

What Is Faith?

"[Faith is] the attitude and action of confidence in, and fidelity to, certain realities as the sources of value and the objects of loyalty. . . . On the one hand it is trust in that which gives value to the self; on the other hand it is loyalty to what the self values" (H. Richard Niebuhr, *Radical Montheism and Western Culture*: 16).

"The counterpart of trust in the value-center is loyalty or fidelity. Trust is, as it were, the passive aspect of the faith relation. . . . Loyalty or faithfulness is the active side. It values the center and seeks to enhance its power and glory. It makes that center its cause for which to live and labor" (18).

"[Faith is] the dependence of a living self on centers of value whence it derives its worth and for the sake of which it lives" (21).

"[F]aith [is] dependence on a value-center and . . . loyalty to a cause" (24).

"[Faith is] faith reliance [and] faith loyalty" (33).

"[Faith is] faith assurance and faith loyalty" (35).

"[Faith is] the confidence and fidelity without which men do not live" (38).

"[Faith is] confidence in the One and . . . loyalty to the universe of being" (41).

"[Faith is] the confidence that being can be relied upon to maintain as well as give value in a universe of interdependent values" (43).

"Faith [is] human confidence in a center and conserver of value . . . and human loyalty to a cause" (64).

"[Faith is] a personal, practical trusting in, reliance on, counting upon something" (116).

"Faith is an active thing, a committing of self to something, an anticipation. It is directed toward something that is also active, that has power or is power. It is distinguished from belief both on its subjective side and with respect to that to which it refers. For belief as assent to the truth of propositions does not necessarily involve reliance in action on that which is believed, and it refers to propositions rather than, as faith does, to agencies and powers. . . . [I]t is evident, when we inquire into ourselves and into our common life, that without such active faith or such reliance and confidence on power we do not and cannot live" (117).

"[Faith is] the faith that life is worth living, or better, the reliance on certain centers of value as able to bestow significance and worth on our existence [W]e cannot live without a cause, without some object of devotion, some center of worth, something on which we rely for our meaning. In this sense all men have faith because they are men and cannot help themselves, just as they must and do have some knowledge of their world, though their knowledge be erroneous" (118).

"[T]o have faith and to have a god is one and the same thing, as it is one and the same thing to have knowledge and an object of knowledge. When we believe that life is worth living by the same act we refer to some being which makes our life worth living. We never merely believe that life is worth living, but always think of it as made worth living by something on which we rely. And this being, whatever it be, is properly termed our god" (119).

"[T]he word 'god' means the object of human faith in life's worthwhileness" (119).

"[F]aith in the last power is . . . the end of the road of faith, . . . is unassailable, and . . . when men receive it they receive a great gift" (125).