



Just Believe...

Three thoughts about this word, BELIEVE...It's kind of a funny word. So often we (at least as Westerners) think of believe as a sort of head-nodding to some idea that's thrown our way...Sort of like, "Yes, I believe you." Translated, "I agree with you." For some, however, believe goes way beyond head-nodding. Believe, in many non-Western settings, is a word used for placing the weight of your life on something. For example, believing in a cause and "giving your life" for that cause. Now that carries a bit more weight than nodding my head in agreement to some idea I overhear. This distinction was made clear in a story I read a number of years ago. A Masai warrior was talking with a Westerner in his Kenyan homeland. He said that white hunters come to Africa and hunt with their fingers and their eyes. They pull a trigger on a gun as they site down its barrel. In contrast, said the Masai man, a lion hunts with its whole being. It scents its prey, it stalks its prey, it pounces on its prey, it enfolds its prey, and it literally becomes one with its prey. This man went on to explain that these contrasting styles of hunting are analogous to the difference in the use of the word BELIEVE I shared at the top.

Second: when our son Drew was very young, maybe just 2 or 3 years old, he got his first basketball hoop. He had a little nerf ball and would slam dunk it gleefully through the hoop. My response: *Drew, you're such a big boy!* Now, I knew clearly that Drew wasn't then the 6'4" that he is today...So, I did not LITERALLY BELIEVE he was "a big boy." But, in that case, it wasn't my literal belief that mattered. My "belief" was, I believe, much more than a literal truth. It was a belief in my son that said (at least I hope it said), "I BELIEVE IN YOU!" "You have what it takes." "Daddy is FOR you!" These statements of affirmation hopefully helped Drew along the way. My point:

Believing is way MORE than the literal accuracy of the words we use...

And, finally (at least for today ☺): This is something I've been ruminating on for a while and it's made its way on to the laminated sheet I keep in my journal for regular pondering:

Can I BELIEVE about myself what I BELIEVE about (and say to) others?

Are you following me? I find it way easier to tell someone else they have what it takes (like my statements to Drew when he was young) than to believe those statements about myself. Instead of believing, I often doubt myself. So, for me, I'm "in process" – learning what it is to not just question my beliefs, but to question my doubts. Example: I find myself finishing a phone call with "perfect." Someone runs an idea by me or a plan, and I will reply, "Perfect!" Yet, when it comes to myself, the tape, "It's never good enough," plays loudly...I'm learning to delete that tape, and to play the "tape" I play to others.

And, along the way, literal "perfect" doesn't need to exist for me to hear "perfect."

I'm glad my tapes are changing. What about yours?