



# CELEBRATIONS

LIVING LIFE TO THE FULLEST

SESSION 5.

# BELIEF

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Celebrations – Belief





## **OBJECTIVES:**

Participants will:

- Understand the power of beliefs to improve quality and length of life, reduce stress, and foster a happier life.
- Discuss the effects of stress on several systems of the body.
- Foster a faith in God, and trust Him to provide and guide them.

## **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- Leader's notes
- PowerPoint
- Participant worksheet
- Computer (for your PowerPoint presentation)
- Projector and screen
- Tables and chairs
- Sound system (for large classes)

## TIPS AND GUIDELINES

01. **Come prepared.** Review the entire content and handout materials before the session. Arrive early for your presentation. Set up your equipment and test everything before the participants arrive.
02. **Greet the participants as they arrive.** One of our goals is to build relationships within the community. Greeting people as they enter puts them at ease and can open doors for further dialogue.
03. **Start on time.** The presentations are designed to be less than 1.5 hours. Honor that time frame.
04. **Welcome students and introduce yourself.** This introduction should take only 30 to 60 seconds.
05. **Introduce the topic of the presentation.** A brief introduction appears in the script under slide 2. Keep it short. Introductions should get the participants' attention, not bore them.
06. **Distribute the participant worksheet for note taking.**
07. **Give the PowerPoint presentation.**
08. **Introduce and distribute the quiz.** Detailed instructions are given in the script. Have the participants work in small groups of two to four, discussing and completing the quiz together. (If the nature of your group warrants it, lead the discussion of the quiz questions from the front, soliciting responses from the participants.) Give the participants about 20 minutes to complete the quiz. Monitor the participants' progress, adjusting the time as needed to allow them time to complete the worksheet. Then call them back together as a group and discuss the answers using the answer key.
09. **Closing remarks and reminder.** Introduce the next session's topic, and remind them of the date, and time of the session.
10. **Thank the participants for coming, and visit with them as they are leaving.**

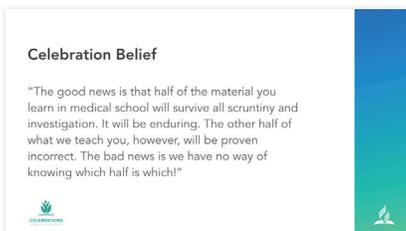


## WELCOME



### Slide 1 (BELIEF)

Welcome to another CELEBRATIONS presentation! During our time together we will explore celebrating belief, which is the fifth healthy lifestyle in the CELEBRATIONS acronym.



### Slide 2 (CELEBRATION BELIEF)

A professor announced to a brand new class of medical students: "I have good news and bad news: The good news is that half of the material you learn in medical school will survive all scrutiny and investigation. It will be enduring. The other half of what we teach you, however, will be proven incorrect. The bad news is we have no way of knowing which half is which!"



### Slide 3 (WHAT TO BELIEVE?)

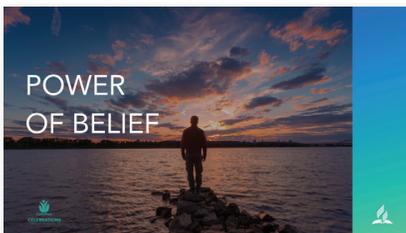
In today's world it's sometimes difficult to know what to believe about much of the information we're "fed"! One day we read that drinking alcohol is harmful. The next week other reports indicate that it's protective of good health. Chocolate is fattening, right? Wait a minute—now a research group has reported that it actually helps people lose weight. Coffee is harmful, we've been told. But then we learn that in a significant study those who drank large amounts of coffee lived longer! And one week a major tech company introduces another time saving, "must have" device; the next week media report those claims as based on unreliable analyses.





#### Slide 4 (WHAT TO BELIEVE?)

In what or whom can we truly believe? Sometimes determining the answer to this question is tough! Yet, we all believe in something. The greatest skeptics have beliefs, even if it's the belief that no one can be trusted. The survival of all humans is based on beliefs of some kind. Belief is essential to human existence and organization.



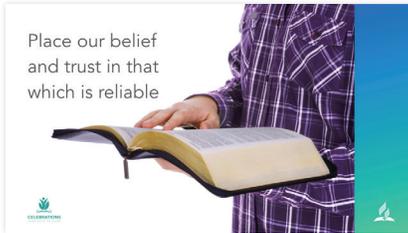
#### Slide 5 (POWER OF BELIEF)

One day a physician was examining a patient who complained about a myriad of symptoms, unrelated to any known syndrome or disease complex. The patient told the doctor that perhaps an evil spell had been cast on him and was making him ill. The doctor then took two small glass tubes and filled one with hydrogen peroxide and the other with water. The patient didn't know the two liquids were different. The physician then drew a small amount of blood from the patient and put a few drops into the tube with the hydrogen peroxide. Naturally, there was an immediate reaction of effervescence, and the doctor knowingly nodded. "Ah-ha," he said, "you will benefit from this." He then gave the patient a saline injection and told him to wait in the waiting room.



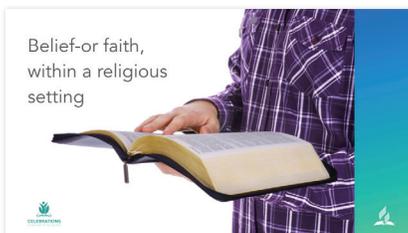
#### Slide 6 (POWER OF BELIEF)

After a short time the doctor called the patient back into his office and again drew a small amount of blood, this time putting a few drops into the tube containing plain water. As expected, it mixed without any reaction. The doctor told the patient that the evil spell had been broken, and the patient left feeling immensely better. The story goes that the patient told all his friends about how he had been healed, and many of them came to the doctor wanting the same treatment!



### Slide 7 (POWER OF BELIEF)

As this story demonstrates, there is tremendous power in belief. For many a peddler of “quack medicine,” this phenomenon is a mighty source of revenue. “Unscrupulous” salespersons can sometimes create a false need in the minds of their targets. They then sell herbal concoctions, nonessential mineral supplements, nutraceuticals (fortified foods or supplements), special diets, and magnetic or electrical cures mediated through empty black boxes or mild shock-emitting equipment. They are trading on what can be called the “gullibility factor.” For those who are healthy, the only cost is some money, from which they are soon parted. In a situation in which something such as cancer is involved, sometimes the delay before undertaking more traditional treatment leads to a deadly outcome as well as the wasting of limited and precious resources on worthless “cure-alls.” It’s important to place our belief and trust in that which is reliable and not on such unproven methods.



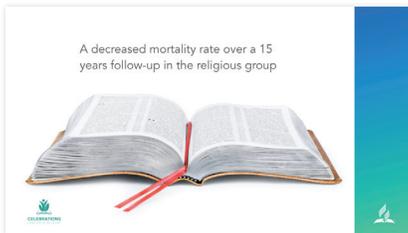
### Slide 8 (POWER OF BELIEF)

Belief—or faith, within a religious setting—has been shown to have statistically significant benefits that exceed the placebo effect. When the religious experience of Americans who reached the age of 100 was studied, researchers found that religiosity significantly enhanced health. Although many questions are still unanswered, the benefits of trust in God result from more than simply attending religious services.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J. S. Levin, H. Y. Vanderpool, “Is frequent religious attendance really conducive to better health? Toward an epidemiology of religion,” *Social Science and Medicine*, 1987; 24(7): pp. 589-600.





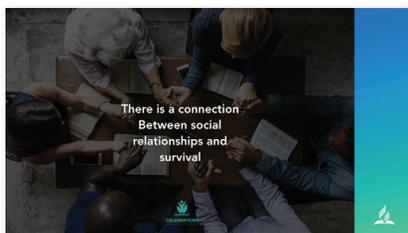
### Slide 9 (POWER OF BELIEF)

A study comparing mortality rates between secular and religious kibbutzim (collective agricultural communities in Israel), found a decreased mortality rate over a 15-year follow-up in the religious group. The age-adjusted risk of premature death of members of the secular kibbutz was 1.8 times higher for males and 2.7 times higher for females when compared with the religious kibbutz.<sup>2</sup>



### Slide 10 (POWER OF BELIEF)

A study of African-Americans found that those who engaged in organized religious activities had improved health and life satisfaction.<sup>3</sup> Duke University researcher C. G. Ellison found that a lack of religious affiliation increases the risk of depression in African-Americans.<sup>4</sup>



### Slide 11 (POWER OF BELIEF)

A connection between social relationships and survival has been documented in several studies. C. J. Schoenbach and his colleagues have documented this effect, particularly among white males.<sup>5</sup>

2 J. D. Kark, et al. *American Journal of Public Health*, 1996: 86(3); pp. 341-346.

3 J. S. Levin, L. M. Chatters, R. J. Taylor, "Religious effects on health status and life satisfaction among black Americans," *The Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 1995 May;50(3): pp. S154-163.

4 C. G. Ellison, "A Race, Religious Involvement and Depressive Symptomatology in a South Eastern US Community," *Social Science and Medicine*, 1995:40(11); pp. 1561-1572.

5 V. J. Shoenback, et al. "Social Ties and Mortality in Evans County GA," *American Journal of Epidemiology*,



### **Slide 12** (IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE)

One of the most consistent findings across all racial groups is that spirituality profoundly improves the quality of life. Ellison describes these significant benefits, brought about by exercising faith:<sup>6</sup>

Religious attendance and private devotion strengthen a person's religious belief system. Strong religious systems, when accompanied by a high level of religious certainty, have a substantial and positive influence on well-being.

Individuals with strong religious faith report higher levels of life satisfaction, greater personal happiness, and fewer negative psychosocial consequences of traumatic life events



### **Slide 13** (IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE)

Spirituality not only helps believers but also benefits the nonbelievers in their community. Research has found that communities gain health benefits when they have higher numbers of adherents to faiths that emphasize implicit obedience to God and His standards of conduct.<sup>7</sup> The reason that nonbelievers are benefited as well is likely that their social norms favor conformity to the more healthful lifestyle embraced by their religious neighbors.

Religious people—particularly adolescents from religious homes who frequently attend religious services, pray, and read Scripture—have fewer problems with alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs than do their nonreligious peers.<sup>8</sup>

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6 C. G. Ellison, "Religious involvement and subjective well-being," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 1991 Mar;32(1): pp. 80-99.  
7 J. W. Dwyer, L. L. Clarke, M. K. Miller, "The effect of religious concentration and affiliation on county cancer mortality rates," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 1990 Jun;31(2): pp. 185-202.  
8 H. G. Koenig, *The Healing Power of Healing Faith*, p.72, 1999 Quoting P H Hardestyn and K M Kirby. "Relation Between Family Religious and Drug Use Within Adolescent Peer Groups," *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality* 10:(1) 1995; pp. 42-30.



Religion was also positively associated with emotionally healthful values and socially accepted behaviors such as tutoring or other volunteer activities often promoted by religious organizations.<sup>9</sup>



### Slide 14 (IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE)

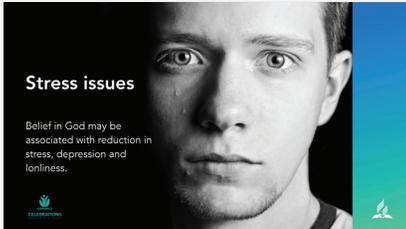
Harold G. Koenig, M.D., discusses the findings of Idler and Kasl. These researchers noted a connection between healthier emotional lives and closer social ties in religiously active people, which often resulted in lower levels of disability. The increased physical activity associated with leisure and social activities did not fully account for the increased benefits in these people's lifestyles, and the authors concluded: "A significant effect of religiousness remains even after social activities have been considered."<sup>10</sup>

Thus, we find that belief in a loving God produces a very positive and powerful health-promoting state of mind. There is nothing more reassuring than the peace and satisfaction experienced by those who place their lives in the hands of a loving God and who are aware of His love for them. This brings health, happiness, and a sense of purpose. As the Bible says, "Those who love your instructions have great peace and do not stumble" (Ps. 119:165, NLT).

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<sup>9</sup> Amoatin and S. J. Bahr, "Religion, Family and Adolescent Drug Use," *Social Perspectives* 29:(1) 1986; pp. 53-76.

<sup>10</sup> H. G. Koenig, *The Healing Power of Faith* (Simon & Schuster: April, 1999), p.177.



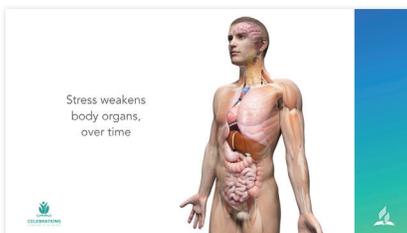
### Slide 15 (STRESS ISSUES)

Belief in God may be associated with reduction in stress, depression, and loneliness. A 1990 Gallup poll revealed that more than 36 percent of Americans live with chronic feelings of loneliness. According to a Princeton University Research Associates survey, at least two thirds of Americans feel stressed at least once a week. Stress, loneliness, and related depression can have serious consequences. Between 75 and 90 percent of all doctor visits contain components relating to stress.<sup>11</sup>



### Slide 16 (STRESS ISSUES)

Medical science has discovered that when you feel stressed as a result of facing challenges, the negative emotions trigger the release of certain hormones that stimulate the nervous system in such a way as to put stress on the various organs of the body. If these organs are subjected to stress over long periods of time, they become weakened. Once weakened, they are more susceptible to a variety of disease processes. The order and intensity with which organs are affected depend upon the person's heredity, constitution, environment, and lifestyle. For example:



### Slide 17 (STRESS ISSUES)

Stress may cause the release of adrenaline, making the heart beat more rapidly and powerfully. Such stress can cause one to suffer from heart palpitations (unpleasant awareness of heartbeat).

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<sup>11</sup> J. Marks, "A Time Out," U.S. News & World Report, Dec. 11, 1995: pp. 85-97.



**Slide 18 (STRESS ISSUES)**

When stress hormones cause the blood vessels to constrict, they may augment the effects of hypertension and cause diminished peripheral vascular flow, leading to cold hands and feet.

**Slide 19 (STRESS ISSUES)**

Stress may induce shallow and rapid breathing with bronchial dilation, which causes hyperventilation.

**Slide 20 (STRESS ISSUES)**

Stress results in diversion of the blood supply away from the digestive system, possibly affecting digestive processes. Stress induces a state of increased clotting of the blood; though protective in some circumstances, it could have detrimental effects in others.

**Slide 22 (STRESS ISSUES)**

Chronic stressful conditions may increase perspiration, leading to unpleasant dampness.



### Slide 23 (STRESS ISSUES)

Stress causes an increase in blood glucose (to serve as a rapid source of energy); in those predisposed to diabetes, chronic stress may lead to the hastening of the onset or exacerbation of diabetes mellitus. Stress may cause alterations in gastrointestinal and urinary functions. Some may suffer from urinary frequency and irritable bowel syndrome.



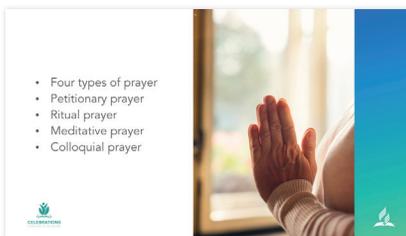
### Slide 24 (STRESS ISSUES)

A stressed person may visit the doctor for numerous physical complaints and suffer from emotional disorders such as anxiety, depression, phobias, cognitive disorders, memory problems, and sleep disorders.



### Slide 25 (BENEFITS OF PRAYER)

An Ohio study<sup>12</sup> examined the effects of prayer on well-being. Of the 560 respondents, 95 percent classified themselves as religious people; 54 percent were Protestants and 25 percent Catholics. Four types of prayer were identified:



### Slide 26 (BENEFITS OF PRAYER)

- Petitionary prayer: asking for material things you may need.
- Ritual prayer: reading the book of prayers.
- Meditative prayer: “feeling,” or being, in His presence.
- Colloquial prayer: talking as to a friend and asking God for guidance in making decisions.

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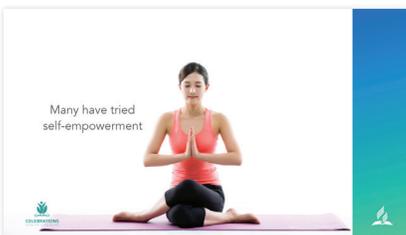
12 Journal of Psychology and Theology, 1991; 19(1): pp. 71-83.





### Slide 27 (ROLE OF PRAYER IN HEALING)

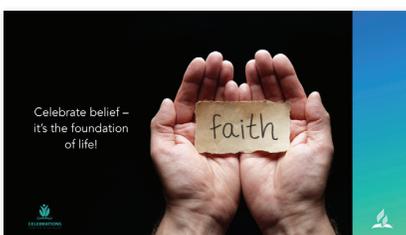
Of all these types of prayer, this study revealed that colloquial prayer correlates best with happiness and religious satisfaction; whereas, ritual prayer was associated with a negative effect producing feelings all the more sad, lonely, tense, and fearful. Talking to God as to a friend, telling Him all our joys and sorrows, can bring happiness, healing, and religious satisfaction. So important is the role of prayer in healing that Dr. Larry Dossey said, "I decided that not to employ prayer with my patients was the equivalent of withholding a potent drug or surgical procedure."<sup>13</sup>



### Slide 28 (ROLE OF PRAYER IN HEALING)

Many people have tried to solve their problems through yoga, secular meditation, or some similar internalized program of self-empowerment; however, these methods do not have the same effectiveness.

In many cases they are techniques of self-hypnosis.



### Slide 29 (ROLE OF PRAYER IN HEALING)

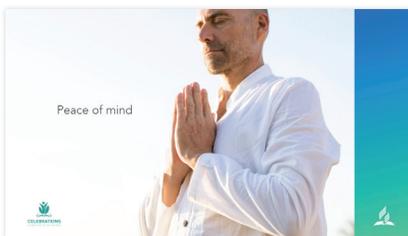
Most civilizations have been founded on a set of beliefs and moral values that lead to an orderly society. Throughout the centuries belief in spiritual values has been a strong motivator to treat others well and to develop peaceful human relationships. History demonstrates that faithless and amoral societies become so corrupt that they cannot survive. Belief is fundamental to science as well as to religion. Just as faith in a scientific principle is verified, faith in God is validated when tests show that its application leads to correct conclusions and brings satisfying results. Studies indicate that those with

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13 L. Dossey, *Healing Words: The Power of Prayer and the Practice of Medicine* (New York: HarperCollins Publisher, 1993) p. 18.



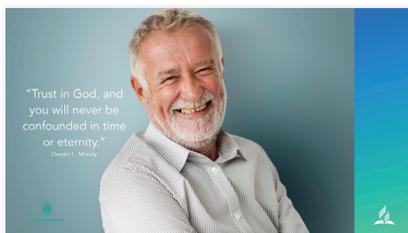
regular spiritual practices who meet with a faith community live longer, live better, and are far less likely to have a stroke or heart attack. Faith can provide strength to overcome stress and destructive habits. Belief can give you peace of mind and enable you to reach your full potential through positive choices. Celebrate belief—it is the foundation of life!



### **Slide 30** (PEACE OF MIND)

The Bible says, “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. (Isa. 26:3, NKJV). When we have a close relationship with God, we experience peace of mind.

This does not mean that those who believe in God and trust Him implicitly will be free from problems. “Trouble and turmoil may surround us, yet we enjoy a calmness and peace of mind of which the world knows nothing. This inward peace is reflected in a . . . vigorous, glowing experience that stimulates all with whom we come in contact. The peace of the Christian depends not upon peaceful conditions in the world about him but upon the indwelling of the Spirit of God.”<sup>14</sup>



### **Slide 31** (PEACE OF MIND)

As nineteenth-century evangelist Dwight L. Moody is quoted by many as saying:

“Trust in yourself, and you are doomed to disappointment.”

“Trust in your friends, and they will die and leave you.”

“Trust in money, and you may have it taken from you.”

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<sup>14</sup> The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 4 (Hagerstown, Md., Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1966), p. 203.



"Trust in reputation, and some slanderous tongue may blast it."

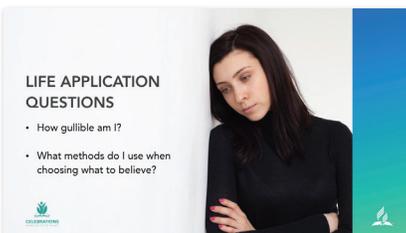
"But trust in God, and you will never be confounded in time or eternity."

Trusting in a loving, powerful God provides us with the ability to enjoy a healthful lifestyle. Belief and faith in God enables Him to fill our lives with abundant peace and joy.



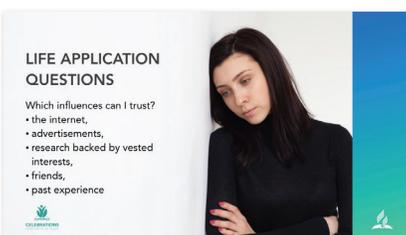
### Slide 32 (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

We will now focus on some life application questions regarding belief. We will review them carefully so that you have time to consider the questions and apply what you are learning to your life. Please write your responses in your Celebrating Belief participant worksheets. You are welcome to ask questions and to look back over the material.



### Slide 33 (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

How gullible am I?  
What methods do I use when choosing what to believe?



### Slide 34 (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

Which influences can I trust?

- the internet,
- advertisements,
- research backed by vested interests, friends,
- past experience?



**LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

What benefits have I noticed by having faith in God?

- How well have I coped with stressful situations?
- Do I feel peaceful most of the time?
- Do I have a strong purpose in life?



### Slide 35 (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

What benefits have I noticed by having faith in God?

How well have I coped with stressful situations?

Do I feel peaceful most of the time?

Do I have a strong purpose in life?



**LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

- Is the community in which I live and work aware of this, and are they benefitting, as well?
- Are adolescents in my community better protected from disruptive and risky behaviors because of my association with them and the faith I exhibit?



### Slide 36 (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

Is the community in which I live and work aware of this, and are they benefitting, as well?

Are adolescents in my community better protected from disruptive and risky behaviors because of my association with them and the faith I exhibit?



**LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

- Which of the effects of stress have I experienced?
- How many visits to physicians could possibly be related to my not having an ongoing, meaningful relationship of trust with my Savior?



### Slide 37 (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

Which of the effects of stress have I experienced?

How many visits to physicians could possibly be related to my not having an ongoing, meaningful relationship of trust with my Savior?



**LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

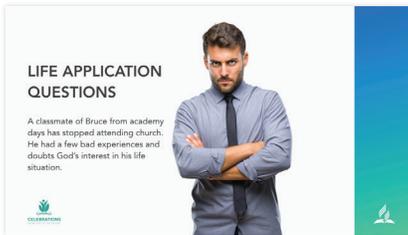
- Do I need to spend more time growing my faith through the study of God's Word and association with those who have the same beliefs I do?



### Slide 38 (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

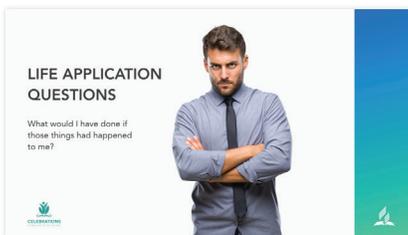
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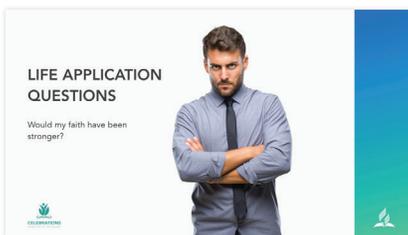
**Slide 39** (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

At this time we will divide into small groups of three or four. This will be a great opportunity for you to get to know one another and to work together as we discuss the next series of questions in our groups. You may write your responses and/or the group's responses in your Celebrating Belief participant worksheets.

A classmate of Bruce from academy days has stopped attending church. He had a few bad experiences and doubts God's interest in his life situation.

**Slide 40** (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

What would I have done if those things had happened to me?

**Slide 41** (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

Would my faith have been stronger?

**Slide 42** (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

How can I encourage Bruce?

**Slide 43** (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

Can I choose to start a fellowship group or small-group Bible study?



**falta esse slide**

**Slide 44** (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

What particularly encouraging experiences can I share with him?



**Slide 45** (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

Which of the four types of prayer do I practice most often?

**falta esse slide**

**Slide 46** (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

In what ways can I change my prayer habits in order to become more joyful and inwardly peaceful even amid tumultuous events?



**Slide 47** (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

We are glad that you took the time to attend this discussion. We look forward to seeing you at the next CELEBRATIONS presentation!



**Slide 48** (LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS)

Author Fred Hardinge, DrPh, RD, FADA, originally from California, is a nutritionist with extensive public health training, and a registered dietitian.







# SESSION 5 **WORKSHEET**

PLEASE NOTE: THE FOLLOWING OUTLINE IS PROVIDED AS A GUIDE FOR PERSONAL NOTE TAKING.

The second B in CELEBRATIONS stands for \_\_\_\_\_.

We all have beliefs. On what should we base our beliefs?

## **Studies show that religious faith can:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ life
2. Improve \_\_\_\_\_ and life

\_\_\_\_\_

Another study showed a connection between social relationships and \_\_\_\_\_, particularly among males.

Young people who frequently attend religious services, pray, and read Scripture have fewer problems with:

Belief in God may help reduce \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, and loneliness.

**Stress can affect the body several ways. It can:**

1. Trigger the release of certain \_\_\_\_\_ that can affect various organs of the body.
2. Cause the release of \_\_\_\_\_, which makes the heart beat more rapidly and powerfully and can cause heart \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Release hormones that can cause blood vessels to \_\_\_\_\_, which can affect \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Cause shallow and rapid \_\_\_\_\_, which can cause hyperventilation.
5. Divert blood supply away from the \_\_\_\_\_, and possibly affect the \_\_\_\_\_ processes.
6. Can induce increased \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Can cause an increase in \_\_\_\_\_.



8. Can manifest itself as emotional disorders such as:

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.
- F.
- G.

Studies have shown that prayer, when offered in a faith relationship with God, can result in:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

# CELEBRATING BELIEF QUIZ

SHORT ANSWER: WRITE A SHORT RESPONSE THAT BEST ANSWERS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

## Question 01

**A.** How gullible am I?

**B.** What methods do I use when choosing what to believe?

**C.** Which influences can I trust? The Internet, advertisements, research backed by vested interests, friends, past experience?

## Question 2

**A.** What benefits have I noticed by having faith in God?

**B.** How well have I coped with stressful situations?



**C.** Do I feel peaceful most of the time?

**D.** Do I have a strong purpose in life?

**E.** Is the community in which I live and work aware of this, and are they benefiting, as well?

**F.** Are adolescents in my community better protected from disruptive and risky behaviors because of my association with them and the faith I exhibit?

### **Question 3**

**A.** Which of the four types of prayer do I practice most often?

**B.** In what ways can I change my prayer habits in order to become more joyful and inwardly peaceful even amid tumultuous events?





# CELEBRATING BELIEF QUIZ/KEY

SHORT ANSWER: WRITE A SHORT RESPONSE THAT BEST ANSWERS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

**Facilitators: please note that answers to the questions will vary due to the personal nature of the response.**

## Question 01

**A.** How gullible am I?

Answers will vary

**B.** What methods do I use when choosing what to believe?

Answers will vary

**C.** Which influences can I trust? The Internet, advertisements, research backed by vested interests, friends, past experience?

Answers will vary

## Question 2

**A.** What benefits have I noticed by having faith in God?

Answers will vary

**B.** How well have I coped with stressful situations?

Answers will vary

**C.** Do I feel peaceful most of the time?

Answers will vary

**D.** Do I have a strong purpose in life?

Answers will vary



**E.** Is the community in which I live and work aware of this, and are they benefiting, as well?

Answers will vary

**F.** Are adolescents in my community better protected from disruptive and risky behaviors because of my association with them and the faith I exhibit?

Answers will vary

### Question 3

**A.** Which of the four types of prayer do I practice most often?

Any of the following:

- Petitionary prayer: asking for material things you may need.
- Ritual prayer: reading the book of prayers.
- Meditative prayer: “feeling,” or being, in His presence.
- Colloquial prayer: talking as to a friend and asking God for guidance in making decisions

**B.** In what ways can I change my prayer habits in order to become more joyful and inwardly peaceful even amid tumultuous events?

Talking to God as to a friend, telling Him all our joys and sorrows can bring happiness, healing, and religious satisfaction.

### Question 4 (GROUP DISCUSSION)

**A.** What are the effects of stress that people experience?

Medical science has discovered that when you feel stressed as a result of facing challenges, the negative emotions trigger the release of certain hormones that stimulate the nervous system in such a way as to put stress on the various organs of the body. If these organs are subjected to stress over long periods of time, they become weakened. Once weakened, they are more susceptible to a variety of disease processes. The order and intensity with which organs are affected depend upon the person’s heredity, constitution, environment, and lifestyle. For example:

- Stress may cause the release of adrenaline, making the heart beat more rapidly and powerfully. Such stress can cause one to suffer from heart palpitations (unpleasant awareness of heartbeat).
- When stress hormones cause the blood vessels to constrict, they may augment the effects of hypertension and cause diminished peripheral vascular flow, leading to cold hands and feet.
- Stress may induce shallow and rapid breathing with bronchial dilation, which causes hyperventilation.



- Stress results in diversion of the blood supply away from the digestive system, possibly affecting digestive processes.
- Stress induces a state of increased clotting of the blood; though protective in some circumstances, it could have detrimental effects in others.
- Chronic stressful conditions may increase perspiration, leading to unpleasant dampness.
- Stress causes an increase in blood glucose (to serve as a rapid source of energy); in those predisposed to diabetes, chronic stress may lead to the hastening of the onset or exacerbation of diabetes mellitus. Stress may cause alterations in gastrointestinal and urinary functions. Some may suffer from urinary frequency and irritable bowel syndrome.
- A stressed person may visit the doctor for numerous physical complaints and suffer from emotional disorders such as anxiety, depression, phobias, cognitive disorders, memory problems, and sleep disorders.

**B.** How many visits to physicians could possibly be related to not having an ongoing, meaningful relationship of trust with our Savior?

Between 75 and 90 percent of all doctor visits contain components relating to stress.

**C.** Do we need to spend more time growing our faith through the study of God's Word and association with those who have similar beliefs?

Yes, studies indicate that those with regular spiritual practices who meet with a faith community live longer, live better, and are far less likely to have a stroke or heart attack. Faith can provide strength to overcome stress and destructive habits. Belief can give you peace of mind and enable you to reach your full potential through positive choices.

## Question 5

A classmate of Bruce from academy days has stopped attending church. He had a few bad experiences and doubts God's interest in his life situation.

**A.** In what other ways could Bruce's friend have dealt with that situation?

Answers will vary

**B.** How can Bruce encourage his friend?

Answers will vary

**C.** Would it be helpful to start a fellowship group or small-group Bible study?

Answers will vary