

Faith & Doubt

“The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves and wiser people so full of doubts.” Bertrand Russell

It is ironic to hear such spiritual wisdom from the pen of a world-famous Atheist. All my life, I could not understand why God hides from us and offers us only glimpses of spiritual truth, and then only through the eyes of faith. Jesus said that being born of God is like feeling the wind. You experience its affects but you can't see it. The Apostle Paul continually emphasized the need for faith in order to open the door to a meaningful relationship with God and a successful life.

Why the need for faith? Because, I believe, God does not want us to know for sure. If God wanted us all to be theologically correct and know all the answers with absolute certainty, then that is exactly what would happen. But it didn't happen. What actually happened is that we were thrust into a physical existence full of doubts, uncertainty, pain, suffering, and death. True, there is also the potential for learning, discovery, and much joy and happiness. But without the doubts, uncertainty, suffering and death, the learning, discovery, joy and happiness would not be possible. Without the negatives, the positives could not exist. Light has no meaning without darkness, joy has no meaning unless contrasted with sadness. Success is not possible if failure is not also an option. Bravery is not possible in the absence of danger. Sacrifice is not possible where no sacrifice is required. Love is most appreciated when it is most needed. Life cannot be fully appreciated in the absence of death. The list goes on and on.

The most important lessons in life cannot be learned in the absence of doubt and uncertainty. The Bible does not teach us that we are saved by faith without doubt. By definition, faith presupposes the existence of doubt. Without doubt there would be no need for faith. The exercise of faith involves moving ahead in the face of doubt.