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Faith vs. “faith”

by Matt Oglesby

I, like most people, am hesitant to believe things that I cannot see. As I’m driving, I might be attempting to change lanes and ask my wife if it’s clear in the other lane. Despite her answer, I often catch myself checking before I turn into the other lane. I’m even more skeptical when I don’t have enough reason to believe something I’ve been told like when my daughter tells me she’s already cleaned her room. I tend to have the same attitude of Thomas of “unless I see” (John 20:25).

I must admit that I have never literally seen God. I can’t literally reach out and touch Him. I can’t prove the existence of God through traditional scientific methods. I believe in God because of faith. I realize that my life as a Christian is a “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). Am I crazy to believe in a supernatural being, an inspired word of God, and eternal condemnation and reward? I don’t believe so because my faith is not baseless. I have reason to believe because of the evidence around me (Hebrews 11:1). I believe in God because there must be a cause for the effect of the world. It couldn’t just happen. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). I believe in God because of the intricate design seen throughout the creation. An intelligent designer is seen throughout the world. How reasonable is it to conclude that a complicated creation such as the human body just happened into existence? Could a tornado rip through a junkyard, whip around all the parts, and a beautiful new Mustang drop out of the clouds? I believe in the God of the Bible because of the evidence that is presented within its pages evidence that has been documented throughout history. I have every reason to believe in God.

Agnostics and Atheists will think I’m crazy. They will look at my evidence, and say that it doesn’t prove anything (at least by their methods). However, I have a question: what evidence do they have for their theories of how the world began? They may cite some purported evidence to support their theory of evolution and the “big bang,” but have they proven anything? They may be widely accepted, but they’re still theories. Any explanation of the beginning of the universe comes down to the same basic idea: faith. An atheist must make a similar admission that I did: they **believe** that the universe was created in some other way than God. Can they prove it? No.

It amounts to a Faith versus “faith” debate. That leaves each of us with the question: which “faith” is more reasonable? In which “evidence” do we put more trust? “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

Too Cold

Shawn Bain

With early last week’s cold spell, many people may have had thoughts of skating and snow skiing. Others are not looking forward to winter at all. When the first snowflake falls, some start calculating how many months before winter is over. Life seems rather bleak when you have nothing to anticipate but cold weather.

Some souls are locked in winter. Their heart is waxed cold all the time. It would not matter what time of the year it is. It would not matter if they were rich or poor. They may be disappointed with life. Each day may be filled with despair. Their hearts are frozen regardless of the number of blessings God bestows upon all mankind. Cold hearts need heat. You could turn up the heat by preaching on the wrath of God and the expectation of hell. You could turn up the heat with an emphasis on the love of God. Maybe the joy in Christ would heat up a coldhearted faith.

Matthew 24:12 describes the days leading to the destruction of Jerusalem by saying, *“And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold.”* Sin is the cause of many a cold heart. When sin dominates a person’s life, love for God and the truth have no regard and no place in the heart. It was a prevalent problem then and now.

Look at the two words "iniquity" and "love" from the first epistle of John. These two great powers contend for the mastery of the earth. All mankind is found on one side or the other. 1 John 3:4 says, *“Everyone that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness”*. Lawlessness can be described as a lack of interest in God's law, ignorance of God's law, a deliberate ignoring of God's law, lack of love for God's law, and a lack of perception of the necessity, holiness, and blessing of God's Law. Sin has such great power to take away the place where love and faith could dwell.

The other power is love. This is a power greater than sin as illustrated in 1 John 3:9, *“Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because His seed abideth in him...”* The more we read, meditate, and practice the law of God, the more faith and love increases. As 1 John 4:4 says, *“...greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world”*. Then 1 John 5:4 says, *“For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.”* Therefore, fix your mind and allegiance on the everlasting law of God. This will fill your hearts not with a passive, flat, and powerless belief but with a heated zeal to embrace the good works God prepared for us to follow.

11/16/25 - Message

Citizenship Conflicts

Mark White

Christians are “not of this world” according to our Master (John 18:36). Of course, necessity demands some involvement in the affairs of earth-life, but we must continually remind ourselves that “our citizenship is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20). The apostle Peter (1:1) referred to Christians as “strangers” (KJV) or “aliens” (NASB) He wanted them to see themselves as Jesus described them, “not of this world.”

But Christians have to be careful about their behavior among people who ARE of this world. Consider Peter’s instruction further in 1 Peter 2:11-12, “Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to ... Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.” (NASU) If we are not careful, our behavior among “Gentiles” can be counter-productive to our purpose in the world. Our purpose is to bring glory to God by helping others become citizens of heaven, too.

As difficult as it may be, this means we cannot become so engrossed in earthly concerns to the extent that we lose focus on our heavenly hope. Let the Gentiles be Gentiles, but keep yourselves pure (1 John 3:3).

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