

Faith and Doubt

When the questions start to whirl and the panic of unwilling atheism sets in (which it does on a fairly regular basis), I have to remind myself that my beliefs about God are not the foundation of my faith. I will not find God by thinking harder, by using the power of reason to convince myself intellectually that a particular set of beliefs are true.

But if I instead focus my energy on walking in the way of Jesus---loving my neighbor, practicing forgiveness, standing against injustice and speaking out for those who have no voice--- I wonder if I might just find myself staring God in the face.

Uncertainty is uncomfortable. I would love to have all the answers. But I think that would make me God, and I suspect I don't have the qualifications.

I think one of our biggest problems is that we are still a bit stuck with the idea of God being up there, occasionally intervening down here. Like some sort of cosmic super-genie, granting wishes from above. But the whole point of the Jesus story is that God is with us. The curtain in the temple was torn in two, and there is no longer any separation. God is not looking down on us, demanding appeasement and hurling blessings and curses from on high. According to the New Testament this God of ours is in the sweat, blood and dirt of our lives, with us in our weakness and in some mind-boggling way, suffering alongside us.

If my doubt and confusion feel like a fog, then God is in that fog, not hidden behind it. I dare to hope that I am more open to experiencing the reality of the presence of God in this moment. God in the soil, in the breeze, in laughter, in the faces of strangers I would usually avoid, and in the last places on earth I would think to look.

This may not cover all the bases for you. After all, what does? If a little encouragement would help, here's a quote from a plaque that Carl Jung had over his door and on this tombstone. *Translated:* "Called or not, God is present." So if you are experiencing doubt, come on ahead to St. James where you will be most welcome. That fog may disappear.

Believers and Doubters, please come home and join us at the "Table of the Lord".

Marti – a fellow believer and doubter