

Faith vs Belief

by Jacques Ellul

Faith is a personal relationship with God that leads to individualization, doubt, and questioning, while belief is a system of explanations that can lead to fundamentalism and intolerance.

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, Romans 10:17, 1 Corinthians 13:2, Hebrews 11:1, James 1:22

Topics: "Faith And Doubt", "Personal Relationship"

Description

Jacques Ellul emphasizes the distinction between belief and faith, highlighting how belief seeks to explain and create consensus through shared ideas and rituals, while faith focuses on listening to God's questions and nurturing a personal relationship with Him. Belief tends to bring people together in institutional structures, fostering rigidity and intolerance, while faith encourages individuality and uniqueness, challenging certitudes and societal norms. Faith acknowledges doubt and tests every aspect of life, guiding individuals to question human activities and avoid attaching ultimate significance to them.

Transcript

Belief provides answers to people's questions, so as to find assurance and provide a solution; so as to fashion for themselves a system of beliefs. Faith is not to supply us with explanation, but to get us to listen to God's questions. Belief talks and talks, it wallows in words, it takes the initiative to explain. Faith listens patiently. Belief brings people together, joined in the same institutional current, oriented toward the same object of belief, sharing the same ideas, following the same rituals, enrolled in the same organization, speaking the same language. It has the social benefit of consensus and identification. Faith individualizes.

It has to do with a personal relationship with God in which God confers each with unique identity.

Faith separates people and makes them unique, set apart for what God wants to do. Belief is antithetical to doubt. It is the basis of fundamentalism; people unbending in their convictions, intolerant of any deviation. In their articulation of belief they press rigor and absolutism to their limits. Belief is rapidly transformed into passwords, rites, orthodoxy. Faith recognizes doubt. Faith puts to the test every element of my life and society. It leads me to question all my certitudes, all my moralities, beliefs, and policies. It forbids me to attach ultimate significance to any expression of human activity."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jacques-ellul/faith-vs-belief/>

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