

Reflections on Faith

So many people, even Christians, have a rather confused concept of what faith is. Unlike the existential type of philosophy that is so prevalent today, faith is not just a leap out into the dark. Faith is not in opposition to knowledge. Faith is an avenue to knowledge that carries us through the dark with its light. Consider just a few points on faith.

Faith Is Based on Reliable Evidence

We act by faith because we have evidence that the object of our faith is reliable. That is why the apostle Paul said that “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).

Our Walk Is by Faith Not by Sight

In 2 Corinthians 5:7, the biblical contrast is not between faith and knowledge, but rather between faith and sight. We do believe in what we have not seen. We have never seen God, yet we have deep and abiding faith in Him. We can, indeed, know that God is. We know it by faith, which is based upon reliable evidence that God is. There are things that we will never understand, and we do accept those things on faith, but that faith is in a God that is worthy of our trust. It is still not a leap out into the dark, but rather an acceptance of the God that is revealed to us by abundant evidence, including His revelation of His nature and will through the inspired Scriptures.

Each of Us Must Develop His or Her Own Faith

There is a system of faith, the once-delivered faith of Jude 3, which is unchanging and set by God. I believe that Romans 1:17, “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith,” teaches that through an understanding of that once-delivered system of faith we come to our individual faith. We can neither inherit nor borrow faith; we must build our own faith so that we can indeed live by faith.

True, Strong Faith Is Life-Sustaining

There are not always answers to specific questions about life, why we go through particular things and why bad things happen to us despite our faith in God. What true faith ultimately does is sustain us and helps us realize that we do not know all the answers, but that God does. It also carries us through the difficulties, trials and unanswerable questions, because of the promise to His people that all things will work together for our good. True, strong faith makes it possible to walk the unknown highways, press on in the dark of the night and ultimately soar on the wings of eagles. Faith is not uncertainty; faith is the certainty that helps us face a life and world full of uncertainty.

Our Faith Must Be Maintained and Grown

We are going to have fluctuations in the strength of our faith. One fact is certain: faith cannot be stagnant and be successful. Not only must faith act to be true faith (James 2), but it is a fact that faith must consistently be buoyed up by continuous study of God’s Word, prayer and Christian fellowship. Peter admonished, more than once in his writings, to grow in faith.

May we have a true understanding of faith, and may it be the power in our lives that not only takes us through the bad times, but motivates us in the good times. Ultimately, may our faith end in sight in a heavenly home with God and the saved of all the ages.

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