

## **Why We Believe What We Believe (Subjective vs. Objective Motivations)**

We “believe” something for one of two reasons:

1. A clear and undistorted view of evidence forces us to a conclusion (belief) regardless of our feelings and desires = **objective**.
2. Our feelings and desires cause us to either ignore the evidence or at least “see” it in a distorted way to arrive at the conclusion (belief) we desire = **subjective**.

Obviously, the first pathway to “belief” is *objective*, while the latter one is very much *subjective*. Jesus highlights the problem of *subjective* belief (and its results) in Matt.13:13-15. But within these two primary pathways to “belief” there are at least seven separate, though often related, motivations. The *subjective* pathway has six, while the *objective* has but one. Let’s consider them for a few moments.

### **Subjective Motivations for Belief:**

1. **It’s Easy- Intellectual Laziness.** This is all I want to believe- it’s good enough for me; minimum intellectual commitment is the priority, Jas.2:19 (cf. Deut.6:4); cp. Mark 12:29-31. This is often the bastion of the “spiritual, but not religious” who “know” two passages: John 3:16 and Matt.7:1 (but do not really understand or believe either of them!).
2. **It Suits Me / Fits My Lifestyle- Moral Relativism.** It allows me to live the way I want; moral liberty is the priority, cf. Matt.19:16-22; cp.1Cor.6:9-20. If what I “believe” does not change me and make me better, then I have become my own “God,” Phil.3:19.
3. **It’s What I Think- Intellectual Arrogance.** I am the smartest person I know; it making sense to me is the priority, Acts 17:16-20, 22-31,32. Unless our “beliefs” lead us to convicted obedience, they are worthless, cp. Jas.1:26.
4. **It’s What My Family Believes / Taught Me- Emotional Connections.** I could never go against my families’ beliefs; family loyalty is the priority, Matt.10:34-39.
5. **It’s What Our Church Teaches- Traditional Loyalty.** This is what “your church” teaches? What does God/Christ/Holy Spirit teach, cf. Matt.15:1-13? (By the way, “His” church will teach the same thing, cp. Matt.23:1-12; Luke 6:46.)

These all *boil down* to...

6. **It’s What I Want to Believe- Subjectivism.** Whether the *source* of this motivation is *personal, national, familial, or traditional* really does not matter, for they are all *subjective* in nature- what I want. But this is the question that must be honestly asked and answered: “Is what I want to believe more important than what God says?” Phil.3:3-6,7-11; cp. Acts 26:9-20. On the other hand, there is but one...

### **Objective Motivation for Belief:**

1. **It’s the Truth.** It’s what the evidence dictates and God demands; knowing and being obedient to truth is the priority. John 8:31-59.

**Why do you believe what you believe? How did you come to “believe” it? Subjective motivations, or the Objective evidence and desire to please God above all else?**