

BEVERAGES AND BIBLES

“Prior to the modern period, the most common Christian meanings of ‘faith’, were not matters of the head, but matters of the heart....Faith is the way of the heart, not the head.” Marcus Borg

Question: What does it mean to have faith?

- “I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.” C.S. Lewis
- “None of us knows what might happen even the next minute, yet still we go forward. Because we trust. Because we have Faith.” Paulo Coelho
- “A casual stroll through the lunatic asylum shows that faith does not prove anything.” Friedrich Nietzsche
- “Faith without works is dead.” James 2:20
- “Some things have to be believed to be seen.” Madeleine L’Engle

Question: Do some people have more faith than others?

- “We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone.”
Martin Luther
- “I know of no society in human history that ever suffered because its people became too desirous of evidence in support of their core beliefs.”...“It is time that we admitted that faith is nothing more than the license religious people give one another to keep believing when reasons fail.” Sam Harris
- “Faith does not eliminate questions. But faith knows where to take them.”
Elisabeth Elliot

Question: Is faith something that you are given or something you develop? Or both?

- “Faith is walking face-first and full-speed into the dark. If we truly knew all the answers in advance as to the meaning of life and the nature of God and the destiny of our souls, our belief would not be a leap of faith and it

would not be a courageous act of humanity; it would just be... a prudent insurance policy." Elizabeth Gilbert

- "Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark."
Rabindranath Tagore

Question: Could it be that belief is the starting point for faith. And faith is the way we put our beliefs into practice; faith is the way we live out our beliefs?

- "For many people, 'faith' and 'belief' are just two words for the same thing. But they are not the same. Faith is about deep seated confidence. Belief is more about opinion....We can believe something to be true without it making much difference to us, but we place our faith only in that which is vital to the way we live." Harvey Cox
- "Besides belief, Christianity involves practice, and paths toward transformation." Elaine Pagles

More Questions

- How has your faith changed?
- "Doubt is often a sign that your faith has a pulse, that it's alive and well and exploring and searching" Rob Bell. Do you agree, disagree?
- Is your faith personal or public?
- John Wesley argued that faith should be personal - with acts of piety and devotion, yet also public, connected with social justice. What could this look like today?
- Can someone's faith be wrong? Misplaced? Misguided? How can/do we know?

More Quotes

- "You do not need to know precisely what is happening, or exactly where it is all going. What you need is to recognize the possibilities and challenges offered by the present moment, and to embrace them with courage, faith and hope." Thomas Merton

- “Doubt isn't the opposite of faith; it is an element of faith.” Paul Tillich
- “What is it with science these days? Everyone is so quick to believe in it, in all these new scientific discoveries, new pills for this, new pills for that. Get thinner, grow hair, yada, yada, yada, but when it requires a little faith in something you all go crazy.’ He shook his head, ‘If miracles had chemical equations then everyone would believe.” Cecelia Ahern, *The Gift*
- “And faith isn't about perfect attendance to services, or how much money you put on the little plate. It isn't about going skyclad to the Holy Rites, or meditating each day upon the divine. Faith is about what you do. It's about aspiring to be better and nobler and kinder than you are. It's about making sacrifices for the good of others - even when there's not going to be anyone telling you what a hero you are.” Jim Butcher

Some well-known figures and voices on faith

- “Faith is not something to grasp, it is a state to grow into.” Mahatma Gandhi
- “To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible.” Thomas Aquinas
- “I think every person should have some faith inside him, in his heart. What matters is not an external display of this faith, but the inner state of the soul.” Vladimir Putin
- “A child is not a Christian child, not a Muslim child, but a child of Christian parents or a child of Muslim parents. This latter nomenclature, by the way, would be an excellent piece of consciousness-raising for the children themselves. A child who is told she is a 'child of Muslim parents' will immediately realize that religion is something for her to choose -or reject- when she becomes old enough to do so.” Richard Dawkins
- “Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase” Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- “To have faith is to trust yourself to the water. When you swim you don't grab hold of the water, because if you do you will sink and drown. Instead, you relax, and float” Alan Watts

- “Faith is the strength by which a shattered world shall emerge into the light.” Helen Keller

A final thought - Pete Enns from the Blog, “The Bible for Normal People”

The Expression of Faith is its Best Defense

<https://www.peteenns.com/expression-faith-best-defense/>

Each day, I try to pray from this Book of Common Prayer app (Shane Claiborne and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove; there’s also a book.) The key word is “try,” but I will not have you people judging me.

Anyway, this morning’s liturgy includes the following quote from Jean Vanier, Templeton Prize winner and founder of L’Arche communities. The liturgy doesn’t provide the source, and I’m both too lazy and too wounded (broken finger) to bother to find it, so, again, no judgment please.

This quote struck me as very Jesusy. I really like every bit of this, and so I am sharing it with you, as you might like it too.

Vanier also says well what I was trying to say in my recent post about apologetics. The true expression of faith is its best defense, because it transforms broken lives.

My experience has shown that when we welcome people from this world of anguish, brokenness and depression, and when they gradually discover that they are wanted and loved as they are and that they have a place, then we witness a real transformation — I would even say ‘resurrection.’ Their tense, angry, fearful, depressed body gradually becomes relaxed, peaceful and trusting. This shows through the expression on the face and through all their flesh. As they discover a sense of belonging, that they are part of a ‘family,’ then the will to live begins to emerge. I do not believe it is of any value to push people into doing things unless this desire to live and to grow has begun to emerge.