

“Unless you people see (*eido*) **sign** and **wonders** (*teras*), you will never **believe**” (John 4:48).

A wonder (*teras*), is a sign with an attention grabber, a portent or omen.

The trigger for verses 30-31 is the text before it.

24 But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “**Unless I see** (*eido*) the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, **I will not believe.**”

26 A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.

27 Jesus said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but **believe.**”

28 Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”

29 Jesus said to him, “Have you **believed** because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to **believe.**”

So, the attention grabber for Thomas is the evidence of crucifixion and death in a man that is now standing before him in resurrection transcendence, a state beyond the boundaries of Thomas' normal experience and understanding. So, the Lord invites Thomas to get the evidence he needed as a prerequisite of belief. He did so, but the Lord gently chided him by telling him not to doubt, not be incredible, suspicious, or untrusting.

In this respect, Thomas was a typical Jew of whom Paul wrote: *the Jews ask for signs* (1 Corinthians 1:22). In fact, they beg, and require them as evidence before they believe as these texts in John show.

The Jews then said to Him, “What **sign** do You show us as your authority for doing these things?” (John 2:18).

So they said to Him, “What then do You do for a **sign** so that we may see, and **believe** You? What work do You perform? (John 6:30).

But even with signs, some did not believe as Jesus said: But though He had done so many **signs** before them, they still were not **believing** in Him (John 12:37). For some visual evidence is never enough.

On the other hand, "blessed" (*makarios*) are those who believe without visuals. In the classics, "blessed" described a state of safety and security, that is untouchability. It applied to men of substance, the untouchables of society, but also to the gods — the ultimate untouchables — or wealthy men.

Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

4/13

[Word meanings are taken from Abarim Publications](#)



Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

5/13

[Word meanings are taken from Abarim Publications](#)



Seeing is believing

The meaning of “seeing is believing” in our western culture is that the evidence of our eyes tends to lead us to accept something as true. The earliest version of the “seeing is believing” proverb in the English language appeared in 1609 (Oxford Dictionary).

The meaning of “seeing is believing” in Greek civilization where it originated, was that seeing and knowing were considered the same or similar. Both were connected in the verb *eido*. as in John 20:25 on previous page. The Hellenistic religion believed that it was through the senses that a connection formed between an external, separate reality and an internal cognitive apprehension of that reality. The Bible thus serves as a counterpoint to the Greek ([Cristobal](#)).

That you may believe

So, who is the "you" in John 20:31, unbelievers, or believers? We'll come back to that question later. In the meantime, we'll examine each of the five signs that John selected as a sample from all the signs.

1. Water to wine. Jesus did this in Cana of Galilee as the **beginning of His signs**, and revealed His glory, and His disciples **believed** in Him (John 2:11).

You can read the full story, but the point I see here is that Jesus took something (water) and made it into something else (wine). This is Genesis 1 again. There God created from nothing, bringing something new into existence, He also worked or manufactured from existing elements, forming and fashioning the world into a functional order. This first sign imprints Jesus as the Creator, and the wedding guests were reassured of that fact and the disciple, who were already believers, believed more.

2. Sickness to health. This was the second sign that Jesus did... (John 4:54).

Jesus is back in Cana again, and gets an urgent message from a servant of Herod who lived in Capernaum, a border town, and doubtless many administrative officials lived there. This royal official had a son who was at the point of death, and he begged Jesus him to come and heal him.

Perhaps the official was a Jew for Jesus said to him, *Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe*. The official said to him, *Sir, come down before my little boy dies* (v48-49). Jesus said to him, *Go; your son will live* (v50). This is transformation from sickness to health by the spoken word.

The man **believed** the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way. The official took notice of the time, and when he was met on the way by his slaves they told him the time of the child's recovery. So the father **believed** again, along with his whole household (vs50-54). So, the father didn't have to see before believing, but he did believe because of the evidence. This is growing in faith.

After these two signs, we don't read of numbered signs - 3, 4, 5. That is, after these signs, new signs aren't numbered. Why? If in the first sign Christ is the Creator, in the second He demonstrates that He is the Word. He spoke healing at a distance of 30-40kms from the child. These two signs take us back to John 1:1ff, where the Lord is identified as the Creator-Word.

Does faith need any more evidence? It was certainly given in the signs that followed.

3. Multiplication of the bread. Now a large crowd was following Him, because they were seeing the **signs** which He was doing on those who were sick (John 6:2). This particularly refers back to the royal official's son of John 4.

Therefore when the people saw the **sign** which He had done, they were saying, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world” (John 6:14).

This is the third sign. This is multiplication, whereas the first two were transformations from something to something else (water to wine, sickness to health, dying to living). However, was the assessment of the crowd of 5000 that Jesus was the Prophet "like Moses" of Deuteronomy 18:15, a statement of belief? Some of them may have believed as they wanted to make Jesus king (6:15).

Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

6/13

[Word meanings are taken from Abarim Publications](#)



Multiplication continued

The multiplication miracle had taken place near the town of Tiberias (John 6:23). Afterwards, Jesus and His disciples set sail for Capernaum (6:17). The next day boats from Tiberias picked up a few of those who had seen the multiplication and brought them to Capernaum. It was to this group that went looking for Jesus, not because of the miraculous signs but because they were just interested in free food. Jesus challenged them go after the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give them in response to **believing** in Him (6:26-27).

But there were also people from Capernaum who had gathered to see Jesus, who had not witnessed the multiplication, and it was this group that asked Jesus for a miraculous sign like the manna (6:30-31). This would have seemed superfluous if it were the same crowd that had already seen the multiplication of the bread. But some from Capernaum had heard about it and wanted to see a similar miracle repeated (6:25-31, Net Bible Notes).

Jesus wouldn't satisfy their curiosity, but said to them, *"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever **believes** in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet **do not believe** (6:35-36).*

4. Bringing light to darkness. "How can a sinful man do such **signs**?" Now the Jews **refused to believe** that he had really been blind and had gained his sight until at last they summoned the parents of the man who had become able to see. (John 9:16, 18).

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you **believe** in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may **believe** in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "**Lord, I believe.**" And he worshiped him (John 9:35-38).

This event involved a Jewish man, blind from birth receiving his sight. He had lived in darkness all of his life until adulthood. The true light, in whom was life, Who was the light of the world steps into his benighted vision. Then, the darkness showed that it could not conquer His true light, and He who gives light to everyone coming into the world gave light to him (John 1:4-5, 9). This is illumination.

And he believed. On the other hand, the unbelieving Jews here are "the Jewish religious authorities", as the context refers to the Pharisees who identified in 9:13, 15, 16, 40. In addition, the references to the synagogue (v. 22) suggest an emphasis on the religious nature of the debate (Net Bible Notes).

5. Resurrection. 14 Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. 15 For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may **believe**.

23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who **believe** in me, even though they die, will live, 26 and everyone who lives and **believes** in me will never die. Do you **believe** this?" 27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I **believe** that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

38 Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you **believed**, you would see the glory of God?"

41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may **believe** that you sent me." 43 When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

7/13

[Word meanings are taken from Abarim Publications](#)



Resurrection continued

45 Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, **believed** in him.

46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what he had done. 47 So the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council, and said, "What are we to do? This man is performing many **signs**. 48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will **believe** in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation (John 11:14, 23-27, 38-48).

Eight times in this story the word "**believe**" (*pistis*) appears. If we compare the number of times the word "believe" occurs in each of the five signs, this is the progression:

Sign 1 - 1 time

Sign 2 - 2 times

Sign 3 - 3 "

Sign 4 - 4 "

Sign 5 - 8 "

Not only is sign 5 climactic in character, outrageously daring, and stupendous in its achievement, way above the previous 4, so the "believing" is climactic too. That is, the "believing" ought to be commensurate with the sign enacted. Not only is "believing" the key word of this sign, it reinforces the purpose of this gospel (20:30-31).

In New Testament times (*pistis*) referred to the mental substance that results from intelligent and reasonable inquiry or instruction; the mind's response to valuable information. It described sureness in every way, from sureness about salvation to sureness about how to make a club sandwich. Someone's *pistis* did not denote one's religious or political leanings but comprised everything a person was certain of, on whatever level and whatever field, without distinction between scientific, artistic and religious certainties or even little practical certainties to help with daily chores.

The derived verb (*pisteuo*), in turn, has to do with examining, understanding, learning and teaching (2 Corinthians 4:13).

The raising of Lazarus from the dead was resurrection. Jesus raised Lazarus on the fourth day to demonstrate power over absolute death, as first-century Jewish tradition held that for three days after death, the soul returns to the grave, hoping to re-enter the body. When it sees the face change due to decomposition, it departs ([Babylonian Talmud](#)).

Five Signs: Implication

So, five signs demonstrating creation, transformation from something to something else, multiplication of quantities of food from a meal for a boy up to a meal for 5000 men, illumination of the blind from birth, and resurrection of the dead. Here was enough convincing evidence that Jesus was the Almighty God, enough to blow your socks off and to generate faith in Jesus Christ. Did it? Some believed, and some did not.

The evidence-belief nexus

So, who is the "you" in John 20:31, unbelievers, or believers? The following tables help us to answer that question. Specifically, the tables tabulate the connection between evidence and belief, and indicate, where the text is explicit, believers or unbelievers.

This first table shows the type of evidence that generates belief in Christ. For some people, it was just visual of various types - a convincing witness, a miracle (sign), the cross, an empty tomb, or an event that occurred after the prediction of it was made.

For other people, it was hearing about something was evidence enough - a past event, the resurrection of Christ reminded the disciples of the Scripture He had spoken early in His ministry, the Samaritans did not believe the woman, but believed her story from Jesus, Jewish leaders and disciples hearing the words of Jesus, and the converts of the disciples hearing Jesus' words.

No.	Evidence generating belief in Christ	John's Texts
1	Visual evidence	
1.1	Seeing a witness, the embodiment, or visible form of the Light (John), or the Samaritan woman.	(1:7, 4:39, 19:35).
1.2	Seeing the signs Jesus did. Some were unbelievers, some were Jewish leaders, some were disciples.	(2:23-24, 10:42, 12:11, 20:25, 27, 29, 31).
1.3	The love of God. A Jewish leader.	(3:16).
1.4	The cross. A Jewish leader.	(3:13-15).
1.5	Disciples seeing the Lord's empty tomb.	(20:8).
1.6	Disciples would believe later when events occurred.	(13:19, 14:29).
2	Hearing evidence	
2.1	Jesus told Nathaniel that He saw him under the fig tree, unbeknown to Nathaniel.	(1:50-51).
2.2	After the resurrection of Christ, disciples were reminded of what Scripture He had spoken.	(2:22).
2.3	The Samaritans did not believe a witness, but believed when they heard Jesus.	(4:221, 41-42).
2.4	Hearing Jesus' words Jewish leaders believed.	(8:30).
2.5	Disciples hearing Jesus' words from the Father.	(17:8).
2.6	Converts of disciples hearing Jesus' words.	(17:20-21).
3	Visual & hearing evidence	
3.1	Disciples.	(6:69, 16:30).

Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

8/13

Word meanings are taken from Abarim Publications



The evidence-belief nexus continued

This second table shows the type of evidence that does not generate belief in Christ. Notice here that there are seven types of evidence that do not cause people to believe. The first three, visual, hearing, and the Scriptures were God-provided evidences that caused belief in some people, as we have already noted.

But not in table 2. Mostly, it's the Jewish leaders who were not persuaded to believe by the God-provided evidences. Moreover, these men had self-generated barriers to faith - their personal vanity, their religion, and fear of their religious colleagues. For the brothers of Jesus, common parents who were good parents, weren't conducive to faith. So, righteousness doesn't run in the blood, and fleshly connections don't get you into the kingdom.

No.	Evidence not generating belief in Christ	John's Texts
1	Visual evidence	
1.1	Jewish leaders.	(6:36, 10:25-26, 37-38, 12:37-38)
1.2	Some disciples.	(6:64).
2	Hearing evidence	
2.1	Nicodemus.	(3:12, 18).
2	The Scriptures	
2.1	Jewish leaders.	(5:38, 46-47, 6:29-30, 8:45-46, 12:39).
3	Vanity, vainglory, self-glorification	
3.1	Jewish leaders.	(5:24, 44).
4	Common parents	
4.1	The brothers of Jesus.	(7:5).
5	Common religion	
5.1	Jewish leaders.	(7:47).
6	Fear of man	
6.1	Jewish leaders.	(12:42).

The third table on the next page tabulates the consequences of believing, and not believing in Christ.

There eight tremendous benefits of coming to faith, from seeing greater things later than in this life, provides access to the Father that no religion can, receiving God's indwelling Spirit, being true disciples, and sons of Light, having faith in God the Father, freedom from worry, being agitated, and disturbed, and maintaining the unity of Son with the Father.

Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

9/13

[Word meanings are taken from Abarim Publications](#)



Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

10/13

[Word meanings are taken from Abarim Publications](#)



No.	Consequences of belief in Christ	John's Texts
1	Opens the gate to seeing greater things later.	(1:50ff).
2	Believing provides access to the Father that neither a Samaritan, nor Jewish temple can give.	(4:21).
3	Receiving His indwelling Spirit.	(7:39).
4	Dwelling in His word is evidence of true disciples.	(8:31).
5	Become sons of Light.	(12:36).
6	Faith in Jesus is also faith in God the Father.	(12:44).
7	Freedom from worry, being agitated, disturbed.	(14:1).
8	Maintaining unity of Son with the Father.	(14:10-11,16:27).
No.	Consequences of not believing in Christ	John's Texts
1	Condemned already.	(3:18).
2	Conviction of sin and dying in sins.	(8:24, 16:9).

So, to revert to our unanswered question, 'who is the "you" in John 20:31, unbelievers, or believers?'

Considering all of the evidence outlined in the above tables it seems safe to conclude that John's writing purpose was dual. On the one hand, he wanted to strengthen the faith of believers, while on the other he wanted to witness to unbelievers concerning Jesus, in order that they come to believe in him and have eternal life.

His name

Just a reminder about the importance of the name of Jesus. Here are the two texts again.

He came to what was his own, and his own did not receive Him. But to all who received Him, who **believed in his name**, He gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God (John 1:11-13).

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to **believe** that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through **believing** you may have life in **his name** (John 20:30-31).

As we noted at the start, a person's name conjures up meaning beyond the name. The name is shorthand for identity, reputation, character, titles and status.

So, apart from His personal name Jesus, He is identified as God, and the Son of God, the Holy One of God (John 1:1, 1:34, 6:69, 20:28), the Word (Logos, 1:1), Lamb of God (1:29), the Messiah/Christ (1:41), Lord (man of authority, master 1:23), Teacher (13:13), and Rabbi (great one 1:19).

I AM

Frequently Jesus claimed the divine name "I AM" (*ego eimi*), for Himself, directly, and absolutely.

I think that this is the only name that He said was His.

So, let's look at the references to the "I AM" in the table on the next page.

Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

11/13

[Word meanings are taken from Abarim Publications](#)



No.	The I AM of John's Gospel	John's Texts
1	Who Jesus is	
1.1	I am the bread of life.	(6:35, 48).
1.2	I am the living bread.	(6:51).
1.3	I am the light of the world.	(8:12, 9:5).
1.4	I am from above. I am not of this world.	(8:21, 17:14), 16.
1.5	I am.	(8:24, 28, 58, 13:19, 18:5, 8).
1.6	I am the door of the sheep.	(10:7, 9).
1.7	I am the good shepherd.	(10:11, 14).
1.8	I am the Son of God.	(10:36).
1.9	I am the resurrection and the life.	(11:25).
1.10	I am Teacher and Lord.	(13:13).
1.11	I am the way, and the truth, and the life.	(14:6).
1.12	I am in the Father.	(14:10-11, 20).
1.13	I am the true vine.	(15:1).
1.14	I am a king.	(18:37).

The 'I AM' claim shocked his audience to the core, particularly the Jewish leaders. Such assertions that *I am from above. I am not of this world, before Abraham was, I am, I am the Son of God, and I am in the Father*, were claims to be the eternally existing God.

Of those references above, the 'most frequent claim that He made was 'I AM', on its own without any suffix (8:24, 28, 58, 13:19, 18:5), as the table shows. What does "I AM" mean? "I (*ego*) AM" (*eimi*) means to be, expressing the mere fact of existence, "I am present". The words of Jesus are usually connected with the words of the Lord to Moses below:

The Lord God said: "*I am* the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exodus 3:6). **Present and past**

God said, "*I will be with you*; when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain" (Exodus 3:12). **Future**

When the Israelites ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "*I AM that I AM.*" You must say this to the Israelites, "*I AM* has sent me to you" (Exodus 3:14).

Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you': *This is my name forever*, and this my memory for all generations (Exodus 3:15).

3 I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob...but by my name 'the Lord' I was not known to them. (There is a difference between promise and fulfillment in the way revelation is apprehended. The patriarchs were individuals who received the promises but without the fulfillment, which could only come after the Israelites became a nation. The two periods were not distinguished by not having and by having the name, but by two ways God revealed the significance of his name ([Wilson, Herrboth, Smith](#)).⁶ *I am* the Lord. **I will** bring you out from your enslavement to the Egyptians, **I will** rescue you from the hard labor they impose, and **I will** redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7 **I will** take you to myself for a people, and **I will** be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from your enslavement to the Egyptians. 8 **I will** bring you to the land I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—and **I will** give it to you as a possession. *I am* the Lord (Exodus 6:3-8).

So, I AM means "I was, I am and I will be." **Past, present and future**

Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

12/13

[Word meanings are taken from Abarim Publications](#)



I AM continued

"I am" is from the Hebrew root "being", and Exodus 3:6, 3:12, and 6:3-8 above provide contextual meaning for "I am".

Exodus 3:6

God didn't say that "I *was* the God of the patriarchs, although these men lived some 400-800 years before Moses. God was not only 'being', for them so long ago, but He still is 'being' for them when He spoke to Moses. 'Being' for God is both past and present.

Exodus 3:12

I will be with you, is future.

Exodus 6:3-8

'I am the Lord' (v3) is present, but the seven "I will"s that follow are future, and those seven express the love, the affection, the desire, the passion, the compassion of the Lord and reveal the meaning of His forever name "the Lord".

The Lord's compassion led Him to say *I will bring you out from your enslavement, I will rescue you from hard labor, I will redeem you, I will take you to myself, I will be your God, I will bring you to the land, and I will give it to you as a possession. I am the Lord.*

In sum, "I AM" expresses *what* He is (forever existing), and is not His name, but "Lord" (Yahweh) is His name and expresses *who* He is (forever passionate, and compassionate).

On this, [Knohl](#) offered an intriguing alternative interpretation of the name Yahweh. He says the name Yahweh has its origins in the Nomad-land of Yehwa among the Midianites, so then the meaning of the name should be from the Arabic language family rather than the Hebrew language family. If so, it derives from the Arabic term for "love, desire, or passion".

Biblical evidence suggests that Yahweh comes from the southeast. Each of the poems below opens with the image of YHWH coming from his home in the south. In fact, Habakkuk's song (v. 7) even goes on to describe how the tents of the Midianites shake as YHWH stomps on the ground near them on his way to his people:

The Lord came from Sinai and revealed himself to Israel from Seir. He appeared in splendor from Mount Paran, and came forth with ten thousand holy ones. With his right hand he gave a fiery law to them (Deuteronomy 33:2).

Lord, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the Edom's plains, the earth shook, and the heavens poured, the clouds indeed poured water (Judges 5:4).

God comes from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His splendor has covered the skies, the earth is full of his glory. I saw the tents of Cushan overwhelmed by trouble; the tent curtains of the land of Midian were shaking (Habakkuk 3:3. 7).

This conception fits with what the story of Moses and the burning bush, where Moses goes to the Mountain of God while tending the flocks of his Midianite father-in-law. Moses is wandering in Midianite territory, though not in Arabia but in the vicinity of modern-day Petra, biblical Kadesh.

Israel *must not worship any other god* (Exodus 34:14), because YHWH, whose name is Impassioned, is an impassioned God. His bond with his worshipers is one of passionate love, and in return, the worshippers' relationship with YHWH must be exclusive. All in all, Moses not only found his wife among the Midianites, but found his God there as well, a passionate deity expecting exclusive love.

Note: Headings in this menu are hyperlinks. Click on them and they will take you to the relevant page

[Introduction](#)

[John 1:11-13](#)

[Received Him](#)

[Believed His name](#)

[John 20:30-31](#)

[Seeing is believing](#)

[That you may believe](#)

[1. Creation](#)

[2. Transformation](#)

[3. Multiplication](#)

[4. Illumination](#)

[5. Resurrection](#)

[Five Signs: Implication](#)

[The evidence-belief
nexus](#)

[His name](#)

[I AM](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

13/13

[Word meanings are
taken from Abarim
Publications](#)



I AM continued

Now, let's connect the dots between the Exodus texts and John. The Lord declared that He is the "I AM", the forever existing One, whose forever love, passion, and compassion are revealed in His being for His believing people, their forever:

- satisfier and sustainer (bread of life);
- illumination (light of the world);
- safety and security (door of the sheep);
- carer and overseer of their souls (good shepherd);
- head of God's family of His sons (the Son of God.);
- immortality and life (the resurrection and life);
- educator and master (Teacher and Lord);
- access to the Father (the way, and the truth, and the life; in the Father);
- source of a fruitful and productive spiritual life (the true vine);
- sovereign who holds supreme authority over all (the king);
- access to an out-of-this-world life (from above; not of this world).

Conclusion

Now, let's bring all the threads together. The dedicated purpose of this 'sandwich' book of John is to define belief in Jesus Christ, and show why that's important.

The act of believing is equated with the act of receiving Him which is taking Him near, taking possession of Him, or holding Him close as a willing and enthusiastic action. This is not just head knowledge, or intellectual judgment, but heart acceptance.

But more than that, it is believing in His name, His identity as outlined in the "I AM"s above, and other identifiers such as the Word, the Logos of God, and the five signs, those attention grabbing miraculous performances that marked Him out as the God from heaven - creation, transformation, multiplication, illumination, and resurrection.

What John records are many examples of the evidence-belief nexus, both by those who believe and those who don't. There were some, then as now, who didn't believe despite the visual and hearing evidence. Those who did believe saw a wonderful vista opened up before them - seeing greater things later, receiving God's indwelling Spirit, becoming sons of Light, freedom from worry, being agitated, disturbed, and oneness with the Father and Son. None of which the religions of the day, Samaritanism or Judaism could provide.

On the other hand, there are consequences of not believing in Christ, as He made very clear. Such unbelievers are condemned already, and if they don't change their choice, they will die in their sins.

When you think of it like that, it makes the one of only two choices an easy decision to make.

References

Geronimo Cristobal, Seeing is Believing, Jan 23, 2020.

Babylonian Talmud. Midrash Rabbah, Genesis Rabbah 100:7.

R. D. Wilson, "Yahweh [Jehovah] and Exodus 6:3," Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation, 29-40; L. A. Herrboth, "Exodus 6:3b: Was God Known to the Patriarchs as Jehovah?" CTM 4 (1931): 345-49; F. C. Smith, "Observation on the Use of the Names and Titles of God in Genesis," EvQ 40 (1968): 103-9.

Prof. Israel Knohl. YHWH: The Original Arabic Meaning of the Name, <https://www.thetorah.com/article/yhwh-the-original-arabic-meaning-of-the-name>