INSTRUCTIONS:

What’s Belief Got to Do with It?

**Getting Started**

Jesus and the authors in the New Testament make it very clear that it is belief in Jesus as the Son of God that saves people and brings them into a right relationship with God. It is repeated over and over as the most important theme throughout the Gospels and the letters that follow. If this is true, then what one believes, especially when it comes to Jesus, is very important. But what does it mean to believe and why is it so important to both salvation and life here and now?

In our current cultural climate in America, we hear a lot of opinions all the time. From news networks to Twitter to Facebook and the Internet, we are bombarded with the latest reactions and talking points over events or political issues. It is easy to quickly take sides out of emotion and proclaim what we believe about an issue. We may even feel pressure from friends, coworkers, or family to agree on certain issues or believe certain things. But is belief merely about our opinion, what we think, a side to take, or an intellectual decision we have made? A favorite Christian author of mine, Dr. Sandra Wilson, says, “You may not always live what you profess, but you always live what you believe.” The obvious point she is making is that real belief expresses more than just what we say. Real belief goes to the core, to the heart. Real belief is not just emotional, but something that actually shapes who we are regardless of how we feel. Real belief becomes something we seek to live out in attitude, action, and relationships because we know it’s true. And real truth is always bigger than us . This is the belief Jesus and the New Testament writers are talking about. This belief does not start with believing an idea, but believing in and trusting the person of Jesus. Living the Christian life is first, foremost, and always about believing that Jesus is who He says He is, has the authority He says He has, and as a result putting our trust in Him, not the world or ourselves, for what is true. Belief is agreement, submission, commitment, and willingness to follow all in one.

What we believe matters because it shapes all of who we are. Belief is deeper than culture, diversity, politics, and changing opinions. That is why it is so important. That is why God chose belief in His Son Jesus as the solution. This kind of belief not only changes us, but will always be bigger than the culture, ideas, differences, and popular thinking of people around us. Belief in Jesus as the truth is above these things. It can never be shaken.

**Pray**

*God, you know that everything flows from what I believe. You know that, in order to have all of me, you need to have my heart; you need me to trust in you, not just ideas or opinions. Thank you Jesus for also knowing that to have real belief and trust in you, I first need to know that you love me and that you are worthy of my trust. Dying for my sins on the cross proves that love. You are the bread of life, and I choose to believe in you and feed on your goodness and truth. I love you, God. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*



**Resources**

* Bible
* Video: What A Beautiful Name (Lyric Video) - Hillsong Worship



**Background Information**

*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.*

John 3:16–17

*Then they asked Him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”*

*Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one He has sent.”*

*“Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”*

John 6:28–29, 47–51

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes.*

Romans 1:16

*If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*

Romans 10:9–10

*Yet to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.*

John 1:12–13



**Instructions**

1. Review the rubric to make sure you understand the criteria for earning your grade.
2. Watch the video, “[What A Beautiful Name (Lyric Video) - Hillsong Worship](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5L6QlAH3L4).”
3. Navigate to the threaded discussion and respond to the following prompts:
	1. How do you see the real beliefs (religious or nonreligious) of your clients or those around you playing out in the way they live? Give an example that is positive or negative.
	2. Do you agree that real belief is about putting our trust in something out of conviction and knowledge that it is true? Why or why not? If you disagree, what definition of belief would you offer?
	3. By the definition of belief described by Jesus and the New Testament, belief is the key to change. Belief orients our life, ideas, decisions, and relationships. What does this mean for you as a social worker, both for yourself and how it may impact your work with clients and constituencies?