

# **Believe willingly and immediately**

2 Hatour 1728: **Date of preparation:** November 12, 2011

3 Hatour 1728: **Date of presentation:** November 13, 2011

## **Verses:**

**Sources:** Bible, NKJV, various parts  
Bostan El Rohban, parts about belief

**Lesson to be learnt:** What does believe in Jesus mean? How do you implement it?

## **Meditation:**

My Lord Jesus Christ...as usual and as always, I am the worst person to teach this; my belief is far from perfect, and I would not like the children to have my kind of belief. I implore you Lord to teach me the benefits and blessings of believing in you like Abraham did, believing in you like the short St. John who kept willingly watering a dry twig until it became a beautiful tree, I need this belief in all aspects of my life; forgive me O Lord and help me give this lesson...

## **The Lesson:**

*(Start playing a game with the kids...ask them to stand up, sit down, etc, then ask them to do an impossible task; like jumping off the roof of the church or such...)*

Ok so we played this game for a certain reason; today we are learning about how to believe in God. I know this seems like a weird topic; because we all believe in God right? Who doesn't? We are now talking about the how to believe in Him; the HOW not the why....

Ok, how do you believe in Him? (Take answers)...ok let's take examples.....

[1] Abraham and his story with his son....are you honestly able to do what Abraham did? Really seriously, think about it....can you? This is the level of practical belief God wants from us; it is true it is very unlikely God will ever ask this of us again, but the level of belief in Him needed is still the same; are you able to actually have that? Am I?

[2] Isiah the prophet and the Judas's kingdom's king at the time, when an evil king wanted to destroy the kingdom, and Isiah the prophet told the king that God is telling him he will win....how did the king be sure? Remember, he is responsible for the

lives of tens of thousands of his soldiers; it is no laughing matter....this is the level of belief needed.

[3] From the beautiful book Bostan el Rohban (the garden of the monks), which tells the detailed lives and sayings and lessons from many of our desert fathers, there was saint called St. John, and he was very short, so that's why our church calls him St. John the short, so he was told by his father in the monastery to go take this dry wood rod and put it somewhere kilometers away in the desert, in the searing sun and heat, and water it, and for many months this happened, until it became a beautiful tree; the elderly father then took the fruits of this tree and called the other monks and said "Taste the fruit of obedience" (which is the result of true belief in God through St. John's father of confession.)

[4] Our church sacraments; although we physically do not see anything happening, we believe that these sacraments are true and correct and that God is present through them. That is significant belief in and of itself, but do we act on this belief as such when we participate in the sacraments? In the mass for example, do we actually realize God is on the altar, or do we take it as a ritual we must do every week for blessings? In confession, do we realize we are confessing in front of God, or just in front of Abouna?

From all these examples, you can see how deep God wants our obedience to be. How do we attain this?

[1] No one can ever say that he has complete belief because we are human; we try our best and God will help us, guide us, and judge us accordingly....no one is perfect except for God's grace and pity on us...

[2] This depth of belief requires true love of God...it requires for you to really love God; love Him enough that your daily actions are to be filtered according to this love. Like St. Augustine once said "Love God, then do whatever you want." Do you get what he's saying? Really truly love God, then through this love you will naturally do only what is right! Your actions are also naturally defined by your belief too, so that's why I started with love God....through your love to God, your belief will grow....

[3] Throughout your love to God, throughout your life, you have to prop yourself up; so that your love is renewed, so that your faith is renewed, so that your belief in God is renewed. You cannot possibly have the same level of faith and love in Christ if you don't take His Holy Body and Blood you cannot possibly have the same level of

belief if you don't clean yourself regularly in repentance and confession, you cannot possibly have the same level of belief if you are not in here, the true Noah's ark, and you cannot have the same level of faith if you don't taste the depth of our Orthodox church, in spirit, in prayers, in masses, in agpeya, in...in...in....

In short, if you want your belief to go towards being perfect in Christ, then you must first truly love Him, really try through your father of confession, then you go into the depths of our true church, the depths of her prayer, her life, and her relationship with God, and your love to God and belief will increase greatly. Only then, and only then, will we start to taste true belief in Christ and not only shallow belief, and if any one of you kids attain it, and I pray you all do, please pray for me as I have a long way to go....(give them my personal example of how I loved the church so late, but as a “my friend came from....” not talk about myself...). You cannot learn and grow in belief on its own, without what was said before...our church's almost 2000 year old history teaches that....