

FAITH.

Many people journey through life taking faith for granted. Knowing that one day follows another, that as the sun sets in the west at night, so the next morning it will rise in the east. The little lad on seeing dark blotches on the bright face of the moon, rushes in to his parents full of questions about what he has discovered. Not so very long ago the stock answer was usually, "Why that's the man in the moon, if you look carefully you'll see his face!" For a little while that answer satisfies. But not for long. Not even looking at the grinning faces of the moon printed on our calendars depicting the various phases of wax and wane during the month will long delude the child as to the real possibility of a man being 'way up there. In our day as soon as the child can read understandingly he will soon discover that those dark blotches on the face of the moon is no man but mountain ranges. He will also quickly learn that there is every possibility of a real man or men being up there before he is very much older. But for a little while the old answer satisfies him. He has faith that what he has been told is right and his imagination carries him from there. He sees what looks like a face and it is not hard for him to imagine a big body behind that face but hidden from his view. In a few days his active mind will turn to something else and gradually the man in the moon gives way to some other curiosity.

What is mind? What is imagination? What is faith? We wonder as children. We play in dream worlds often of our own making. We are curious about everything under the sun. We day dream. We imagine. We see cities in floating clouds, we see ships, We see animals, we send ourselves up there and sit on the edge of a cloud, our feet dangling over and always our imagination

leads us on. But we know somewhere deep within that these thoughts are only imagination, "pretend thoughts that pass away the time, that interest and make us wonder for the moment. We connect it with nothing real. It does bring a certain amount of pleasure albeit with a hint of half-satisfaction attached. It adds nothing to our faith, only that we have been dreaming other than what we have been told, and, for the time being accepted as fact. We have been experimenting in journeying for ourselves and now it is time to do something about the physical hunger within. Here is where faith enters. We know that mother will have a meal ready for us and our only worry now is to be there on time, with a reasonable explanation of where we were and what we were doing. If we were to tell our parents the truth, that we were sitting 'way up on the edge of a cloud with our feet dangling down, or that we were playing hide and seek round the man in the moon or that we were running round the sun and found it too hot, more likely than not we would be told that we were crazy, "Now go wash your hands and face, no more of that foolishness, come and sit down and eat up your meal !" So we sit down not even thinking about being foolish but that word crazy sticks in our mind. We saw a real crazy man once and it wasn't nice and we sure don't want to be like him. So although we dream now and then it is with a lurking fear that there might be a little truth in that crazy business. So we use our imaginations to have a good answer ready as to our previous whereabouts and activities and tuck into our meal, trusting that the half-truth will get us by parental sarcasm.

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We possess a certain amount of faith when we are very small. As babies we are soon on to the idea that a certain amount of crying will bring attention, and continued crying in another key will bring something to eat. Those two things being our immediate necessities we are content for the time being. Thus at a very early age we have faith that we can gain attention. As we grow older we find that there are other lessons to learn that require faith on our part and faith on the part of those who teach and guide us. We start by finding out that our parents and teachers have certain set rules that they wish us to abide by. We have faith from previous experience that certain results will happen to us if we do not do as we are told. However, being young and resilient we very quickly find out that with a bit of perseverance on our part, parental diligence can be worn down to the point where repetition takes the place of actual physical projection of some threat, and the old adage that "sticks and stones will break some bones but names will never hurt us" becomes a matter of general acceptance among families. Thus the faith we early learned about adults suffers a change and we as children find out that dad, mother and teacher do not carry out all they say. Our faith in them as directors and protectors and advisors diminishes rapidly in direct ratio to the number of times we are told not to do this or that or I'll do this to you, and we do it and they don't.

As the years pass we find that with a bit of bluffing we can get by most uncomfortable and difficult experiences and faith in our own ability to sidestep and compromise deepens. But it is at best a rather nebulous faith in that we are never quite sure whether or not we can depend on it to carry us through some new experience..