

Homily July 7, 2019

Robert Bagioni St. George Church Bolton, CT

O Lord, make us have perpetual love and reverence for your holy Name, for you never fail to help and govern those whom you have set upon the sure foundation of your loving-kindness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Genesis 1; 31

“God saw all that was made and it was very good.”

God believed in creation from the very beginning, every man, woman, and child. Every living organism, every rock, mountain and river. It was all very good.

God believed in all of creation, shouldn't I???

“Believe” What a unique word. Say it one way and it is Uplifting and Empowering. I believe you! I believe you are telling the truth. I believe that you will make an excellent \_\_\_\_\_ ( doctor or whatever you want to put in this space).

When someone believes in you it empowers you to do thing you might not have thought you could do. When someone believes in you, you begin to believe and trust in them.

When believe is used another way it can be very demoralizing and hurtful. I don't believe you! I don't believe you will ever amount to anything! I don't believe a word you said.

The way you use the word believe can shape a person's life. Especially a child's life, and we are all children of GOD.

Scripture is all about believing. But then Christianity is all about believing. I referenced Believe in my study bible and found hundreds of cross references.

The Nicene Creed “We believe in one God the Father Almighty”

Genesis has been a focal point of our our Old Testament readings for several weeks now. Genesis is all about believing.

In Genesis 3 Adam and Eve did not believe God when God told them not to eat from the tree of life in the center of the garden of Eden. They believed the serpent instead.

There always seems to be a test to see if you really believe and if you do there will be a result that empowers you.

Adam and Eve failed the test and the result. We all know the result. They were denied eternal life.

In Genesis 17 Sarah was tested when she was told she would bear a son in her old age and tested again in Genesis 21 when God told her to banish the son of Abraham borne by Sarah's Egyptian slave so that her son Isaac might be the sole heir.

In Genesis 22 Abraham was tested when God told him to sacrifice his son Isaac.

But Sarah and Abraham believed God and did what God commanded.

Testing , Believing, Results. THE BIRTH OF A GREAT NATION!

The Psalms are all about believing.

Psalm 13

The Test ;

1 How long, O Lord?

will you forget me for ever? \*

how long will you hide your face from me?

2 How long shall I have perplexity in my mind,  
and grief in my heart, day after day? \*

how long shall my enemy triumph over me?

Believing;

5 But I put my trust in your mercy; \*

my heart is joyful because of your saving help.

The Result;

6 I will sing to the Lord, for he has dealt with me richly; \*  
I will praise the Name of the Lord Most High.

The Gospels;

I am not going to use the Gospel for today but one of my favorite passages.

Matthew 25: 31-46 (I will give a brief overview of the passage)

33 He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left.

34 Then the King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take as your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world.

35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome,

36 lacking clothes and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me."

37 Then the upright will say to him in reply, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?"

38 When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome, lacking clothes and clothe you?"

39 When did we find you sick or in prison and go to see you?"

40 And the King will answer, "In truth I tell you, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me."

41 Then he will say to those on his left hand, "Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

42 For I was hungry and you never gave me food, I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink,

43 I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, lacking clothes and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me."

44 Then it will be their turn to ask, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or lacking clothes, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?"

45 Then he will answer, "In truth I tell you, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me."

Do we really believe this passage? In today's world and specifically our country there is so much debate over providing healthcare for all and food for all. All of the drama about the healthcare act and programs such as SNAP.

Do we really believe as Christians that if we deny healthcare and food to the least of our citizens we have denied healthcare and food for God?

That is our test. How will we respond? Will we be on the right (with the righteous) or on the left with the condemned?

The answer lies in our belief and trust in God.

I am reminded of the first few words of a very beautiful hymn.

"Yes Lord I Believe that you are the Christ"

When your heart truly embraces those words, when your heart sings out in joy, you will fully trust in the Lord.

The Result will be that we will be empowered to live the life that GOD intends for us. We will do what Jesus would do.

Amen