

Believe (Dictionary.com) “To have confidence in the truth, the existence, or the reliability of something, although without absolute proof that one is right in doing so: Only if one believes in something can one act purposefully.”

A Christian pop group called “The Darins” have a line in their song “Believe” and it says: “This is real: all you have to do is believe and let this love into your heart.” Listen to the words again from the dictionary: “Only if one believes in something can one act purposefully.” There are those who say first you must believe. I don’t believe that. First you must trust in hope then you will begin to believe.

In an earlier chapter I quoted Eomer from Lord of the Rings saying “Look for your friends. But do not trust to hope. It has forsaken these lands.” That man had lost all hope. I say we always have “Hope” it’s just about bringing it back to life. I also quoted God saying he gives us hope. Look at Romans 15:4 **“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”** Look at the words endurance and encourage. All our life’s events have driven and trained us to have more hope.

I suppose it comes back to that dreaded saying again “Is the cup half full or empty.” I hate it when people say that, yet I sure quote that a lot for a guy who hates it. The Bible says we are to hope in what is not seen. The dictionary says “To have confidence in the truth, the existence, or the reliability of something, although without absolute proof.” The words believe, hope, and trust all come together in a common theme: there is no way to prove it. Faith should be added to the list. We have faith in hope, trust, and belief; without a shred of proof. It appears we are crazy trusting in a faith we cannot prove.

Why write a chapter on believe when I am asking you to not believe first? Patrick you have asked me to not believe in God half as much as believe in myself. The reason it appears I went that way is all about trust. In the beginning you trusted in adults and as years have gone by we have trusted a little less. We trust in God, but in time, that trust can grow or fade depending on what happened to you in life. The hope for better days can wane if circumstances press our backs to the wall. I believe our trust in things is the key. Once bitten, twice shy they say. We must gain trust in ourselves to know that God was right.

Check out these two verses:

Proverbs 3:8 **“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.”**

Isaiah 12:2 **“Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid.**

The Lord, the Lord himself, is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation.”

God said that we are purposefully and wonderfully made. Jesus asks you this question: “How much more would God the Father do for you if he provides so much for the flowers.” I love this verse in Malachi 3:10 **“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”**

They say to don't put the Lord your God to the test, yet God says right here to test him. In a way I'd like to change that word to trust. Do you trust that the Lord will do what he said he will do? He said he would bring joy, peace, and happiness, yet (seemingly) all we see these days are disaster outside and inside the church. This world is going to hell in a hand basket. I thought at-

least I am safe inside the church: a place of refuge. Boy was I wrong! Maybe God is putting us to the test?

So often our faith, hope, belief, and trust are based on what we see and experience. We judge circumstances in history and stats. What if our trust came from the lives we lead? God said test me and see. Does it say by his actions or ours? If you read Malachi again it is by both God's actions and ours. We trust and God delivers, yet we are to do it because we should and not because God will bless us. Read Matthew 6:2 below:

"So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full."

The reset is not just about you. Maybe those around you need "You" to reset. Are you miserable, unhappy, or sad all the time? Maybe those around you might like a happier you? To give of one self is to bless others far more than it is to bless you. Titus 3:8 **"This is a trustworthy saying; and I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone."** Those that seek adornment receive the full blessing right then and there. If we are good to those around us we are like a Hallmark card that's the gift that keeps on giving. The presence of a happy person is better than gold.

We don't work on God to make him better. God works on us to make us better. Throughout the Bible we see the word light. God is a pillar of fire (or light) in the darkness. Moses sees a burning bush. In Matthew 5:14-16 it says:

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives

light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

The light we shine is good for you, good for others, and good for God. The best you is the best thing in this world. The Bible has themes like light and rising up. Moses raised a staff. David was raised from a small boy to King. Jesus was raised on a cross and raised from the dead. We too, are to be raised up to make this world a better place. We are the light of the world because God made us that way. The sunshine always rises in the morning.

With that in mind we must understand that the spiritual and physical go together. We were built that way. If I punch someone I hurt their body, but I also hurt their feelings. God is spirit but we are the physical flesh. To glorify God we must be healthy spiritually and physically. God works on the spiritual in us and we work as the physical for him. We must become better than expected to make God look good. A car maker is thrilled when they win the car of the year award. It is the same with God. He would be thrilled to see you be person of the year.

How do we get there? It's all in the trust. I wonder if Neil Armstrong took a step on the moon because it was symbolic or that (hesitantly) he really didn't know what to expect, yet he stepped. God made you but you were built to step. The real you inside is out there waiting to be seen like a city on a hill. If you plan something to challenge yourself that is good, but no matter how detailed your plan, there will always be the first step. That step will always be into the unknown and unsure. That is where trust is grown.

I like this saying “Why does a dog lick himself, it's because he can.” He could do it because he wants to, likes to, or has to, but in the end it comes down to one statement: “He can.” We can become something special because we want to or like to but in the end it is because we can. If we couldn't achieve it then why try if it's not possible? Someone said God's goodness is

like jumping for the moon, it's impossible so why try? We try because it's the right way to go and because we can jump.

We were meant for more so go for it because you can. I was talking with my daughter about writing and she says she wants to. I said I write because I trust I can. There needs to be a deep set trust in yourself that says you can be more. It all begins with the first step. What is that step? I spoke in a mall in front of 500 scouts before I went to public speaking school. I was nervous as hell but I did it. I spoke at a church before I learned to preach and that was a disaster but I did it. It's all about stepping into the unknown and being brave enough to fail. Through failure we gain trust in our ability to try.

Isn't failure a recipe for doubt? You could say that but that comes back to the cup thing again is it full or empty? Thomas H. Palmer is quoted as saying "If at first you don't succeed then try, try again." Thomas Edison is quoted as saying "He knows a thousand ways to not make a light bulb." Success always comes from failure. How do you think Armstrong felt taking that first step on the moon? It could have been an unmitigated disaster in space, yet he stepped.

James 1 says beginning at verse 2 **"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."**

How often have I heard these verses being used to prove a point? That's what I'm going to do too. Most of the time Pastors use these words to entice perseverance. They say "Yes" times are tough, but we suck it up and keep on running till we win. Win what? Yes, we cross the line with a half dead body that hurts like hell. Way back in the first chapter I talked about hope. If you skimmed through it then go back and read it this time. I think many well-meaning Pastors

get this section all wrong. My point is these verses point to overcoming and winning more than suffering over time.

Hope is completely linked to trust. The more we try, and the more we succeed, the more we hope for something better. Failing is just like trying another door. Eventually you know the right door to open. Hope is built by trusting there is a door. Pessimism says there is no door. Trust says we have a hope in God that he “Will” see us through to the good end. That is why Paul says in Romans 8:28 **“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”** There is a good reason to trust hope.

Some people say they believe the world will end tomorrow at midnight. An hour passes and their belief turns into dismay and unbelief. The belief we have in ourselves and God comes from a foundation of trust and hope. We trust because we have been there and done that. We have strong hope because endurance and perseverance wins every time. We might fail along the way but we have hope that one day soon we will get it.

A reset brings all that good confidence to the forefront of our lives. We keep on trying until we win. We never give up because God says we were built with a purpose. Our confidence is fueled by doing the things we love. We were made to love certain things. We are most likely pretty good at those things too because of our zeal for them. I have heard that coaches are looking for football players that can play but they also want players that love the game. A reset will help you love the game.

So what happens when we choose not to discover ourselves? In James 1 we get another view. He points out that when we are not fulfilled, sin can creep in. I know he does not come

right out and say it, but sin happens when we are not being who we were meant to be. We start to waver away from the best life. Read James below:

James 1:13-15 “When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”

I spent 33 yrs. wishing for more. My life was completely full of sin. Remember, sin is anything we do that hurts others and ourselves in the process. I wanted more and was grasping at anything to get it. The problem was that, in the end, I did not even know myself. Samson in the Old Testament knew God and accepted the strength God gave him. Judges 16:20 says **“But he did not know that the LORD had left him.”** At what point do we go too far the wrong way? I am scared to death of finding myself in that place like Samson did.

Hopefully that is not where you are. I certainly thought I was lost and done. I had gone too far the wrong way. God however had different plans. Jerimiah 29:11 says **“For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”** There is nothing in the Bible that says God is not there for us. John 3:16 sums it all up with **“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.”** There is that word believe again.

To believe in you takes time; to really believe in God takes time. Why add eternal life? God gives us plenty of time to learn and trust in him. Some say that God is slow and patient. That means he takes the time to get it right. There is nothing rash about God. There needs to be a

slowness and patience to you as well. To believe means you need to begin somewhere. Eternity is probably enough time to do that, so take your first steps. Here are three places to begin.

The first thing you need is to trust in the Lord. Know inside that you were made for a purpose. That purpose is not just church work. Doctors, Lawyers, and Subway sandwich makers are the Lords ministry too. Trust is always earned. God has given you time to earn his trust. The Bible is a big place and so is this world and universe. Rome was not built in a day, but they trusted that it would be someday. Take steps to trust by trying to do things that inspire you.

The second thing is to trust in what God has given you. If you're a writer then write. No matter what it is, do it because you're passionate about it. I know a guy in photography that takes stunning pictures, and he loves photography. I love to write and I love to speak out in public. Successful people do what they are good at. You will never know how good you are until you try. Remember the likes of Wayne Gretzky and Michael Jordan were always the first to show up and the last to leave the practice. They loved to play and practice to get better. They loved the game more than the fame.

The third thing you need to is to practice what you preach. If you love sports: then play. If you love to read: then read. Whatever your passion is, do it with passion. The best you is passionate about the ten things on your list. Basically, do them or die. A reset brings perspective but it also inspires being alive. I took a course on spiritual gifts several years ago. I totally recommend discovering your spiritual gifts. What that course gave me were three things that God could use in ministry like outreach, preaching, or discernment. Once I knew what they were I was on fire for God. That also gave me purpose.

You need to make your list and begin to trust in you. Hope for better days with who you are. It's time for you to believe in yourself. God does, so why not you? I want you to be on fire

for you. Imagine someone noticing that you really like life. Imagine the questions they might have about why you live passionately while they seem to just float along. Be inspiring and be exciting. Whatever you are passionate about, you can do with vigor. People will notice that.

I started a singles group in my home town. I brought nine churches together with the purpose of uniting singles to do great things. One mistake I made was me. A handsome single guy running a singles group is a bad idea. It's like I showcased all my talents before the women like I was for sale. It quite honestly was like putting a nice piece of prime rib on a hook for all to see. We need to use our talents and gifts but do it with prudence while thinking about the consequences of our actions. It's nice to be on fire but don't become a bull in a china shop.

I guess I'm boasting but really that is not my point. I got in a heap of trouble for doing a singles group. Women do notice men who are confident, outspoken, and brave. I guess being cute helped. They fight over men too and that was the end of my singles group. In the end I was still single.

Living my traits made me more than I was. In the past I was so shy and nervous around women. Once you gain confidence in who you are, look out. I think once I trusted in me and my abilities I just went crazy for a time. I did so many things without thinking. I had no fear of failing. That is a good thing but we need to still act like God by being slow and patient. My wife says at times I intimidate people. I need to be mindful of how I portray my zeal for me.

People say "Oh they have strong faith." Where does that come from? Well it ties into all the things we have talked about. Hebrews 11 is called the faith chapter. Paul is describing the strong hope people have in God. This chapter opens with "**Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.**" Look at those progressive positive words

from Paul: confidence, assurance, and hope. Our faith comes from a strong belief in yourself and God.

People believe that the sun will rise tomorrow. If the sun fails to rise do they struggle with their faith? Those that believe and trust in God know that no matter what: God is in control. Let's look at you. Do you have faith that no matter the circumstances you will persevere and win? Do you have the confidence and assurance that it will happen? A reset sounds so simple and non-impactful, yet I did it and here I am writing to you with confidence. There was a time when confidence was not part of my portfolio.

There was a time when I thought God made junk. Today, I confidently don't believe that. I may fail, but God built me to win within my passions. Do you recall Michael Jordan trying to play baseball? He was not a baseball player. He was good at sports but great at basketball. You need to excel in the right areas. Those places fall within your passions.

Belief in you means something. If you trust yourself then you trust God's handy work. He did a good work in you. Philippians 1:6 says **“being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”** I believe God sees failing as just another opportunity to succeed. A reset says I am prepared for the long haul. I trust, hope, and believe in the process.

Belief comes in many forms. I am asking you to believe in yourself. I am pleading with you to believe in God like you once did. I have painfully tried to show you the good God. People have failed us. We have failed ourselves at times. It's time to consider believing in this world like we used to as children. The belief of a child is so trusting and innocent. Free of the scars we have as adults.

Jesus makes a strange statement to his disciples that have caused a stir for centuries. Matthew 18:3 Jesus says **“Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”** I think it’s about purity. Children know who takes care of them. They experience love from a parent (most of the time) and that comforts them. There is unwavering trust, faith, hope, and belief in humanity. This whole book has been about bringing that hope back into perspective.

I’d like to end the reset with a belief in humanity. My faith in people has taken a hit over the years. My parents have been less than stellar. Certain friends have let me down. I have been crushed in ministry work over and over. It seems the deeper I go into Christianity the meaner people get. Co-workers have been hard to work with. Society is in a bad place. There is a lot of doom and gloom if I want to find it. Yet, I have been challenged by God to be inspiring in the mist of darkness.

People at their core are little children that have had life affect them. Certain people grow up and love life. There are those who hate life because of the darkness around them. I can’t stand (or sit) here and say suck it up. The child in a slave army in Chad has been dealt a terrible card in life. Children in Cambodia working in the garbage dumps for money will find it hard to see the bright side. Where is their hope in humanity? The human trafficking system is alive and well in this country and others. Slavery and abuse still thrives in the 21st century.

One thing I do know: humanity wants peace but they just don’t know how to get there. There have been countless TV shows these days depicting the fall of society. I think Hollywood feels the pulse of humanity. A reset of the current system might do us some good. Is it good for humanity to go back to horses and walking? Would a crumbling of the current government be

good for us? It seems that way because what we have has gone to seed. “To seed” means gone the wrong way. That might mean change is needed.

In a reset there is a certain amount of chaos. You will look in the mirror and not recognize yourself for a time. The fall of humanity would be bad and good for this world. I think it might be better if the people reset more than the government. Government change has rarely been good in any country just ask Russia or Iraq. A marriage or relationship does not need to fall. People need to find a better way.

I think a reset perspective would help. A change of pace is good. To see the world a different way is enlightening. To believe in you for the first time would be invigorating. It might make you realize that we make mistakes and have bad habits but that is not reality. Some people just lose their way. Maybe humanity has just lost its way. I know the Bible says people are not good, only God is good. Yet, we are not horrible either. If we were then why has God taken such a great interest in us? What’s the point?

To sacrifice your son might mean that we are worth saving. God does not make mistakes or junk. All the main characters in the Bible were a mess. God still found it in himself to use them in good ways. I wish sometimes that more was said about Adam and Eve. They just appear to go from Eden to obscurity. I would love to have seen them take that first step outside the garden. The fear, regret, and shame would be interesting to witness. They would have been people without God for the first time, but were they?

These two misfits never gave in. They raised children. When Cain killed Abel they never gave up. We read about the lists and lists of people born from Adam and Eve. The Bible tells a story of generations of people never giving up regardless of their faults. A reset means you

too are carrying on this tradition of humanity. We are sinners but we carry on and we never give up. We are the abused and maligned. Listen to Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 4:9-10.

“We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.”

A reset gives strength to your soul. Yes, confidence in you comes, but strength and power do too. Like I said, I might have used that power poorly in the singles group. I might have used it wisely within these pages. We are destined to be great like our fathers and mothers before us. The things they did should inspire us to do even more. Jesus to some people is a great man. He tried to leave a legacy for humanity. John 14:12 Jesus says: **“Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.”** Even Jesus believed there was more to us than we know.

A reset is not only important for you but it's critical for humanity. To believe in humanity means to believe in the will of God for a better world. Church is good if we inspire it to be good. People are good if we inspire them to be good. We are good if we let God inspire us to be good. It all begins with your list of ten traits. Do you want to inspire change in this world? It begins with you.

Lastly I want to touch on love. To try a reset is to admit you love yourself. That is hard for me as it might be for you. It is not prideful or boastful to love yourself. It's what you do afterwards that determines whether it's a good thing. What will you do to make this world a better place? Do you love people or hate people. Do you love you or hate the person in the

mirror? Do you hate God? Ask yourself why. What do you love? Love is the compilation of faith, hope, trust, and belief in something good. Read these words and ponder your life to this point. Good luck with your reset.

1 Corinthians 13:

If I speak in the languages of humans and angels but have no love, I have become a reverberating gong or a clashing cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can understand all secrets and every form of knowledge, and if I have absolute faith so as to move mountains but have no love, I am nothing. 3 Even if I give away everything that I have and sacrifice myself, but have no love, I gain nothing.

4 Love is always patient; love is always kind; love is never envious or arrogant with pride. Nor is she conceited, 5 and she is never rude; she never thinks just of herself or ever gets annoyed. She never is resentful; 6 is never glad with sin; she's always glad to side with truth, and pleased that truth will win. 7 She bears up under everything; believes the best in all; there is no limit to her hope, and never will she fall.

8 Love never fails.