

Life Demands Faith
(Rev. Dr. John Bartol)

“If it weren’t for faith, there would be no living in this world; we couldn’t even eat hash.” — Josh Billings

Amid all the bad news from all around our world today, I want to share with my readers these positive, hopeful words from some great scholars and leaders, Wernher von Braun, director of NASA research, is quoted as saying, “Prove the existence of God? The proof is everywhere. Must one light a candle to see the sun?” Albert Einstein saw no conflict between science and faith when he said : “Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.”

As he studied psychology, Dr. Henry Link threw overboard all his Christian beliefs, feeling that they were outmoded. But then, when he began to try to straighten out people whose lives were tangled, he found that they were self-centred, caught up in the flypaper of preoccupation. He found that he had to talk to them about God, someone outside themselves with whom they could be honest.

Then he had to talk to them about the new birth. Before he knew what was happening, he found he had talked himself back into being a Christian again. Then he wrote two excellent books, The Return to Religion and The Rediscovery of Man. As he faced life, he found faith to be inescapable; life demanded it. If the Christian faith did not exist, we would have to invent it to meet the demands of human nature.

John Ruskin concluded, “While some people may have difficulty believing in the reality of a God they cannot see, far greater difficulties arise with unbelief.” He went on to find that when he acted in faith and trusted Christ as Saviour, he experienced a peace within that he had never known before. As professor Emil Brunner wrote, “The Christian faith is reasonable, but God is the origin of reason and so is greater than reason. Therefore, to truly know God we must add faith.”

Augustine would add, “God does not expect us to submit our faith to him without reason, but the very limits of our reason make faith a necessity.” Pastor Samuel Shoemaker expressed the same insight with these words: “It must be that somewhere along the line, a man must commit himself to Christ, giving as much of himself as he can to as much of Christ as he understands.”

Faith is betting your life there is a God. Faith is the daring of the soul to go beyond what it can see. Faith is that act of inner commitment whereby you come to the end of yourself and trust your life - past, present and future- to the care and skill of the crucified, risen Saviour. God will never leave you stranded. If you just take a step of faith, He’ll meet you more than half way. If you reach out to Him, He’ll grasp your hand and pull you through.

“Lord, I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24).