

What is Faith?

Faith is a huge subject that can't be covered in a few sentences. It raises some big questions, offers some big answers but can sometimes throw up issues that seem beyond resolution.

When you have faith it can all seem so simple and straightforward but when you don't the questions can seem endless and the issues impenetrable. Of course even when people have faith there are questions but somehow faith imbues us with patience and trust and this seems to help us deal with the questions more equitably.

A friend of mine suggested that 'the answer' to what seemed to him impenetrable questions was to get people from different faiths together and talk it through until a consensus is reached. Life doesn't work like that and maybe it is just as well. When a consensus is sought you end with accommodation and compromise not the truth and truth is not accommodating it is stubbornly absolute.

Of course some people simply walk away and that is tragic because you can never tackle a bigger issue or, in tackling it, have a greater adventure or gain a greater reward.

We are always happy to discuss faith but there is one thing about our faith that we are very excited about in this respect. We believe that somewhere in the course of discussion and sharing something new and wonderful can happen to the true seeker. They can come to know with a perception they had previously not thought possible the truth that motivates faith.

They will see in a way that they might previously have thought incredible. Talk informs and moves along inquiry but God the Holy Spirit "leads into all truth." This experience does not bypass discussion and inquiry but it somehow transcends them.

Faith, then, is not simply academic, but nor is it simply an indefinable supernatural experience. There is a factual basis for what we believe and there is a supernatural life that transcends the facts and draws us to know in a way that mere fact can never know.

Finally, to a Christian, faith is a verb and not a noun. It is more than just saying you think something is true, it is an implicit trust first and foremost in a person, Jesus. We talk about exercising faith, applying our faith, and working out our faith in our lives. Faith makes a difference; indeed faith makes all the difference.