

Living by Faith vs. Living by Science

Introduction. In one of the preeminent passages in the Old Testament, the prophet Habakkuk said, “The just shall live by faith” (2:4). This statement is repeated in the New Testament (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11). Paul furthermore added a similar principle when he wrote, “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7).

A very common idea that’s espoused is, “Religious people do everything by faith; science deals with cold, hard facts.” But let’s face it, the simple truth is everyone on the planet lives by faith, and I want to show you why that’s extremely relevant.

I. Life Is Faith for Everyone

- A. We wake up in the morning without a thought as to whether the air in the room will be breathable and the oxygen in the air will be sufficient for everyone on the planet.
- B. Without a conscious effort and no hesitation or doubt, we inhale and begin to stir and head to the kitchen, where we turn on the faucet. We’ve never been to the water filtration plant and have no knowledge of the steps unseen people there take to purify the water, making it safe for us to bathe in and to drink. We use it by faith.
- C. We open the pantry and refrigerator and take out foods for breakfast. The strawberries are from California, the blueberries from Chile, and the milk from a dairy in another state. The cereal was produced in Battle Creek, Michigan, and the coffee originated in South America. Will you be poisoned today? It’s happened. You weren’t alongside the inspectors of those berries or the FDA people overseeing those plants or the agricultural people checking out the coffee beans at the port. However, you give this no thought as you scroll your phone and eat your cereal. By faith.
- D. We could bring up driving on the highways, going to the doctor or a hospital, going to a restaurant, sending your kids to school, using modern transportation, and police and fire departments. Not one person in a thousand checks out these things. We live by faith. You live by faith. You have incredible, admirable faith, my friend.

II. 4 Clarifying Questions

- A. There are questions that should be asked and issues that need clarifying.
 - 1. We live by faith, but faith in whom?
 - a) No one has earned our faith and trust like the Lord Jesus Christ. We can trust the One who died for us. And we can trust what He says about heaven and hell, the devil and the heavenly Father, life and death, etc. because of His very reliable credentials.
 - b) It was to this issue Jesus was speaking when He said to Nicodemus, “No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven” (John 3:13).

- c) You're going to encounter a lot of people who simply have made up their minds not to believe in the Bible; therefore, no amount of evidence will ever be acceptable to them (cp. Luke 16:31).
- 2. Is our faith well-founded or are we giving blind confidence to someone or something?
- 3. Why do we do a thousand things by faith in people we don't know, then look suspiciously at the Bible which calls on us to place our faith (or confidence) in a holy and loving God?
- 4. Where did the idea originate that scientists deal only with cold, hard facts?
 - a) No one lives with nothing but cold, hard facts. Science is a process of inquiry that involves testing hypotheses, gathering evidence, and building theories, which means there's always a degree of uncertainty and room for revision, making it more nuanced than simply presenting hard facts.
 - b) While certain observations in science are considered "facts" because they've been repeatedly confirmed, even these can be subject to further refinement or reevaluation as new evidence emerges.
- B. Those who use the excuse that "I don't do anything by faith" should open their hearts. They do a thousand things a day by faith. So this excuse holds no water. But we need to dig deeper into why this is so relevant.

III. Science Doesn't Have to Be Anti-Bible

- A. If you want to learn about someone, you study that person's life and what they create (Romans 1:20). God's creation complements His nature. And studying God's creation gives us a deeper understanding of who He is.
- B. Believe it or not, science and the gospel complement each other quite well — it all depends on what your worldview is.
 - 1. While you might be wanting a "smoking gun" proof of God's existence, you won't find that one irrefutable proof because God isn't visible in plain sight (Exodus 33:20).
 - 2. Instead, we see hints of His existence everywhere. They're like fingerprints of a Designer. And these fingerprints can give us confidence that while we can't see Him, He's there and He created the Universe (Acts 17:24-29; Hebrews 11:1; cp. 10:22, we can have "full assurance of faith").
 - 3. To this end, science can actually help instead of be an adversary. Consider these four benefits of science:
 - a) Studying science helps me live in peace with the unknown.
 - (1) Science is about speculating on the unknown, then testing it to see if our speculations were right or wrong, or still unknown. Typically, once we find the answer, it produces an entirely new set of questions.
 - (2) The more I study science, the more questions I have, and the more I realize I don't know how the world works. Being able to say, "I don't know" is freeing — and it produces the all-important humility,
 - b) Studying science makes God bigger.
 - (1) As a child, I realized God made the little world with plants and animals and rocks. As I got older, I realized God made the great big Universe with stars and atoms and photosynthesis.

- (2) My understanding of God's creation got bigger, which meant God had to get bigger. The more we learn, the bigger God has to get. If He created all of it, he has to be bigger and smarter than all of it. Psalm 104:1-35 lays this out beautifully.
- c) Science brings back the awe of God.
 - (1) We live in awe from studying everything humans have the capacity to understand, and yet still falling woefully short from fully grasping all that God has done — and will do.
 - (2) Psalm 65:8 says it best: "They who dwell at the ends of the earth stand in awe of Your signs" (NASB). It's hard to appreciate those wonders if we think we have all the answers.
- d) Science makes God's love bigger.
 - (1) God tells us that we're His most important creation and His greatest love. That's a happy thought to a child who lives in a small world.
 - (2) It becomes more difficult to accept as we become adults and see how awful the world is. But when we study science — and see how vast and complicated God's creation gets — then the love He has for us in the midst of this vast creation defies human understanding.
- C. I can't reconcile every issue that appears to pit science against the Bible.
 - 1. I personally can't give a deep explanation of the cosmological argument for God. I can't answer every question that may come up in Genesis 1-11. I can't deal with every objection against the historicity of the gospels.
 - 2. But I understand that the Bible reveals a worldview that can be reconciled with our scientific discoveries, even though sometimes what we know about God doesn't align with what we know about the Universe.
 - 3. God doesn't lie (Romans 3:4; Titus 1:2), and He knows the truth about all of it. It's His invitation for us to keep looking, keep trying. I know that the majority of the world won't agree, but I know my Savior does (Psalm 19:1-6).
- D. God's children base their lives on a biblical worldview — and rightfully so. When they join with local congregations, the sermons preached, the meetings held, and the classes taught are built and based on these Bible precepts.
 - 1. We do this because of our long-standing beliefs and the Bible's ability to show that it's from God (1 Corinthians 2:16; Ephesians 3:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - 2. The biblical worldview on a number of topics is easy to determine:
 - a) God (Exodus 34:6-7; Isaiah 57:15).
 - b) Creation (Genesis 1:1; Acts 14:15).
 - c) Sin (Hebrews 10:26; 1 John 3:4).
 - d) Salvation (Luke 19:10; Galatians 1:4).
 - e) Biblical authority (Matthew 21:23; John 13:34-35).
 - f) Life's purpose (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Ephesians 2:10).
 - g) Faith (John 1:12; Hebrews 11:1, 6).
 - h) Family life (Ephesians 5:22-6:4).
 - i) Morality (Galatians 5:19-21; Titus 2:12).
 - j) Relationships (Proverbs 5:18-19; Titus 2:4-5).
 - k) Eternity (Romans 6:23; 1 John 5:11; Revelation 1:18).

3. If you're unsure about any of this or anything else not listed here, God's Word will point you in the right direction because it contains "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3).

Conclusion. This final point is very important, and I've put it at the end for that reason. People disbelieve in God even though He's provided evidence. Why? Because they "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:18).

People disbelieve in God, Jesus, and the Bible because they've made up their minds to not believe. And they do that because to admit that these three exist and have power of mankind would require dramatic lifestyle changes, or it would go against their present belief systems — and they're unwilling to do that. Truth matters less to them than their own pleasures and beliefs. And that's the cold, hard fact of the matter.

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