

Misplaced faith can lead to great uncertainty.

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1

A case in point was my misplaced faith in evangelical Christianity, which resulted in total frustration and uncertainty.

Over time, I was able to replace faith IN Christ with the faith OF Christ, and most my doubts and fears vanished. I rejected a religion that was mostly “about” Jesus and adopted the religion “of” Jesus. I replaced a reverence for the Bible with a reverence for the ability of God to accomplish His purposes using imperfect vessels such as the Bible and sinners like me.

When I was young, I was told that the Bible was literally true and inerrant. If you can’t rely on all of what it says, then you can’t rely on any of it. Either it was completely true, or none of it could be relied upon. Unless you believed both the “good stuff” and the “bad stuff” in the Bible, you would not be going to Heaven when you die. I desperately wanted to believe the “good stuff,” that God is love and there would be a place for me in Heaven when I die, but the “bad stuff” got in the way and prevented me from exercising unwavering faith in the Christian gospel.

It seemed to me that the Bible was full of scientific, historical, and theological inaccuracies and contradictions. I was told, however, that reason was the enemy of faith and that *“the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”* (I Cor. 1:18) If science seemed to conflict with a passage of Scripture, then the science was wrong, not the Bible. If the Bible seemed to contradict itself with regard to a historical event, there must be something wrong with the translation or our understanding of the event. If two writers of the Bible seemed to contradict one another theologically, then the fault was not with their theology, but instead with our interpretation of it. If God is depicted in the Bible as loving, kind and forgiving, and at the same time unimaginably harsh, cruel and unforgiving, both views of God must be true. In order to exercise complete faith in God, I was admonished to *“trust in the LORD with all my heart and lean not on my own understanding.”* In other words, I was expected to throw my brains out the window and put my faith in a system of thought that was contradictory to science, reason and logic.

Rather than rejecting Christianity, however, I sought to instead apply reason, logic and good science to my interpretation and understanding of the Christian Scriptures. I also studied other sources of truth, such as other religious thought systems, philosophy, and actual human experience. The religion of Jesus harmonizes very nicely with all of those extra-biblical sources of truth. As a result of employing intellectual honesty in my search for truth, my faith in God and the core teachings of Jesus is now very strong. I still don’t have all the answers, but the answers I have found are totally believable.

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