

“BEYOND BELIEF”*

John 20:24-31

Some claims seem beyond belief because they are hard to believe. Other claims one may want to believe but is afraid to believe. After all, hope disappointed can be devastating. Which of these fit Doubting Thomas? Which fits you?

I. BELIEF IS A _____. **24-25**

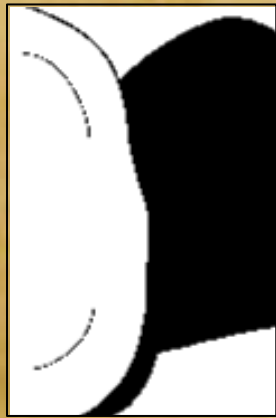
II. BELIEF IS _____. **26-27**

III. BELIEF IS A _____. **27-28**

IV. BELIEF IS _____. **29-31**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you consider yourself a believer or an unbeliever when it comes to Jesus? Do you wrestle with doubt? What specific doubts do you deal with?
2. How do you feel about the honesty Thomas expresses in John 20:25? Do you feel that you can be honest with God and others about your doubts?
3. Read Jeremiah 29:13. What would you say is the difference between half-hearted and whole-hearted seeking? Why does God only promise to be found by whole-hearted seekers?
4. What is your next step on your journey to belief? What are you doing to seek help with your journey?



BEYOND BELIEF

JOHN 20:24-31

I. BELIEF IS A CHALLENGE .

- IT'S IMPOSSIBLE
- IT'S FEARFUL
- IT'S UNCOMFORTABLE

II. BELIEF IS CREDIBLE.

Jeremiah 29:13

“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”

Matthew 7:7

“Seek and you will find.”

Acts 17:27

“God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.”

STEROID SHAME: NO 'HALL' FOR McGWIRE?

Newsweek

March 28, 2005 • \$3.95

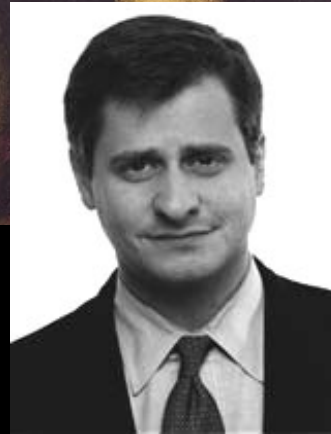


newsweek.msnbc.com

How JESUS Became CHRIST

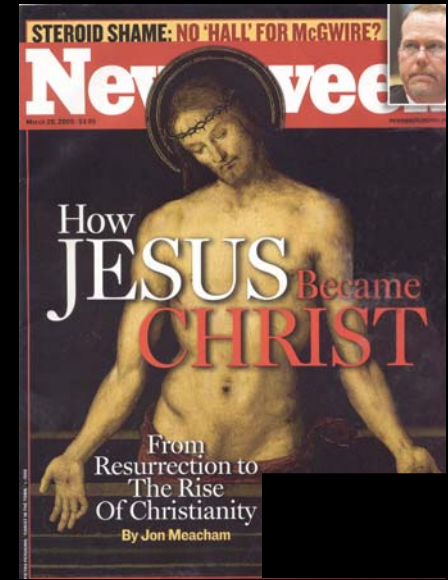
From
Resurrection to
The Rise
Of Christianity

By Jon Meacham

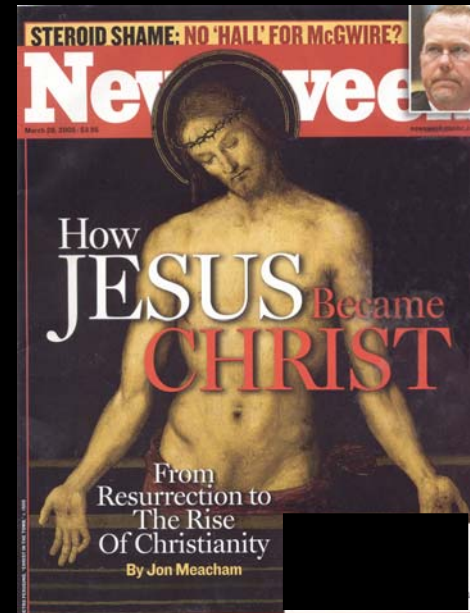


PIETRO PERUGINO, 'CHRIST IN THE TOMB', c. 1500

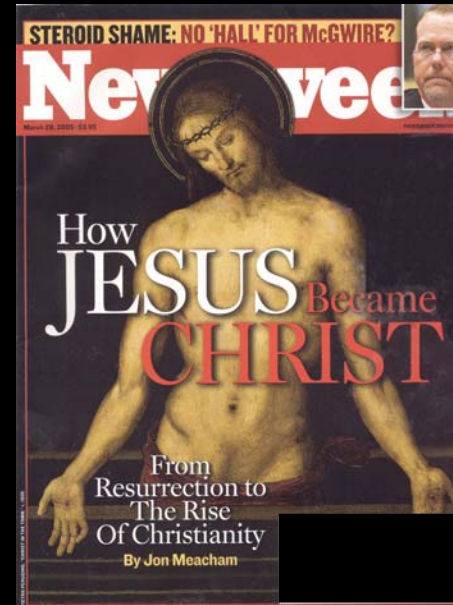
“Without the Resurrection, it is virtually impossible to imagine that the Jesus movement of the first decades of the first century would have long endured” (p. 44).



“Yet we cannot responsibly skate around the Gospel reports that the disciples were initially mystified by the Resurrection. What explains the skeptical disciples’ transformation from fear and wonder to clarity and conviction about the empty tomb?” (page 45).



“That the apostles
would have
created such
words and ideas
out of thin air
seems unlikely.”
(page 45)



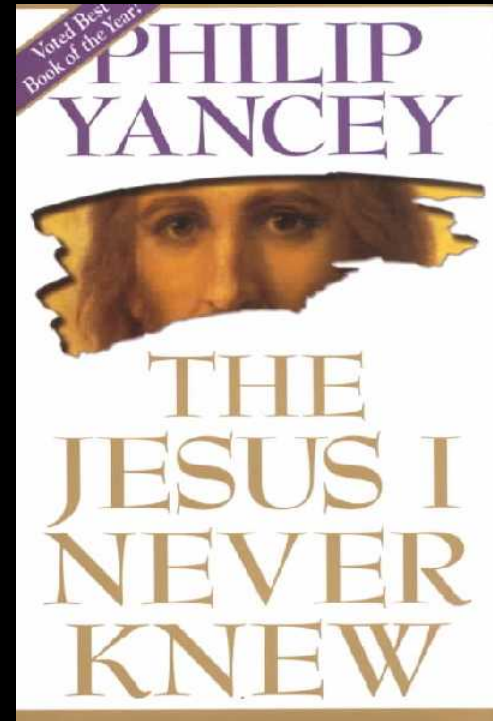
III. BELIEF IS A CHOICE.

GOD IS NOWHERE

GOD IS NOW HERE

GOD IS NOWHERE

“Although much about the Resurrection invites belief, nothing compels it. Faith requires the possibility of rejection, or it is not faith.”



IV. BELIEF IS COMMENDED.

“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see...And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

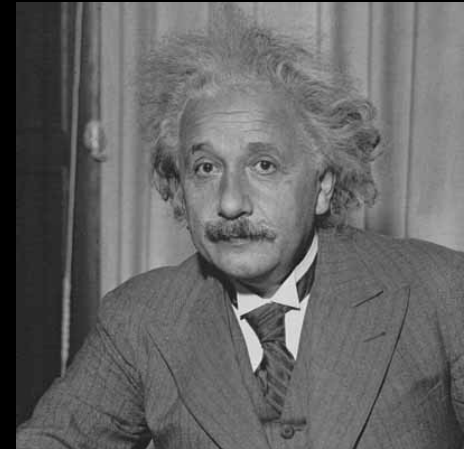
Hebrews 11:1, 6

“Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.”

1 Peter 1:8

“The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed.”

Albert Einstein



God
(holy)



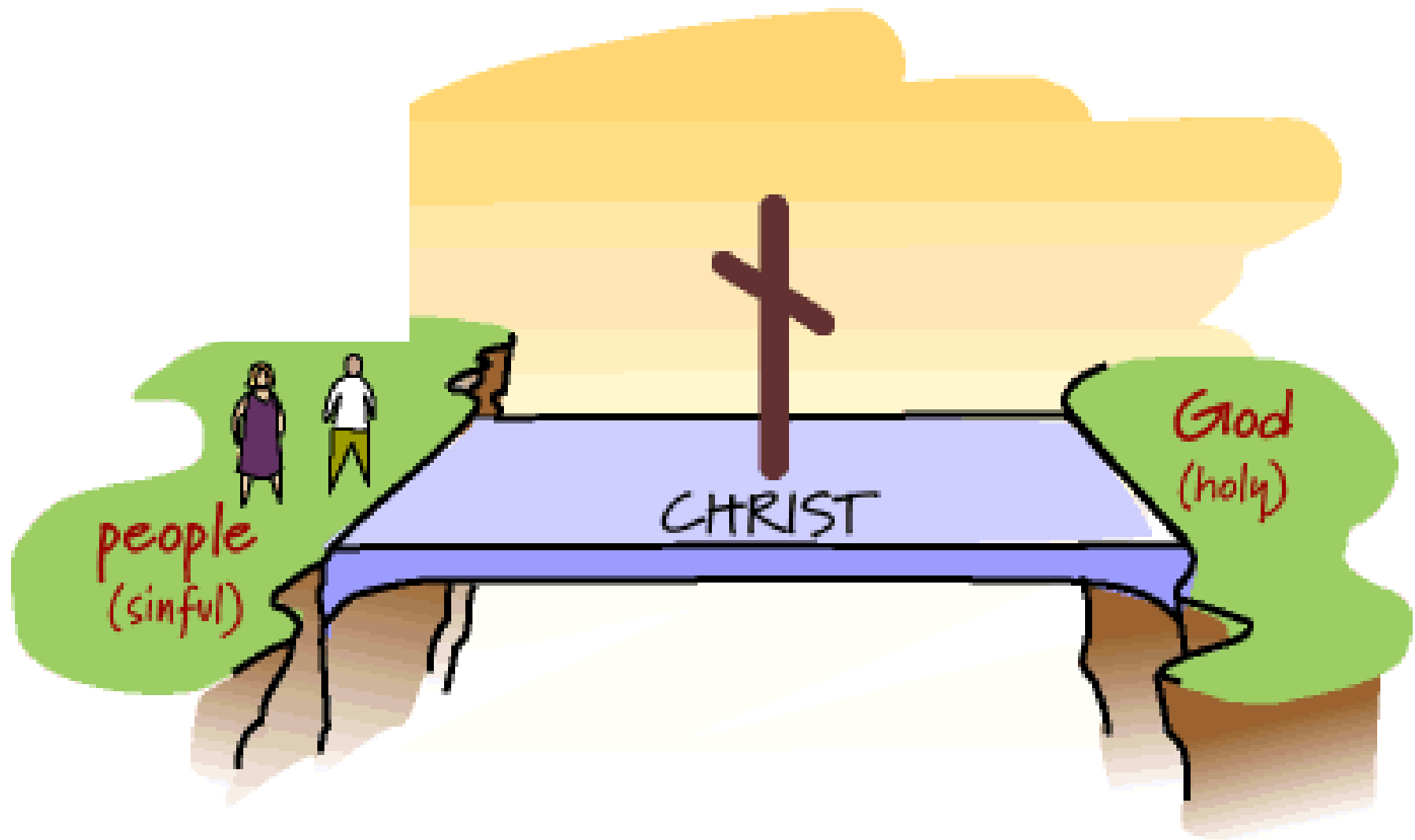
people
(sinful)

Our
Attempts
to Reach
God

God
(holy)

people
(sinful)





Where are you?

Here?

people
(sinful)

CHRIST

God
(holy)

or Here?

