

41 - Facts and Fiction About Faith (Part 1)

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As I look back over my own spiritual pilgrimage, I have encountered, in the thoughts of others and also my own, some misrepresentations regarding faith. Perhaps you can identify with at least one of the following fallacious approaches to faith.

Misconception #1: To become a Christian you must nullify your brain and accept beliefs that are contrary to reason.

Sadly, many people believe Christianity supports blind faith that promotes ignorance and unrealistic thinking, just like the little boy who said, "Faith is believing something you know ain't true." Nothing could be further from the truth. Rather than leaping blindly into the dark, faith steps toward the light. Not contrary to reason, it goes beyond and above it – beyond what we can know with our five senses. True Christian faith is not blind optimism or a manufactured "hope so" feeling. It is certainly not believing in spite of evidence! As Augustine stated, "God does not expect us to submit our faith to Him without reason, but the very limits of reason make faith a necessity."

Some of my readers may associate religious faith with concepts such as anti-intellectualism, bigotry, or even manipulation. However, these are the very opposite to the faith I am seeking to explain. I am horrified by the brand of fanatical faith that breeds terrorists and suicide bombers. In a future article I hope to make a distinction between good faith and bad.

The purpose of faith is to discover truths that are of highest importance and yet unavailable to us by purely natural means. The Christian faith, not based on wishful thinking and false hopes, rests upon solid historical facts. The search for faith cannot bypass the intellect. The biblical documents have been subjected to closer scrutiny and stronger criticism than any other historical records and have proven accurate and trustworthy.

Every thinking person knows that there are limitations to human knowledge. Absolute certainty about anything is not a luxury we have been given. This makes faith a necessity. Even convinced atheists have doubts about their beliefs. No matter how hard we try to communicate about faith, some people still close their minds to obvious truth. The International Flat Earth Society still exists, despite all evidence to the contrary.

Interestingly, when former atheists and agnostics such as journalists Malcolm Muggeridge and Lee Strobel; geneticist Francis Collins; astrophysicist Hugh Ross; lawyer Frank Morrison; apologists Josh McDowell and Ravi Zacharias; mathematician-astronomer Sir Fred Hoyle, willingly examined the evidence for the Christian faith with intellectual integrity, they all became firm believers. Accounts of their conversions and defense of the faith can be openly reviewed.

"God does not die on the day we cease to believe in a personal deity; but we die on the day we cease to be illuminated by the steady radiance, renewed daily of wonder, the source of which is beyond all reason." DAG HAMMARSKJOLD, Markings

To be continued

