

"This hope we have as an anchor of
the soul, a hope both sure and
steadfast and one which enters
within the veil,"
Hebrews 6:19 (NASB1995)



Anchor Points

With so many reports of people losing their faith, we might wonder if there is anything to hold onto to anchor us down when we have doubts, questions, and deep concerns. We must not be dismissive of concerns, but allow the questions to be asked, never thinking that they are to be taken lightly. I have had doubts and concerns in my life, and maneuvering through them is not easy. If we have nothing to hold onto while the people who ought to be helping are not taking it seriously, then we may drift to the point of no return. There are, however, some points that can keep us anchored down in the storms of these difficulties. Here are some that have helped me:

1. The character of biblical faith needs attention. Faith is not blind acceptance with no evidence. Biblical faith builds on evidence and is willing to demonstrate a trust in the reality of what is unseen (Heb 11:1). What is unseen is no less real than what is seen. It takes an eternal perspective to see (2 Cor 4:16-18). At the same time, faith allows for questions yet does not need every question or difficulty answered. We can exercise faith while being uncertain when answers are not readily available. Faith allows us to say, "I don't know." What's at issue here is trust. Can we learn to trust God and live with unanswered questions? Remember that no worldview will remove all questions.

Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.
Jacksonville, FL 32220

Times of Worship

Sunday:

9 am - Bible Classes / 10 am - Worship / 5 pm - Worship

Wednesday:

7 pm - Bible Study/Worship

Evangelist: Devin Barber

www.mariettacoc.com

2. The nature of God helps us keep proper focus with faith. When doubts creep in, it is nearly certain that we will be diminishing God's nature. The God in whom we trust needs nothing (Acts 17:25). He has all wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and power. When we keep this before us, we can trust that He knows what He is doing and works His will in His time. If we don't have answers to some questions, we can defer to God because we can trust His knowledge, and He doesn't have to tell us everything. As a child trusts a parent, we can trust God.

3. The gospel message is paramount to keeping faith. Not only is this a story that no Jewish or Gentile community at the time plausibly would have invented, it is a story that reaches our deepest needs. Humans long for truth, love, grace, hope, goodness, and beauty. The gospel answers to all of these. The love of God is immeasurably shown; God's grace is on full display through forgiveness and reconciliation in Jesus Christ. This is a beautiful message of hope grounded in truth (John 8:32; 14:6). It reminds us that sin is real, but it need not define us. To walk away from this is to walk away from the greatest message of love and hope ever given.

4. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is key to knowing that what we do for the Lord is worthwhile (1 Cor 15:58). The historical evidence for this event is readily available, but this is more than a presentation of evidence. Jesus' resurrection answers our desire to live. When we submitted ourselves to the Lord in baptism, we mirrored His death and resurrection with a view toward our own resurrection (Rom 6:3-6). This connects us back to God's nature, for if we can trust God, then "Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?" (Acts 26:8) Once again, then, the issue boils down to our view of who God is, which is why we need to think deeply about His nature.

5. The total worldview helps us stay grounded. This is about foundations for how we think and live (cf. Matt 7:24-27). Which worldview best explains what we know to be true about ourselves, life, morality, love, compassion, consciousness, conscientiousness, rational thought, free will, justice and a host of other non-material, abstract concepts that are essential to who we are as human beings? Which worldview can adequately explain existence? The failure of the antithesis needs to be kept in mind. Can mindless, chance processes explain the complexity of the human mind and provide us with confidence that we can actually think properly? After all, if there is no God, then there was no directed purpose for the human mind; it was meant only to survive, but not to discover truth. Can purposeless mechanisms account for our desire for purpose, meaning, and believing in something bigger than ourselves? Atheism explains none of the most important features of what it means to be human, but this shouldn't surprise anyone because it is a worldview which has as its bottom line "pitiless indifference" (per atheist Richard Dawkins). It provides no hope, no grace, no purpose, and accepts morality and free will as illusions. When we reflect upon worldviews, we can acknowledge that our own worldview has questions, but consider the alternatives. Which corresponds to the reality of our humanity and guarantees that rational thought has meaning and purpose?

With Scripture as an underlying constant, there are other points that can be considered (e.g., leaning on one another), but these can serve as initial anchors that help us through difficulties of doubts and questions. What are some that have helped you in your faith?

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