What is Faith?

You Are Unique

by Ernest O'Neill Program 38

Particularly, what is faith in God? What we are talking about these days is that on the basis of the circumstantial evidence of our existence, of our ordered and carefully designed world, things of our personality and our sense of moral obligation, and on the basis of empirical evidence, and the historical Person of Jesus of Nazareth, it is very reasonable, very reasonable, to believe that there is a God and that He is actually the Father of Jesus Christ. He's that unique individual that was far more than a human being, that lived in the first century of our era.

What we have been sharing, of course, is that if you do believe that it's reasonable to put faith in that, very important implications follow for your life. Because Jesus said among other things that you are unique. There's nobody like you in the whole world. There never has been anyone like you in the whole world and there never will be anyone like you.

In fact, His Father, the God of the universe, knows you by name and has actually counted the hairs of your head. Jesus said, He knows why He has put you here on earth and that you were placed here to fulfill a certain purpose--bringing some part of the world into greater order under God's will. That is something nobody else can do. It's something to bring this world into order under the Creator's will, only something you can do. Nobody else can do it. If you don't do it, it will be left undone and it doesn't matter if you're a plumber or a secretary or whether you wash floors, or dig holes, sweep roads or whether you dig ditches, or work on computers. It does not matter whether you are the

president of one of the companies of 500. It does not matter if you're the most humble employee in your business. God has put you here to do something in His world that only you can do. That's what Jesus of Nazareth said. That's what the man said for whose existence we have better historical evidence than for any other historic person that existed in our world. He said "You're unique".

Of course, that makes a vast difference about your whole attitude to your life. Of course, many of us who are practical atheists believe, "Ah, there's no God in the world. I am just here, one of four billion people in this world. We are all trying to make our way here and honestly, I don't know how to keep alive, if four billion are doing their best and grabbing for what natural resources there are in the world. They're grabbing for their bit to try to get shelter over their heads to keep the rain off, to try to get clothes to keep them warm, to try to get money that will enable them to buy what will keep them alive, and food. They're trying to do that and I am trying to do the same. There are four billion of us trying to scramble at once."

"To tell you the truth it makes for a very uneasy kind of life. That's why my life's filled with constant worry. That's why I pop pills and pop tranquillizers and spend half the time on alcohol. We're all out there trying to make enough commission, trying to make enough sales, trying to get enough money to protect ourselves and our wives and children from the next recession. Trying to save a little so we will be able to live in some peaceful retirement, so we will be able to due and be buried respectfully." "It's the way I am living. No wonder I am a nervous wreck. Everybody's doing this. It's my faith. It's faith in the fact that there's nobody to look after me but myself. I'd better get about my business and get up out of bed every day and try to make a dollar a day if I possibly can."

Well, it's miserable, isn't it? No wonder we are churned up with headaches. No wonder the poet Auden said that, "Life leaks away, in headaches and worry. Vaguely life leaks away?" And for many of us, that's the way it goes. It does just leak away in headaches and worry.

Because our faith... What us our faith? It's faith in ourselves. We find, of course, we are such unreliable people to have faith in, it worries us all the more and when the recession comes along and takes our job right out from under us, we begin to worry. Are we not just fiddlers on the roof, on a very precarious spot trying to make it, if we can?

Then, of course, we look at people like Howard Hughes who made more than we will ever see. He died in worry and anxiety with Kleenex papers stuck to his fingers, worried about whether the bug that got his father, would get hum. That worries us all the more. We think, "Boy, if he can't fund security how can we ever find security?"

Of course, Jesus says to us, "You're dumb, that's not what it's like at all. My Father is the God of the universe. He created this whole place. For goodness’s sake, look unto My life. Look unto the historical evidence for My existence. Start examining the amazing order of the petals of a daffodil. Start looking at the beautiful wonder of the heavens and waken up and realize thus did not all come about by chance. You were made by My Father. He put you here to do a job nobody else can do. He promised He will take care of you. Sure, you have to do your work. You have to do what He's put you here to do, but it's not your boss who gives you money. It's He that gives you the money!

"Don't you see that? You see how often you have been at a loss as to where to fund the next dollar and somehow or other the month's bulls have been paid. Don't you see it proves these

things don't come about by the salaries; salaries My Father often uses to pay you. But often He seems to bring money from nowhere. You know that. Often you found you were coming to the end of the month and somehow it worked out and you got just enough."

"Don't you see My Father us in charge, actually giving you work to do here in thus world? Your job us to concentrate on doing that well and to trust Hum. If you do that work well and trust hum.