

Take-Home: Session 2, What Faith Is (and Isn't)

WHAT WE FOUND

We put a definition on trial: faith is belief without evidence. The New Testament refused it on its own pages. Luke opens his Gospel describing eyewitness sources and careful investigation, written so that we may know the truth. John says the signs were written down as grounds for belief. The Bereans checked the Scriptures daily and were called noble for it. And Abraham, the Bible's model of faith, reasoned from what he knew of God's character. Biblical faith is trust in a credible witness: trust of the same shape as the reasoned trust that carries a human life, elevated by grace and directed to God who reveals, grounded and free.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: ST. JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

St. John Henry Newman teaches, in substance, in his *Grammar of Assent* that we rightly reach certitude by the convergence of many probabilities, the way a judge weighs evidence. Faith, we might say with Newman, is not an exception to how we know; it is reasoned trust at full depth.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

St. Thomas teaches, in substance (*Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 2), that to believe is the intellect assenting to divine truth at the command of a will moved by grace: neither a feeling nor a leap in the dark.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: ST. ANSELM OF CANTERBURY

St. Anselm's program in the *Proslogion*: I believe in order to understand (*credo ut intelligam*). In our own application of his program: trust opens a kind of understanding that suspicion never reaches, the way trusting a person is the only way to know them.

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

- Pick one Gospel passage and read it the way Luke wrote: asking, who saw this, and who is staking their name on it?
- Continue the daily honest sentence to God from last week. If you skipped days, no scorekeeping; start again.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1
(RSV2CE)

BEFORE NEXT SESSION

Read Psalm 19, slowly, once. Notice how many different ways it says that something is speaking.

CATECHISM REFERENCES

CCC 150; 154 to 156; 158 to 159.