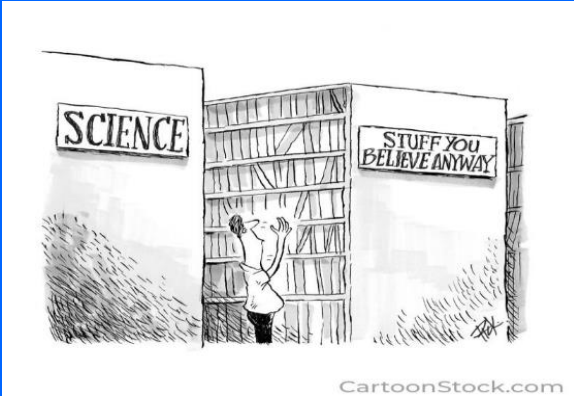


Faith and Evidence



Some people have the following attitude: science gives us facts while faith believes in God without any evidence. Yet, on this blog, I contend that scientific data can provide evidence for the existence of God (especially the Christian God of the Bible).

Many people don't need objective evidence to come to Jesus. However, for others, like me, evidence holds importance. To me, evidence provides a strong basis to believe in the Christian God of the Bible. Still, you

may be thinking that you want proof. I have had this thought myself.

As a college student majoring in biochemistry, I started questioning my beliefs. I wanted to believe in God as revealed in Jesus, but wanted to know for sure that this was right. I was impressed with the evidences, but that only got me part of the way. I concluded that I believed in God 90%, but wondered what to do with the other 10%. So, I decided to believe 100 % with 10% of that being faith.

This step was not based on blind faith since it was built on evidences. In addition, another factor came into play. I was putting my faith in a person. People do that all the time. I think back to last century when I made a ministry trip to Albania. Someone there wanted to send a substantial amount of money to a person in the USA for certain purposes. In those days, Albania didn't do wire transfers easily and an issue arose with using a check. Well, the Albanian person trusted a member of our USA team to deliver the money and not steal it. Why did that trust occur? Could it be proven like the Pythagorean theorem in math? Could it be shown to work in a chemistry lab? No, but faith was there.



Similarly, I know I can trust certain people with secrets. These individuals won't tell what I have asked them not to tell. How do I know? I have faith in these people.

I wasn't around when Jesus lived on the earth physically. Nonetheless, through the Bible, I developed a faith in the person of Jesus. On top of this, God can actually give faith to believe in God as revealed in Jesus. It might happen in a dramatic way. More often, though, a person will just have a sense of what she or he wants to believe. Some Bible verses that say this are:

- After Peter confesses faith in Jesus Christ, Jesus tells him that this was not revealed to him by flesh and blood, but by the Father in heaven (Matthew 16:17).
- Jesus said that nobody can come to him unless the Father draws him (John 6:44).
- The apostle Paul wrote that the Holy Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God (Romans 8:16).

- Jesus said: “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand” (John 10:27-28).

So, belief came to me through evidence + faith in the person of Jesus + an inner faith witness. However, I do understand why a person might still say: Give me more. Why can't God just give me a revelation that I can't help believing? Or, how about a miracle like those Jesus is said to have done in the Bible? I wished for this myself even after my initial faith commitment.

Someone once told me that he wanted a combination of a revelation and a miracle like the Bible describes for the Apostle Paul (Acts 9). However, consider two points about Paul's experience. One, he already believed in the right God (though Paul believed wrong things about that God). Two, if you want Paul's experience, be careful what you wish for. Read the Bible book of Second Corinthians to think about all Paul went through after his dramatic calling.

God can give revelations and miracles to nonbelievers. However, this does not seem to be the usual pattern. One reason is that it can force belief without a heart attitude that wants a relationship with God. In fact, sometimes these experiences can harden a person further. John 12:27-30 describes a group hearing God's voice from Heaven but writing it off as just thunder. I talk more about these issues on this site's writing on miracles. I will also hit this area in an article to come on God's hiddenness.

It can also be noted that a strong relationship with God may come easier when a person exercises faith without the miraculous. Jesus told Doubting Thomas that he would have been more blessed if he had believed without seeing the latest miracle (John 20:24-29).

No matter how faith develops, it can open up a deeper relationship with God (see the section on how to become a born again Christian).

Postscript. After someone comes to God in faith, God will often give subjective experiences that confirm faith. These can be dramatic or simple (like changing one's attitudes). I will write more on experiences in another site section. These post-faith experiences are called rewards in Hebrews 11:6: “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”