



AREOPAGUS PROCLAMATION

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In my time of initial searching, the reliability of the Bible in the face of its detractors was very important to me. I concluded that the Bible interpreted the detractors better than they interpreted it.

Again, in many years of living, counseling, teaching and studying, I am more convinced than ever that the only way to understand us is as fallen images of God. This is not just an “adequate explanation”—it is an understanding that illuminates all human activity from our nobility and heroism to our selfishness and cruelty.

It also seemed to me that the human quest for life’s meaning would not go away, despite the denial and ridicule heaped on those who seriously seek it. For example, everyone has moral feelings which they need to believe are meaningful. But moral feelings are meaningful only if they correspond to actual moral obligations. Otherwise they are merely preferences or opinions which do not connect to anything beyond our own consciousness. Where could actual moral obligations come from? I found attempts to answer this question — without appeal to a self-revealing, personal God — inadequate, if not evasive and dishonest. In an accidental world, our moral feelings float free without authority, disconnected from any actual obligation, moral order or accountability. By contrast, the character of the God of the Bible is the anchor of all moral obligation, the source of moral meaning. In my 1960’s search in this and many other areas, I began to realize that it was a greater “credibility stretch” for me to affirm any of the non-Christian options than to embrace faith in Christ. The other options strained my sense of plausibility more than the world view of the Bible itself, which gained plausibility not only through its understanding of humanity but because of its understanding of me personally.

Then, in my years of living as a Christian, there have been thousands of times when I have witnessed God’s faithfulness in guidance and prayer and his amazing work in peoples’ lives. I have been able to say again and again, “I have believed and now I know that Jesus is the Holy One of God.”

What Most Convinces Me That Christianity Is True?

by Richard B. Keyes

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After a session of Jesus’ hard teaching, many “disciples” left him. He then asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” Simon Peter answered him, ‘Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.’” (John 6:67-69)

Peter was not making some sort of disjunction between “believing” and “knowing,” but seemed to be saying: “We believed in the beginning and now that belief has been confirmed in what we know.” There was continuity between their *initial belief* and what they *now knew*.

That is what I have experienced, growing up outside the Church, coming to believe in Christ after a long post-university struggle in the mid 1960s and then spending forty-five years in Christian ministry with **L’Abri Fellowship**.

I still believe that but with a lot more to go on. I rely less on having a ready-made answer to every new objection and more on the covenant structure of the Bible as a whole, telling one amazing story by many authors writing during a span of over 1,000 years.



Dominant in my search for truth was the desire to understand human nature and human purpose. Who are we and did we get here by a long series of accidents without meaning? I believed that a reliable way to start was to assume a naturalistic explanation of all life forms. I would then need some exceptional or special reasons to go “beyond” naturalism; for example, to believe in a God that I could not see. But then I realized that none of the claims that I had heard had “self-evident” or “taken for granted” status. All the answers to the big questions, naturalism included, were faith-held assertions, no one of them having more or less burden of proof than another. I became convinced that the Christian faith explained human nature in a way that nothing else could – each person as a “glorious ruin.” We are glorious images of God who have been substantially marred and dis-oriented through sin. I could find many cynics who could see only the ruin and many sentimentalists who could see only the glory, but only the Christian could account for both.

More Evidence in Defense and Confirmation of the Christian Faith