

# Essential: Believing

Study Guide for Small Group Discussion and Personal Application  
Lynn Haven UMC – August 23, 2020 – Pastor Terry Tatum

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As our regathering and rebuilding process as a church continues over the summer, we are discussing what is essential to our existence as a congregation. Last week Pastor Craig proposed that the essential process for people choosing to follow Jesus Christ could be described as **Belong, Believe, Become**. We then looked at how the church is called the body of Christ, a temple, and is like a family - and how important it is that people are welcomed into our community and made to feel as though they **belong**. This week we consider what we **believe** that is essential, and next week we will consider how we **become** all that God intended us to be.

## Discussion Starters:

⇒ Stop for a minute and think. Could you explain the gospel in less than one minute? Try it. Take turns in your group summing up the essential beliefs that make someone a Christian in a few sentences. Do any particular Bible verses come to mind?

Let us consider what Christians believe that is essential to our faith:

## How do we know what we do not know?

If you are interested in growing in your faith then...

- (a) Pray and ask God to help you learn.
- (b) Participate in worship weekly, take notes.
- (c) Join a small group, class, or Bible study and learn to read your Bible.
- (d) Ask questions.

## What do we need to know?

The Four Spiritual Laws:

1. God loves us and created us to know Him personally.

*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. (John 3:16)*

*Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. (John 17:3)*

2. We are sinful and separated from God, so we cannot know Him personally or experience His love.

*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)*

*The wages of sin is death... (Romans 6:23)*

3. Jesus Christ is God's only provision for our sin. Through Him alone can we know God personally and experience God's love.

*But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinner, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)*

*I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. (John 14:6)*

4. We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, then we can know God personally and experience His love.

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)*

*Here I am. I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in... (Revelation 3:20)*

### **Application/Reflection:**

⇒ If this is the first time you have heard these essential truths, pray that God would open your heart and your mind to understand them. Tell God you believe these truths and that you want to follow Him. Tell someone else what you are thinking and ask them how you can learn and grow.

⇒ If you already know these truths and have embraced Jesus as your Savior and Lord, what do you need to do to grow in your faith? What is your next step? Do you need to learn to read your Bible, to join a small group or class, to develop a prayer life, or something else? Reach out to your church staff to ask questions and let them know what you need.