



# THE BROOKSVILLE BULLETIN

*Brooksville church of Christ*  
*604 W. Fort Dade Avenue, Brooksville, FL*

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July 10, 2022

## **Faith And Evidence** **(Shane Scott)**

Several years ago, I decided I needed a hobby. I had many interests – basketball, fantasy baseball, music – but I engaged in all of these past times with members of the church where I preached or with fellow Christians in the area.

I needed a hobby that would put me in contact with people from all walks of life. So I looked up the closest chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society, and over the last 17 years I have made a large and diverse bunch of friends.

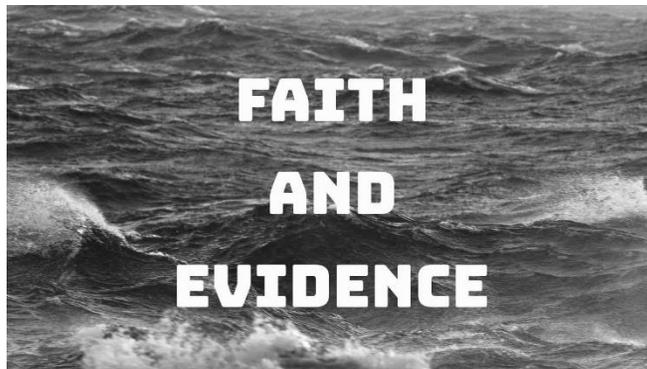
As it happens, several of my barbershop singing friends are from Sweden, and – typical of the very secular climate in Sweden – they are not believers. A few of them are quite belligerent about their atheism.

Last fall, I fell into a discussion on Facebook with one of them, a discussion I was frankly hesitant to engage in, given the nasty

reputation that debates on social media have earned. But in this case, I am glad to say that my fears were misplaced. Over the course of nearly three weeks, several atheists and agnostics in Sweden as well as in the States joined in and presented arguments against Christianity and gave me a very courteous hearing as I responded.

What actually precipitated the discussion was a post one of my atheist friends made in which he said no one believed in Christianity because of evidence but simply because it provided a hope for an afterlife. When I responded that through the centuries believers had offered many powerful rational arguments for belief in God based on evidence, he replied with this statement: “Sorry, but you just cannot argue that there is any kind of evidence whatsoever that supports Christianity. If there were, it wouldn’t be called ‘belief’”.

In his mind, Christianity is a belief based on no evidence whatsoever.





This viewpoint is based on a gross misunderstanding of what “faith” is. Christianity has never claimed that faith is “belief without evidence.” To the contrary, from the earliest days of the preaching of the apostles, great emphasis was placed on logical argumentation.

Notice these examples from Acts. “And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, ‘This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ’ (Acts 17:2-3).

“Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there.” (Acts 17:16-17).

“And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks (Acts 18:4).

Mark Twain may have thought that faith is “believing what you know ain’t so,” but that is not what the apostles believed! They used reasoning and logic to argue from the evidence found in the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah.

If someone wants to challenge whether the apostolic belief in Jesus was justified, that is fair, and Christians are eager to take up that challenge and look at the evidence. But what cannot be disputed is that the apostles claimed it was a justified belief. They didn’t simply argue on the basis of wishful thinking.

**FAITH  
HOPE  
LOVE**

It is true that at a very basic level, faith involves an intellectual commitment to believe in unseen realities. “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). We can’t see God, and we didn’t see the risen Lord. But this exhausts only the most juvenile definition of faith.

The fuller concept of biblical faith has to do with confidence and

trust. “And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

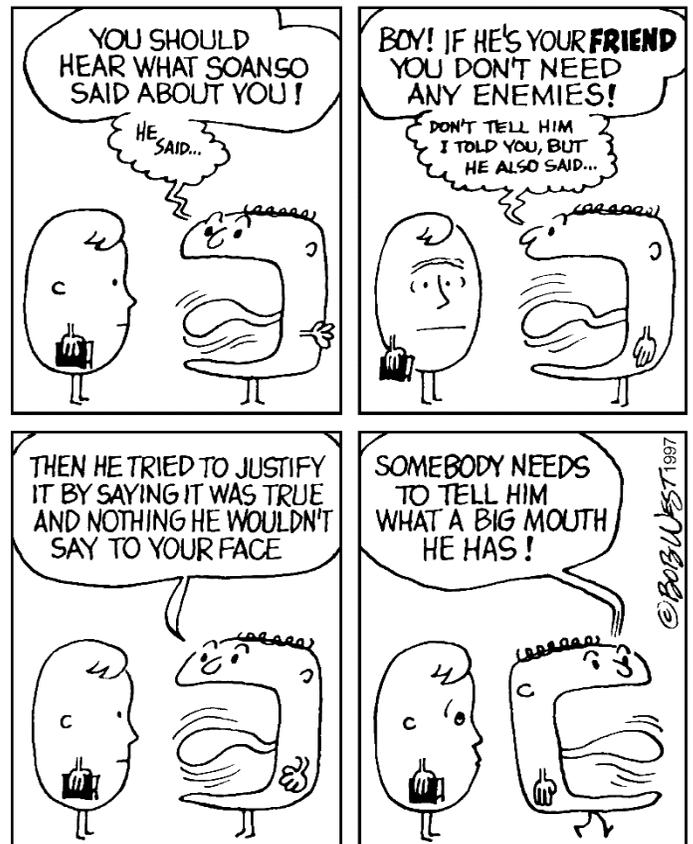
Even though we cannot see God, we believe that the evidence for His existence is overwhelming in the order of nature (as Paul argued in Acts 14:16-17). And even though we did not witness the resurrection of Jesus, we believe the testimony of the apostles has decisively demonstrated its truthfulness (as Paul claimed in 1 Corinthians 15:3-8). And because this evidence is so powerful, we are willing to place our total trust, our complete confidence, in Christ. That is what faith means to a Christian. Complete trust in Christ on the basis of evidence.

A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday, does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do. We are trying to do a futile thing if we do not know where we came from or what we have been about. (Woodrow Wilson)

- When was honey ever made by only one bee in a hive?
- Happiness is not a state to arrive at, but a manner of traveling.
- Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.

THEOPHILUS

For Your Own Good



## Living Holy Lives Even Here (Jeff Himmel)

Historically, our country has been without equal as a place where Christians can live out our faith in freedom and safety. Still, our nation has its problems — or maybe it’s better to say that our nation’s people have their problems. Many of those problems are stark reminders that every Christian, even here, must be diligent to pursue holiness and keep “unstained by the world” (James 1:27).

In a nation with as many as 17 million alcoholics, God tells us, “Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18).

In a nation where people spend more than \$500 billion

dollars a year on gambling (both legal and illegal), God calls on us to put away covetousness and to provide for ourselves and others through honest labor (Colossians 3:5; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12; Ephesians 4:28).

In a nation where 43 million people are classified as living in poverty, God calls on us to “be generous and ready to share” (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

In a nation where almost one-third of married couples divorce before their tenth anniversary, God tells us to hold marriage in high honor as a sacred, inviolable bond (Hebrews 13:4; Matthew 19:3-9).

In a nation where virtually every expression of sex outside of marriage is celebrated, God calls on us to flee from sexual immorality (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20).

In a nation that is the world’s number one producer of pornography, God calls on us to

pursue purity and self-control even in our thoughts (Matthew 5:27-28).

In a nation where the number of people who identify religiously as “none” is growing every year, God tells us to draw others to Him by letting our lights shine and being ready to explain the reason for our hope (Matthew 5:16; 1 Peter 3:15).



A little girl was walking with her father in the country. As she looked up into the star-studded sky, her eyes were filled with wonder. Turning to her father she asked, “Daddy, if the wrong side of heaven is so beautiful, what do you think the right side be like?”



### **Brooksville Church of Christ**

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#### **Times of Services**

Sunday Bible Class for all ages (10:00am)

Sunday Worship all Welcome (11:00am & 6:00pm)

Wednesday Bible Class for all ages (7:00pm)

*Supporting the GOSPEL in other places:*

✠ Jamey Hinds, Hollywood, Florida; Roy Fenner, Panama City, Florida

✠ Zeke Flores, Columbus, Texas; Philip North, Branson, Missouri

✠ The saints in Nicaragua

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