

2: WHY BELIEF ALONE DOESN'T CHANGE A MAN'S LIFE

By John Leavy

In Week 1: What is a Disciple?

3 Min read



“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. — *James 1:22*

You can read all the books on hiking: good planning habits, what protein snacks and food to pack, the pace to set, the proper maps to bring, the exit routes, and how to check on the weather conditions. But if you never set one foot on the trail, you'll miss the whole experience.

A man can study trail maps for years and never leave the trailhead. He can know every contour line, every landmark, every warning sign—and still never take a step. That's belief without following.

Is your Christian experience looking anything like what's being described? Are you taking in all the information: taking part in Bible studies, enjoying fellowships, attending Sunday services, registering for conferences, purchasing good commentaries about abiding in Christ, but never stepping foot on the trail?

There's nothing wrong with these activities as long as they produce a *follower* of Christ.

James says hearing without doing is self-deception. It's convincing yourself you're on the trail because you own the map—you've got the gear.

Believing is standing at the trailhead saying, "I agree with that route." Following is tightening your boots, stepping onto the trail, and letting the terrain shape your stride.

APPLICATION

A man can believe the truth and still resist transformation. He can nod at Scripture, highlight verses, and share quotes—while his habits, reactions, and decisions remain untouched.

Yes, transformation is difficult. It takes time, endurance, obedience, renewal, repentance, faith, and surrender. That's why we ask God's Helper to join us along the trail.

Following Jesus means Scripture shapes behavior, not just opinions. It means what you read on Sunday shows up in how you speak on Monday. It means truth changes your pace, your direction, and your priorities.

Belief stays in the head. Following moves into the hands and feet. Belief can be private. Following is always visible.

This is where discipleship becomes real. The trail is uneven. Some days are steep climbs; others are long, quiet miles. But every step forward requires action, not agreement.

LIVE IT OUT

In Boy Scouts, we always started the troop out on a five-mile hike, not one that was 10 miles or longer. Pace yourself to finish, start deliberately.

Today, move Scripture from the page to the path. Read a short passage and ask how obedience would look in your real life—at home, at work, in your words, and in your choices. Forgive someone, serve quietly, pray out loud, or choose restraint where you'd normally react. Following Jesus is built on small, repeated acts of obedience. One step today becomes a pattern tomorrow. Put on your boots and take the next right step.

PRAY THIS...

"Father, turn my belief into action that I might become more like Your Son."

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***Information lays the foundation—
Practice builds the man.***

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