



November 8, 2021

Seeking to Clear Up the Confusion About Faith

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love". (1 Corinthians 13:13a)

Again, faith is reliance (trust/confidence) revealed in attitude and action. Our attitude can be understood as the basic posture we have in life, our way of being in the world. It is here, in our underlying posture toward life, where real spiritual resources are needed most of all. Take love as an example. We need to love in attitude as well as in action. The person who only acts in a loving way, but does not actually love, is deficient in character. He needs to get the love into his heart, into the very fibers of his being. From Jesus' perspective, the person who merely acts righteously falls into the category of being pharisaical or legalistically righteous. The righteousness of the kingdom of God, however, is righteousness of the heart (Mark 7:6).

Now faith has two main parts: one is *vision* and the other is *desire*, or will. *Vision* is seeing reality as it is, or in the case of the future, as it could be for us. *Desire* is wanting reality to be as it is, or as we hope it could be. To have the faith necessary to live into our hoped-for future is to trust, as the psalmist did, that "goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life" (Ps. 23:6).

Sometimes we speak of someone being "under conviction." When this happens, it means that a person has a vision of how things could be different, but is resisting it. One could see that something should change in their life; that is the person's vision. At the same time, they lack the desire for life to be different than it is. This person desires—wills—something other than what would be best, and thereby lives in denial of this vision. This, in turn, leads a person to act in ways that are in accord with their desire, but not their vision.

The vision or perception of reality upon which we base our faith may often come to us by means of a spoken or written word. You may have an accurate opinion about a person you have never met because you read about him in the newspaper. You may trust a babysitter based on the word of a friend. Of course, advertisers know the power of a good recommendation, and they will spend great sums of money to hire a well-known individual to endorse their product in order to create an attitude of faith in your heart. To what end? So you will act on that attitude and buy what they're selling.

Reflect: *This is how faith works. It is the same with the kingdom of God; faith comes to us as a result of hearing the truth about that kingdom. As Paul put it, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17 NASB). In summary, you cannot live without faith. Faith is tied to the future and has the elements of desire and vision as part of it.*

(Q) How has your vision grown based on your personal interaction with ultimate reality, namely, our Trinitarian God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

(Q) In your life, what new attitudes and actions have begun to emerge on the basis of a properly aligned vision to God and His kingdom?