

What (Whom) I Believe

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The topic of this essay is supposed to be what I believe, but I intend to modify it minimally to whom do I believe. The reason for this alteration is that what I believe, at least in the important matters of life, is totally dependent upon whom I believe. A favorite verse of mine, written by Paul, explicitly states my own beliefs. "That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day. (II Timothy 1:12).

My own suffering for Christ is virtually non-existent in comparison to the stonings, scourgings, etc., that Paul endured, much less the agony and death Jesus Himself suffered for me. Nevertheless, I have at times been ridiculed for my beliefs, and my father, an unbeliever, definitely made my life more difficult. Yet I have made the commitment to live for Jesus the rest of my life no matter what happens, and I know that God will keep me faithful because His Holy Spirit is in me and strengthens me against the wiles and temptations of Satan. The Spirit has already made great changes in my life and drawn me closer to God. Although I led an outwardly moral life prior to becoming a Christian, inside I was very selfish, envious, and prideful. This was exemplified especially in my track and cross country running, as I would wish that my twin brother and my best non-family friend would run poorly, just so that I could beat them. Now, these many years later, I can truly, like Paul, "rejoice when others rejoice and weep when they weep." Also, whereas I used to be afraid to witness to others and didn't care enough to do so anyway, now I am urgent for lost souls and eager to tell them the Good News.

Recently much attention was focused on what was claimed to be the tomb of Jesus and His family. Because I know whom I have believed and that He rose from the dead, I can say with certainty that this claim is false. Likewise I know that God can inspire men to write a book that is inerrant and is relevant for all time, not having to change as the culture does. Consequently, the existence of Adam and Eve is not myth but fact to me, man having been created by God in His image and not having evolved from another species.

In my theme verse Paul refers to the day of Jesus' second coming, when He takes us up to Heaven. How fortunate we are! The God who created a universe that is at least many billions of light years in extent has prepared a paradise for us to spend eternity in. Of course, the best part will be just being in His presence. All this is a free gift to anyone who, like Paul, knows Whom he has believed.