

Faith That Takes A Stand By HG Bishop Moussa

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Our Lord said: "When the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" (Lk. 18:8). The Lord does not mean just any faith but the faith (with the definite article). Humans all have a natural faith, unclear and obscure faith. "Even the demons believe --- and tremble." (Jas. 2: 19). The faith that our Glorious Lord is talking about is an optional and special faith which we hope to learn about in this article. There are, in fact, three types of faiths, and maybe even three stages also. **1. Natural Faith:**

This is the faith that is common to all humans, and even the devils have it as we mentioned before. It resides in the depths of our being and is the voice of God in the hearts of both primitive and civilized men. Primitive man felt in the depths of his being that he was weak and that he needed an external power to protect him. Or he felt the need for a source of good to satisfy him, or he experienced fear of an external power that controlled his life and death. Hence, man began to worship the sun, the moon, the sea, cows, savage beasts and so on. As for civilized man, he began to be in pain because of his psyche, his mind, or his morals. The cries of Nietzsche, the concepts of Marx, and the spurious freedom of Sartre are probably all modern gods in our civilized era. All of them show us glimpses of their depths that indicate the human desire for a good and powerful being who saves mankind from their weaknesses, their fears, and their failings. Therefore, "there is not even one atheist" as St. Augustine says. The following are some quotations that indicate this:

- > "I believe in a Thinking Being that governs this universe, but I do not think it is a person," (Albert Einstein).
- > "God is dead, and the only thing that is left for us to do is to fill the blank He has left." (Nietzsche).
- > "I call you by the name of higher man, for man is something we must transcend and surpass." (Nietzsche).
- > "Nietzsche wants to release the wings of man to make him have the greatest metaphysical experience ever." (Zakaria Ibrahim).
- > "God is dead, but that does not mean that He does not exist or that He is no longer there, but it means that He used to talk to us but now is silent." (Sartre).
- > "Man is the origin of man." (J.P.Sartre).
- > "Man is a useless lost hope." (J.P.Sartre).
- > "You created me, but You should not have created me free." (J.P.Sartre).

We perceive man's confusion in these quotations, for as he tries to find himself, he imagines that doing away with God is the only solution. The Lord, in His love and tenderness, is still perfectly willing to reveal Himself to the humble "he who loves Me I will manifest Myself unto him." (Jn. 14: 21).

2. Rational Faith:

Rational faith is when we try to assimilate the divine revelations and tenets of natural faith. It is an attempt to understand what cannot be comprehended by reason alone. That is why we find that it is fraught with difficulties and is never enough. Long ago, St. Augustine said: "Reason leads to faith, and faith leads to reason. I believe but I am rational." Truly, the mind has to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit in order to be able to understand the surpassing mysteries: "No one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God." (1Cor 2: 11). Faith is the microscope that helps our limited and finite eyes (or our brains) to perceive what is beyond its limits. God is the telescope that we put to our eyes to help us see what is beyond our naked vision. That is why every attempt to explain the truths of faith in purely rational terms elevates the mind to

the level of critiquing and limiting faith. All attempts to simplify the truths of faith so that they can be understood and assimilated by the natural brain is a distortion of them. God is revealed only to the humble mind that is enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, unless the truths of faith that we perceive through the Holy Spirit and in which we rest are converted into real and daily action that changes our lives and behavior, and into an assurance that is apparent in the difficulties of life and reality, we will not benefit from this theoretical faith and will not be saved. Hence, we encourage a humble dialogue with the truth to reveal the truth, rather than promoting the simplification of the truths of faith so that they are easy enough for the natural brain to assimilate. **3. Experiential Faith:**

This is the substantial faith that we must attain through grace. For faith "is the gift of God." (Eph. 2:8). Faith holds onto God and does not let go. It has a foretaste of the joys of heaven and feels that there is a real and living relationship between the soul and God. It is the faith of the Virgin that contradicted Her reason, but through it She understood the possibility of a Immaculate Conception and so submitted with joy and thanksgiving. It is the faith of Joshua, son of Nun, who ordered the priests to "wash their feet in the overflowing waters of the Jordan as though they were no longer waters, but rock..." . And so it was. It is the faith of St. Abram, who used to spend the last penny in his pocket, confident that God would send at the right time! Do we have this faith, the faith that takes a stand? When we enter into thick darkness, or have pressing trouble, are we at rest and secure in the Divine Hand that supports us without our feeling it? When we experience the bitterness of defeat, do we accept it from the loving hand of an Omnipotent God, confident that His hand only gives us what is good? When sin enslaves us, do we shake off the dust and ask the Spirit of God to "come and dwell in us", and are we full of faith that He does? When we suffer material or moral losses, do our spirits fail within us or are we silent, saying: God's will be done; this is all for our good? What is the extent of our experience of a living personal loving God Who sticks closer than a brother, and Who is more powerful and greater than the universe? He intervenes in our personal lives in the right way which frequently contradicts our own ideas and our individual moods. **My young brother,**

Do not be satisfied with natural faith, or with rational faith, but enter into a living dialogue with Christ. He knows the preoccupations of your heart, and shares all your pain. He comes to your salvation at the right time. **6a3** Contend with him till the break of dawn so that your name may be changed and that you may become a blessing. **Give Him everything you hold dear:** -> your sins -> your desires -> your ambitions -> your future -> your name **Be** confident that you will not lose, for heaven is not a myth and Christ is not a legend! "Put on the Lord Jesus" through many prayers and cries; "take hold of eternal life" so that you can easily despise the glories of this age. May the Lord be with your spirit.