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Does Everyone Need Faith?

Hebrews 11:6: (NASB) *And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.*



Are YOU a person of faith? If you think about it, everyone is. We all have parts of our lives where we rely on others around us, or on information that might be unverifiable to us personally, or on those who hold a position of authority. So, is this good or is it childish fantasy? Is all faith the same? How do we tell if our faith is truly trustworthy? Stay with us as we look into the depths of faith and see how it applies to our society, our science and our religion.

Is faith a good thing? Is it irrational superstition?

Combat faith and superstition, *Enemies of Reason*, Richard Dawkins

- *There are two ways of looking at the world - through faith and superstition or through the rigors of logic, observation and acceptance through reason. Yet today, reason has a battle on its hands. I want to combat the epidemic of irrational, superstitious thinking.*

Merriam Webster Online Dictionary:

Faith (noun)

1. confidence or trust in a person or thing: faith in another's ability.
2. belief that is not based on proof.
3. belief in God or in the doctrines or teachings of religion.
4. belief in anything, as a code of ethics, standards of merit, etc.

A biblical definition of faith:

Hebrews 11:1: (NIV) *Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*

Hebrews 11:1: (Rotherham) *But faith is, of things hoped for, a confidence, of facts, a conviction, when they are not seen;*

(Source: Biblical commentator C. Russell) **Definition of faith: The reasonable and accepted conclusion of a logical argument based upon a reasonable premise or foundation.**

What do Atheists do in times of crisis, *Fox News*

- *We prepare - hands that help are better than lips that pray. Nobody has a life outside their physical self, they just think they do.*

But it is a scriptural principle to still do the things necessary to prepare. We don't just pray. We believe hands that help *along* with lips that pray will really get the job done!

James 2:14-17

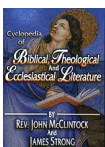
How can you tell if you have faith or credulity?

The virus of faith, permanent state of infancy, *Richard Dawkins*

- *For many people, part of growing up is killing off the virus of faith with a good strong dose of rational thinking. But if an individual doesn't succeed in shaking it off, his mind is stuck in a permanent state of infancy and there is a real danger that he will infect the next generation.*

Merriam Webster Online Dictionary:

Credulity: readiness or willingness to believe especially on slight or uncertain evidence (gullibility)



(Source: McClintock and Strong's Cyclopedia) Faith is essentially *trust*. The various uses of the word (both objective and subjective) may be summed up as follows: 1. An objective body of truth: 2. A rule of thought, 3. A personal quality, act, or habit of the individual man. According to the Greek language, psychologically, "faith is the faculty of grasping evidence, with a propensity to admit it when duly presented to the mind."

A Key Question: Is faith according to the Bible the same as or different than credulity?



What do Atheists do in times of crisis? We prepare. Fox News

- *If you want to believe in an invisible man in the sky, you can do that... WE prepare - we get candles, we make plans, we make back-up plans - we do everything that is utterly possible to protect ourselves and our family, and if we can to help our neighbors...*

Here is an example of the kind of responsibility that Christians are taught: 1 Timothy 5:3-8: (NASB) ³Honor widows who are widows indeed; ⁴but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they (the children/grandchildren) must first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family and to make some return to their parents; (they must first apply themselves to supporting their own family) for this is acceptable in the sight of God. ⁵Now she who is a widow indeed and who has been left alone, has fixed her hope on God and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day. ⁶But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives. ⁷Prescribe these things as well, so that they may be above reproach. ⁸But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

We can't ignore our responsibilities. Gullibility would say, "God will take care of all our needs, so we don't need to do anything." God will care for us in the same way a parent teaches a child to be responsible.

What is the common denominator in all of the following examples of faith? Hebrews 11:20-25: Each individual had the proof of experience that God was with them - this is far from credulity!

Should children be taught faith?

Proverbs 22:6: (NASB) *Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

Does that mean we should avoid facts and only give them faith? No...

The virus of faith, secular education, Richard Dawkins

- *Sectarian education isolates children from each other because of their parent's faith, then their differences are constantly drilled into them and they embark on opposing life trajectories. Such divisions are encouraged. In north London, the Hassidic Jewish community is the largest after Israel and New York. Here, religious division is taken to its extreme. These ultra-orthodox Jews only marry within their sect, television is frowned upon, and of course, children attend exclusive religious schools, cloistered away from external influences which just might lead them away.*

Mark 10:13-16: Jesus saw children as those who set the example of how to learn and accept the kingdom. Obviously we want to teach children about the kingdom of God. But does that mean we have to cut them off from science? Or does their faith enhance their understanding of science?

Exodus 20:12 Proverbs 29:15-18: To not teach our children faith would be to neglect them.

The virus of faith, Atheism is life affirming, Richard Dawkins

- *Atheism is not a recipe for despair, I think the opposite. By disclaiming the idea of a next life, we can take more excitement in this one - the here and now is not something to be endured before eternal bliss or damnation. The here and now is all we have - an inspiration to make the most of it. So atheism is life affirming in a way that religion can never be.*

The "life affirming" responsibility of parents: 2 Corinthians 12:14 Hebrews 12:4-13

Does the Bible ask us for faith or credulity?

Burden of proof on Christians, Christopher Hitchens (atheist)

- *Vicarious redemption - the idea of by watching another person suffer, you can be free not only from your debts or sins but your responsibilities as well...You can cast your sins upon a scapegoat. I oppose not only that disgusting belief but the Judaism from which it's plagiarized.*
- ❖ Does the sacrifice of Jesus free us from sin? Yes.
- ❖ Does the sacrifice of Jesus free us from our responsibilities? No, it actually magnifies them.
- ❖ Does the Bible ask us for faith or gullibility? Faith!



On the subject of vicarious redemption: John 10:17-18: Don't we respect and give thanks to the sacrifice a soldier makes for his country? Faith develops through observation and application: Matthew 8:23-27: The Bible teaches us to prove our faith - to NOT be credulous: 2 Timothy 2:15 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22

 **What do Atheists do in times of crisis, is God all powerful, Fox News**

- *If God cannot stop the hurricane from coming, He is not all powerful.*

Is God all powerful? Yes! But what does that mean? He has a plan.

Psalms 89:11-14

To truly be all powerful, One must be all trustworthy...2 Timothy 2:11-13: So if His parameters are righteousness and justice, He has a plan, and cannot deny Himself, He is not going to do anything you want Him to just to prove His power. He is just, loving, merciful and powerful.

 **What do Atheists do in times of crisis, prayer is like drugs, Fox News**

- *"Is one who prepares and prays blind because he prays?" "He is delusional to think that his prayer is going to have an effect. The storm is coming!" "But prayer brings comfort to so many people!" "So do drugs! Heroin brings comfort to a lot of people too - it doesn't mean it's good!"*

Prayer should be a central part of our lives and based on faith, not gullibility. Our actions should be a "living prayer."

The Scriptures give us amazing proofs that they are inspired by God. For example:

Meteorology: Water is recycled in the earth's water cycle. (How did Job know?)

Job 36:27-29: (NRSV) ²⁷For he draws up the drops of water; he distills his mist in rain, ²⁸which the skies pour down and drop upon mortals abundantly. ²⁹Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds, the thunderings of his pavilion?

Oceanography: The ocean has currents. (How did the Psalmist know?)

Psalms 8:8: (NRSV) *the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.*

 **The virus of faith, do you cherry pick the Bible, Richard Dawkins**

- *It is odd that we should adhere to some parts of the Bible story but not to others. After all, when it comes to important moral questions, by what standards do we cherry pick the Bible? Why bother with the Bible at all if we have the ability to pick and choose from it what is right and what is wrong?*

We think Dawkins is ignoring all of the scientific evidence in the Bible.

Astronomy: The sun moves around in an orbit.

Psalms 19:4-6: (NRSV) ⁴yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. *In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,* ⁵which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, *and like a strong man runs its course with joy.* ⁶*Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hid from its heat.*

The Earth is round and it is surrounded by the atmosphere!

Isaiah 40:22: (NRSV) *It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in;*

The Pleiades - six stars visible, yet seven mentioned:

Amos 5:8: (KJV) *Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The LORD is his name:*

It was not possible for humans to know these things.

The belt of Orion being loosed!

Job 38:31: (NKJV) *Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or loose the belt of Orion?*



All of the stars in this constellation are going in different directions and eventually it will no longer exist.

The Bible gives us all kinds of evidence that it is the inspired word of God, and we haven't even gotten to prophecy yet!

Ezekiel 37:1-14: Bones are something that were once alive, but are not now alive. The passage says that these represented the house of Israel. In the prophecy made long ago, Israel was scattered and dead as a nation. God proclaimed that the nation would rise again! In 1948, Israel came back as a nation! The Bible does not ask us to have faith based on gullibility, but on solid science, prophecy, and more. Faith is an action in our lives, not just a blind belief. We are given ample evidence that it is to be trusted.

Does everyone need faith?

Faith in science, *Richard Dawkins*, bigthink.com

- *There are branches of science I don't understand, for example, physics. It could be said, I suppose, that I have "faith" that physicists understand it better than I do. So when I say something that physicists tell me such as there was nothing before the Big Bang, I sort of have faith that physicists understand that even though I do not understand it. It is not blind faith in the absence of evidence. It is based upon confidence in the scientific method, in the scientific peer review process, that other physicists can test and verify the views of any one physicist.*

Interestingly, Mr. Dawkins seems to have followed a scriptural principle:

Romans 10:14-17: (NASB) ¹⁴How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things! ¹⁶However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed our report? ¹⁷So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

We have faith in those that carry the message.

Colossians 1:23: (KJV) *If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;*

Faith develops through testing:

James 1:2-8: (NRSV) ²My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, ³because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; ⁴and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. ⁵If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. ⁶But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; ^{7, 8}for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

We have to make sure our faith is the central part of our lives.

Jude 1:3: (KJV) *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*

Our faith must be based on that which was originally provided - not that which has been added on by man. Our faith is based on a book that is provable through prophecy, science and history. God has a plan for salvation for all mankind. Work your faith so it can work in you!

**So does everyone need faith...?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!**