

Christian Believer, by *Disciple Bible Study*

Length: 30 weeks (2 hours, 15 minutes)

Includes: VHS tape, and leader and participant guides

Christian Believer assumes that most people--though faithful followers of Jesus they intend to be--know little of the content of the central teachings of the Christian faith and its ties to Scripture. But they want to know. They want to know what is at stake in what the church teaches and how it makes a difference in their own lives, what it means to be Christian, and where we as Christians stand. *Christian Believer* aims at addressing the uncertainty about the substance of the Christian faith and the connection between believing and living. *Christian Believer* assumes that participants are already followers of Jesus and that they come to study to understand the faith they already have. *Christian Believer* emphasizes the head as well as the heart. This study recognizes that Christians say the creeds without understanding everything, or even assenting to everything in them, because in saying them they identify with the people and the tradition shaped by the confessions. They recognize that "faith seeking understanding" is a part of Christian experience. *Christian Believer* allows space for questions, doubts, and dissent. The goal of *Christian Believer* is to make available to people the substance of the Christian faith that the church has confessed as a way of connecting to God and living faithfully. This thirty-week study of the classical doctrines of the Christian faith aims at presenting, explaining, and interpreting Christian doctrine as the basic teaching of the church to the end that informed believing leads to committed discipleship. Coming to faithful understanding of the teaching of Christianity through *Christian Believer* begins with disciplined daily reading of Scripture and of the writings of early and modern church leaders. The process of understanding continues in weekly group discussion about the relation of Scripture, beliefs, and daily living. *Christian Believer* brings in history as it illumines themes and topics, but it is not a course in church history. Historical voices are heard in selections from the writings of early and later church leaders and in documents arising out of church councils that dealt with questions, conflicts, and controversies about what constituted Christian teaching. Participants in *Christian Believer* will gain a sense that Christians before us have wrestled with some of the same issues of belief that Christians wrestle with today. *Christian Believer* emphasizes the relationship of worship, belief, and daily life. The beliefs of the Christian community, taught within the Christian community, equip the Christian community for living faithfully and for passing on the faith entrusted to it.