



DATE	November 6, 2016
SPEAKER	David Smith
TITLE	Living by Faith
SERIES	Everyone wants to fit in. And there's nothing wrong with that, but there are ways God wants His followers to stand out from the world around them. The first-century church dealt with this same tension, so John wrote them a letter, 1 John, describing the difference between true followers of Jesus and counterfeit ones. So, what's true, and what's false?

As we have been discussing over the past two months, the Bible (through 1 John) outlines clear principles and behaviors that must be followed to call oneself a “true Christian.” Today, we learned about the vital role that faith plays.

1. According to today's quiz, practicing Christians are more concerned about not appearing stupid than about being understood. How have you seen this reality in your own life or of fellow believers? When faced with a situation where your belief is made known to other people, are you more likely to take the opportunity to explain yourself or change the topic quickly? Why does looking “stupid” concern us so much?
2. In today's lesson, Pastor David taught that “true believers live by faith, knowing they have everlasting life.” Before Pastor David explained to us what this looks like, what did you picture when you thought of “living by faith”? Who do you know who lives by faith; in what ways do they live that show it?
3. Read 1 John 5:1. How do you explain this truth—that we must love Jesus if we love God—to those of other faiths who do not believe that Jesus is God? Why do many people find it more comfortable to think or talk about finding God than following Jesus?
4. In 1 John 5:2 the phrase given for the Church is simply, “the children of God.” How has it become that many people profess their belief in God but hold serious misgivings about the Church? What are some of the reasons that even Christians give for distancing themselves from the Church? How do we as the body of Christ reach out to people who have left the Church without pushing them away further?
5. Read 1 John 5:13, James 1:5-8, and Matthew 21:21. Pastor David stressed the importance of faith in the life of a true Christian, that one's confidence in God and the eternal life ahead must be “rock solid.” Are there certain areas of your heart that are weakened by doubt? Earnestly discuss what aspects of your faith you struggle with doubt with the most.
6. To recap what we learned from this series, a true believer:
 - Believes that Jesus is God
 - Walks like Jesus
 - Obeys God's commands to experience His love
 - Are not controlled by desires, driven by possessions, or stuck on status
 - Stick it out with the help of Jesus and community
 - Aren't just forgiven – they are being changed!

- Love better every day while banishing hatred
- Live by faith, knowing that they have everlasting life

What did you learn from this series that helped you solidify your confidence in knowing that you have eternal life? What areas do you feel need the most improvement to become a better Christian?

As you conclude today's discussion, remember the importance of loving the children of God as part of your eternal faith in Christ. Is there another believer that you are currently holding resentment toward for some reason? Take time in prayer to ask for God to give you the strength to reconcile with that person.