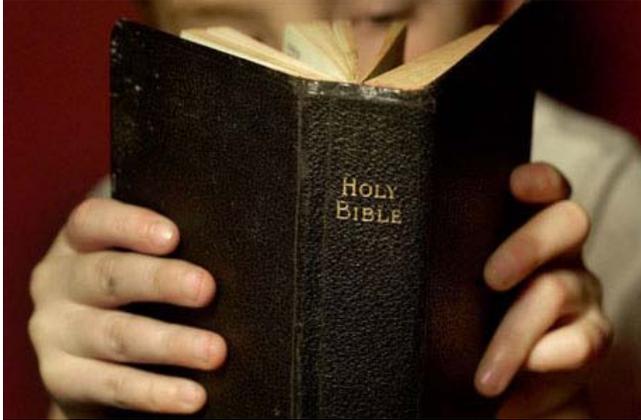


Christian Faith – Fact or Fantasy

by Dr Bruce Woolard



The other day someone said to me that too much of Christianity seems to be wishful thinking. How real is your faith? Many people think that the concept of salvation is too fantastic to be real. Fantasy seems to accompany much of the talk

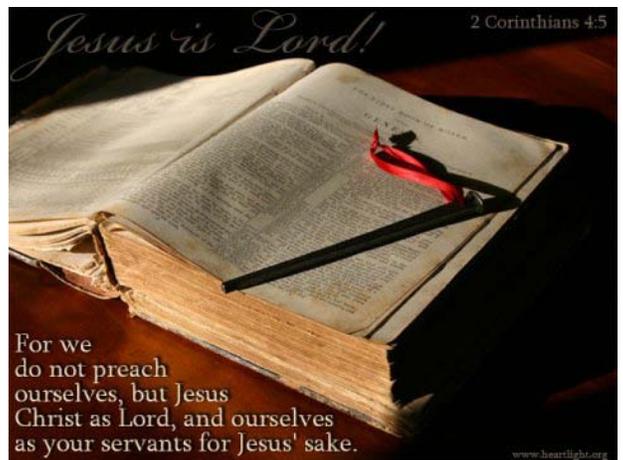
of modern day Christians. In many cases they deny reality and seem to imagine that God is speaking to them. Hearing the voice of God is part and parcel of the conversation that many modern believers seem to employ.

It is important to know why we believe and what we believe. The vast majority of people travel on the broad road that leads to eternal destruction (Matthew 7:13). However, far too many confessing believers seem to live in a “make believe” world or fantasy. Sceptics have a field day with the diverse brands of Christian views. Ritualistic faith, although very meaningful to the religiously devout, seems to be a senseless exercise to the cynic. Lifeless orthodoxy is off-putting to outsiders, on the other hand fanatical Christians who purport to hear God’s voice speaking to them become extremely obnoxious. Little wonder that people of the world find our faith so unattractive. Jesus said “If I be lifted up I will draw all men to myself” John 12:32. In the words of a Buddhist monk “If it were not for the Christians I’d be a Christian”. This man had no difficulty with believing in the goodness of Christ, but he had every reason to doubt Christianity because the followers of the faith contradicted the Christian lifestyle and doctrine.

In order to be an effective witness for Christ we need to understand the power of the Gospel in our own lives. If it changes who you are then there is no doubt you will share it with enthusiasm when communicating with others. Modern church leaders have used secular marketing tactics to draw people to the church. In other words they offer a church programme of entertainment value hoping that this would ignite an interest in church activity. This may have its benefits, in terms of filling pews, but its only the Gospel that can change the heart of man. The social dynamic within church circles seems to be the glue that keeps people together, therefore social activity promoted by the modern day church and friendships are popularised. Most churches recognise “the people friendly approach” and promote programmes designed to keep their people happy and entertained.

“Feel Good Religion” is extremely popular and the church has become no different to a social gathering or sports club facility. By adding Jesus or God to our conversation does not make the church what God intended it to be. With all the confusion how can we know, for certain, that our faith is real? How can we negate the fickle, superficial patterns that are so prevalent?

It is a historical fact that Jesus lived. It is a Biblical fact that He died and rose again. It should be a personal fact that faith in Christ transforms our lives as believers. The Bible says in Romans 8:16 “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God”. There are researchers who suggest that our brains have two hemispheres. We are led to believe that each hemisphere functions slightly differently from the other.



LEFT BRAIN	RIGHT BRAIN
Reason	Intuition
Cognitive	Subjective
Task orientated	Relationship orientated
Verbal	Visual
Facts	Feelings
Language	Arts
Maths	Music
Linear	Spatial

When God works through the church, He doesn't bypass our minds. And neither does He bypass one hemisphere for the sake of the other. We only have one brain and one mind. We have a whole-hemisphere. Without Christ, cognitive people are "always learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2Timothy 3:7). With-out Christ, intuitive people are "led on by various impulses" into cults, mysticism or secularism (2 Timothy 3:6). Neither the rationalist nor the mystic will ever come to Christ through human reason or intuition. Jesus said:

No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day (John 6:44). When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He (John 8:28)."

Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God. He is the Truth. He draws both the rationalist and the mystic to Himself when neither leans on their own understanding or feelings. We receive Christ by faith, we are transferred out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. Cognitive orientated Christians strive to be right and search for wisdom and knowledge. The intuitive-orientated Christians are looking for experience and power and want to express themselves with zeal. When fact orientated people allow Truth to become real and feeling orientated people start searching for biblical truth, we will probably strike the balance that our churches need.

IN CHRIST YOU ARE:

the salt of the earth	Matthew 5:13
the light of the world	Matthew 5:14
a child of God	Romans 8:14-16 & John 1:12
the temple of God	1 Corinthians 3:16
a member of Christ body	1 Corinthians 12:37
a servant of reconciliation.	2 Corinthians 5:18
a new creation	2 Corinthians 5:17
a co-worker	2 Corinthians 6:1
a saint (set apart to serve God)	Ephesians 1:1
seated with Christ	Ephesians 2:6
sealed by the Holy Spirit	Ephesians 1:13
bought with a price	1 Corinthians 6:20
redeemed and forgiven	Colossians 1:14.
complete and whole in Christ	Colossians 2:10
under no condemnation	Romans 8:1
a citizen of heaven	Philippians 3:250