

## Facts, Faith, and Feelings

### Introduction:

1. We are living in a world which is religiously divided, a condition which is the very opposite of that for which Jesus prayed in John 17:20-21.
2. The chaotic state of division which exists in today's religious world creates confusion; yet God is "*not the author of confusion*," I Cor. 14:33.
  - a. If division causes confusion, and if God is "*not the author of confusion*," then God is not the author of division!
3. One main reason for the division, and thus the confusion, which prevails in today's religious world is caused by a failure of people to view certain things in their proper order; specifically, I am referring to three main items: Facts, Faith, and Feelings. If we get these items reversed, or in the wrong order, then confusion and error will reign supreme!

### Discussion:

#### I. Definitions:

##### A. Facts:

1. "Something known to have happened or to exist, especially something for which proof exists, or about which there is information," **Cambridge Dictionary**.
2. Two important facts:
  - a. God is, or God exists! Heb. 11:6; Gen. 1:1; Psalm 14:1; Rom. 1:20.
  - b. The Bible is the word of God, John 17:17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Tim. 3:16-17.
    - (1) The Bible is the most authenticated book in existence; it is **the** book of books!
    - (2) Prophecy and fulfillment provides definite proof of the Bible's credibility. John 13:19; 14:29.
3. Synonyms: Reality, Actuality, Certainty.

##### B. Faith:

1. Bible definition: Heb. 11:1.
2. "Strong belief or trust in someone or something." "Belief in the existence of God." **Webster**.
3. Faith is essential to pleasing God! Heb. 11:6; 2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 14:23.
4. True faith comes from the word of God. Romans 10:17; Acts 15:7.

##### C. Feelings:

1. "A physical or emotional experience or awareness." **Cambridge Dict**.
  - a. "Your feelings are your awareness of the way you should be treated, esp. when you are treated rudely."
  - b. Feelings relate to joy, sorrow, happiness, sadness, etc
2. Feelings are quite different from facts.
  - a. Facts do not change, but feelings continually change.
  - b. A change in the weather, or the barometric pressure, can affect our feelings. The state of our health or our relationship with others can result in a change of our feelings.
  - c. Jacob believed a lie, and it greatly affected his feelings. Genesis 37:31-35.

#### II. There is an Established Order Between Facts, Faith, and Feelings.

##### A. We must Start with Facts!

1. A fact is something that is true.
  - a. Two plus two equals four. You may not believe that two plus two equals four, but facts are not changed by what people do, or do not, believe
2. The most proven **Being** in the world is God. God "*is*," Heb. 11:6.
3. The most proven **Book** in the world is the Bible. Acts 1:3. It has been proven by:
  - a. Its history. People, nations, and cities mentioned in the Bible, but long forgotten by recorded history, have been confirmed by the spade of archaeologists.
  - b. Its scientific accuracy. Isa. 40:22; Job 26:7; Acts 17:26, etc.

##### B. Faith, for it to be valid, must follow an examination of the Facts.

1. Faith deals with the unseen, Heb. 11:1
2. Since the Bible has been proven to be true in matters pertaining to the seen, then it can be depended upon in matters which are unseen.
  - a. I have not seen God with the natural eye, but by faith I know He exists! Psalm 14:1; Psalm 19:1.

b. I have not seen heaven with the natural eye, but by faith I know it exists, I Peter 1:4.

c. I have not seen hell with the natural eye, but by faith I know it exists, Matt. 10:28.

C. Feelings, to be reliable, must follow Facts and Faith.

1. Consider the Jailor at Philippi, Acts 16:30-34.

2. Consider the eunuch from Ethiopia, Acts 8:30-39.

### III. But Many Distort the Relationship between Facts, Faith, and Feelings.

A. Mormons believe Joseph Smith was a true prophet, and that the Book of Mormon is from God.

1. But “*all truth*” was revealed in the first century, hundreds of years before Joseph Smith was born, John 16:12-13; 2 Peter 1:3.

a. The Bible is all we need by which to be guided religiously, 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

2. But how do they convince people to believe that Joseph Smith was a true prophet?

a. They ask you to pray that God will reveal to you that Joseph Smith was a true prophet. Cf. Jas. 1:6; Rom. 10:17.

b. Illus. “Do you believe because you feel, or do you feel because you believe?” The Bible order is that our feelings must be based upon our faith; not our faith based upon feelings. I Peter 1:8.

B. Muslims believe Mohammed was “the last great prophet” and that “God’s final revelation to man” is the Koran.

C. Others, in different religions, make basically the same mistake.

1. Illus. A person pointing to his physical heart and saying, “I would change what I feel right here for a stack of Bibles this tall.” In this case, the feelings form the basis of faith, instead of faith, based on facts. being the basis of the feelings.

2. “I feel that so long as a person is sincere he is saved.” Cf. Acts 23:1; 26:9.

D. Some Allow their Faith to become the basis for Fact.

1. “I believe that God accepts all religions.”

a. Since they “believe” it, then, to them, it must be so! Since they “believe” this to be true, then they “feel” good about their own condition, or that of others who also neglect to follow the Bible. In spite of such scriptures as: Matt.7:13-14; John 14:6; Acts 4:12, etc.

2. “I believe a person can be saved upon the basis of faith only,” so as they perceive it, it must be so, and they “feel” good about themselves even though they haven’t obeyed the gospel or been baptized for the remission of sins. In spite of such scriptures as James 2:24-26; Acts 2:38, etc.

### IV. Closing Thoughts About Faith and Feelings.

A. **Faith** must be based upon true facts.

1. This why we must be like the Bereans, Acts 17:11.

2. This is why we must obey I John 4:1 and I Thess. 5:21.

B. Feelings must not be the **basis** for our *faith*.

1. True faith is based upon true facts; facts which do not change, regardless of the times.

2. Feelings are fickle, changeable, and unreliable.

a. Many “feel” saved, when they are not; many “feel good,” even though unbeknown to them they are dying right then of cancer!

C. Feelings are often based upon relationships – both with God and man.

1. Felix felt bad because his relationship with God was not right! Acts 24:25; Acts 2:37.

2. Others feel bad because their relationship with people is not right.

a. It could be that of a husband and wife.

b. It could be that of parents and children.

c. I could be that of brothers and sisters in Christ.

D. We must learn to handle our feelings!

1. We should not “feel good” about ourselves if we have not obeyed the gospel! 2 Thess. 1:7-9.

2. We should not “feel good” about ourselves if we have neglected to resolve differences with brethren in the Lord, Matt. 18:15-17; Matt. 5:23.

3. If you are a faithful Christian, even though you may not “feel good” physically, you should be happy! Phil. 4:4; Rom. 8:18,28,37-39; 2 Tim. 4:6-8.

### Conclusion:

--Bobby Witherington, Nov. 22, 2015

