

FAITH AND REASON **(Acts 17:11)**

I. Verses that teach use of reason.

- A. God does not ask us to believe something for which there is no evidence: never has and never will.
- B. For instance, notice Romans 1:18-20.
 - 1. God condemned the Gentile world for not believing the evidence that He had given them.
 - 2. Notice verse 19.
 - 3. What God made could be understood to prove that He existed.
 - 4. Their denial of the use of reason left them no excuse.
- C. Paul told the Thessalonians to “prove all things” (1 Thessalonians 5:21).
 - 1. The word “prove” means “put to the test.”
 - 2. They were to use their minds to see what was good and what was not good.
 - 3. There was no mention of believing something beyond evidence.
- D. God expects us to make a logical defense of what we believe (1 Peter 3:15).
 - 1. Peter was writing to people who were going to face persecution.
 - 2. He told them to be ready to give a defense for their holding to God despite pressure to deny Him.
 - 3. Saying “I can’t prove God exists but there is pretty good evidence for it” wouldn’t cut it in carrying out this verse.
 - 4. The word “reason” carries the idea of giving a rational account of why something is believed.
 - 5. It is our responsibility to give a well thought defense of what we believe and why others should believe it as well.
- E. The Old Testament teaches this as well (Isaiah 41:21).
 - 1. Isaiah is writing about idols and how they can do nothing.
 - 2. He says to bring the evidence for idols being capable of anything.
 - 3. One writer said, “This passage makes clear that such matters as whether God exists at all, what such a God is like and just Who He is, must be settled on the basis of evidence.”
- F. The Bible clearly teaches the use of reason and the necessity of faith and that these two are not polar opposites.

II. Examples of how faith and reason work together.

- A. The proper use of reasoning brings about faith.
- B. Woods wrote, “Reason enables one by the use of faculties divinely given- a logical and intelligent mind- to arrive at faith.”
- C. When we use reason and faith properly, they meet at the same truth.
- D. For instance, we use reason and faith in discussing origins.
 - 1. Reason dictates that there must be an adequate cause for the existence of the universe.
 - 2. It is reasonable to believe our universe that shows evidence of design had a Designer.

3. There are only two options in consideration for the order in our universe:
 - a. Order was imposed on the matter;
 - b. Order resides within matter.
 4. There is no evidence for a and much for b.
 5. We know this universe and life could not just happen.
 6. The cause is not sufficient for the effect.
 7. The universe, love, intelligent life, morality are all here and they scream for a great Cause.
 8. The effect can never be greater than the cause, therefore it is very reasonable to suggest a Great Cause.
- E. It is reasonable to believe the Bible is the inspired word of God.
1. There is great evidence both internally and externally to prove that such is the case.
 2. Historical record, archeological findings, places and events all point to the accuracy of the Bible.
 3. Internally, its accuracy of historic events and predictive prophecy and other things point to this being from God.
- F. The belief that Jesus is the Son of God is reasonable.
1. History backs this up with the empty tomb.
 2. Jesus came forth from the tomb after three days as He said He would (Matthew 16:21; 28:1-8).
 3. The Roman soldiers confirmed His resurrection by changing their story because of a bribe.
 4. There were eyewitnesses that confirmed Him having been resurrected:
 - a. The soldiers;
 - b. The women;
 - c. The disciples;
 - d. 500 brethren.
 5. There is abundant proof that is given us that Jesus was the Son of God.
 6. John wrote His gospel account to give proof of such (John 20:30-31).

Material from articles by Burt Thompson and Dick Sztanyo.