

FAITH AND REASON

Their Roles in Religious and Secular Life

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CONTENTS

Preface		ix
ONE	Initial Sketch of a Concept of Faith	1
TWO	Facets of Faith	13
THREE	Faith and Knowledge	37
FOUR	Faith and Scientific Knowledge	61
FIVE	Faith and Morality	79
SIX	Secular Forms of Faith	93
SEVEN	Crises of Faith	107
EIGHT	My Personal Journey of Faith	131
Notes		157
Works Cited		165
Index		171

ONE

INITIAL SKETCH OF A CONCEPT OF FAITH

I take reason to be deeply structured by faith and I take any faith that is not simply madness to be obliged to be articulate about itself and, so, rational in that sense.

—John D. Caputo¹

The term *faith* has many uses in our language. I can speak of having faith that my brother will pick me up each Thursday morning for our regular breakfast together. I can talk of having faith that the salad I am eating for lunch will not make me sick. I can ponder the faith it requires to drive with confidence in a blinding rain—what my dad called a “gully washer”—when the streets are slick and slippery and one can hardly see the traffic lines on their surfaces. But I want to use the word faith in a different sense from these common, everyday uses. The faith I refer to in this book is existential. By *existential* I mean that faith with this meaning underlies, shapes, and supports the distinctive quality of a person’s existence or life, its fundamental sense of purpose and direction, aim and orientation.

To speak of one’s faith in this sense is to speak of the inner core of one’s being, of one’s dispositions, emotions, choices, and actions, as well as one’s most firmly held convictions and beliefs. One’s faith is that mysterious inner strength, resolve, and power that enable one to live in the face of bewilderments, insecurities, frustrations, failures, sorrows, or tragedies, and despite the haunting awareness of an always precarious and uncertain future, with resilient confidence and hope instead of debilitating skepticism and despair. The faith, whether religious or secular, that a person openly *professes* and the faith that person actually *lives*, may in some cases be very different. It is one’s lived faith, not just his or her announced faith, that

most interests me here. Such faith is not just a matter of explicit profession or belief, however honestly held or proclaimed. Faith in this existential sense informs one's most deeply rooted beliefs, helping to give them their particular focus and character, but it is not identical with or reducible to those beliefs. Statements of belief can at best only partially express one's faith, because there is much about it that lies behind and beyond clear conceptual or verbal formulation. Faith's fullest, most accurate, and most telling expression is the character of one's life.

Here are some fundamental questions—questions of a deeply existential and not merely theoretical character—that must be dealt with in some manner by all of us. What is the meaning of life? What basic or perhaps even ultimate values should guide the living of our lives? How should we best exercise our capacity for judgment and choice? How should we live in the face of an uncertain future and the inevitability of death? How can we deal with problems of guilt, shame, regret, and despair? What account should we give of the presence of evil in ourselves and in the world, and how should we respond to that presence? What does it mean to be a human being, and what is the place of humans in the world? How can we find inspiring and appropriate models and exemplars for living our lives? Where can we find strength and perseverance to live up to our deepest aspirations and ideals? These questions are difficult and profound, they are perennial and fundamental to human life, and *they will not go away*.

A major contention of this book is that any serious approach to these questions, whether religious or secular, must give a central role to faith when the concept of faith is properly analyzed and understood. One of the book's tasks, therefore, is to work toward such an analysis and understanding. This task is extremely important despite its evident complexity and difficulty, partly because the nature and roles of faith are so commonly distorted and misconceived, but largely because, when properly understood, faith should be recognized as an indispensable component of thought, feeling, volition, action, and thus the whole of human life. Faith is not, then, the sole preserve or prerogative of religion, nor should it be identified with religion. As important as it is to religious outlooks and ways of life—and it is certainly necessary to do justice to that fact—the scope of faith itself is broader and more encompassing than that of religion. This is one of the basic claims I make, develop, and defend herein.

There are many different kinds of existential faith. There are fundamentalist forms of faith and liberal forms of faith. There are religious and secular versions of faith. There are traditional and nontraditional types of faith, and expressions of faith that are more communal and others that are more individualistic. There are types of faith whose bigotry, rigidity, or proneness to violence call for rigorous criticism and objection, and there are forms of faith that are open-minded, charitable, and exemplary. But there are

few if any among us who are totally devoid of some sort of deeply underlying existential faith, because the complete or nearly complete absence of faith is not mere secularism or professed nonreligion, but nihilistic skepticism and despair. Differences between insistently secular outlooks and those of religious outlooks by this interpretation are not so much differences between faith and nonfaith as differences between particular expressions of faith.

Furthermore, far from reason's being necessarily opposed to existential faith, all forms of reason at critical points rely on stances of this faith. We can speak meaningfully, then, of *faithful reason*. By the same token, all viable and plausible forms of existential faith require the guidance, support, and articulation at significant junctures of reason. So we can speak meaningfully of *reasonable faith*. Reason and faith should not be seen as standing in sharp separation from one another or as being inimical to one another, despite the fact that both secular and religious people all too frequently view them in this way. Rather, I submit that reason and existential faith should be understood as working constantly together in our lives and in those things we take to be most profound and important in our lives.

A passage in the Book of Proverbs in the Hebrew Bible enjoins, "Lean not on thine own understanding."² There is a sense in which this injunction is profoundly true and another in which it is profoundly false. If it is taken to mean that we should not trust *exclusively* in our understanding, it is a principle well worth attending to. For there is much about the world that no one understands completely. The world is mysterious in countless aspects and will always remain so. The astounding fact of the world's sheer existence, its diverse constituents and ever-evolving character, as well as the fact of one's own conscious, reflective life as a fleeting part of the world, are deeply mysterious. Among the world's mysteries are the threatening presence and power of destructiveness, hurtfulness, and evil in their various guises, both within us and outside us. But also arrestingly mysterious are the constructive forces of creation, cooperation, and goodness we find to be at work in ourselves, in our societies, and in the world as a whole.

Then there is the mystery of the future and of what it may bring in the way of new threats, problems, and perplexities, as well as of unanticipated alterations or even radical changes in personal or societal commitments and beliefs. Moreover, no one person even begins to have complete understanding of specific features of the world that may be better understood by certain other persons. No one scientist, for example, can be the master of all of today's complex and far-reaching scientific knowledge or fields of scientific inquiry. It is also true that the whole course of any human life and its multifarious beliefs, commitments, and emotions are complex and many-sided, deeply rooted in one's particular acculturation, habits, and intuitions and in one's firmly held but largely unconscious assumptions. Hence, the course of a life cannot be reduced in its every detail to clear and distinct rational

analysis or to an entirely perspicuous set of rational explanations, goals, purposes, or ideals. Nevertheless, we have to find ways to live productively and meaningfully in the world.

Fullness of life does not and cannot require fullness of rational understanding of everything in one's life or in the world in which one lives. If it did, it would be unattainable. On the other hand, it would be reckless indeed to base one's whole life on beliefs and commitments that deliberately resist or ignore any sort of rational development, articulation, or defense. This would be a recipe for blind credulity, deliberate irrationalism, and dangerous fanaticism. It would be to live a completely arbitrary and unreflective life. In this connection, the familiar Socratic dictum that the unexamined life is not worth living rings true.

A central point I want to make, then, is that a rationally examined life is perfectly consistent with a life that both involves and requires some kind of faith. We cannot live meaningful lives without faith because faith is a stance of trust, hope, and conviction that undergirds all purposeful life. This stance can be based partly on reason, but it cannot be wholly based on reason. In fact, one's faith is a source from which a significant amount of one's reasoning is apt to flow, a source of ultimately significant and deeply embedded and complexly entwined meanings, values, and commitments of various kinds that reason does not so much prove as presuppose.

An author who makes this point with compelling force is the physical chemist and philosopher Michael Polanyi in his book *Personal Knowledge*. Some kind of "fiduciary programme," Polanyi argues, lies behind all processes of reasoning and all claims to knowledge. In the foreground of our consciousness are the *explicit* assertions we are able to make about what we believe and why we believe it. But in the more dim and distant background are all of the *tacit* assumptions, attitudes, feelings, intentions, and outlooks that help to give form and credibility to these explicit assertions but that are themselves relatively inarticulate and unspoken (Polanyi 1962: 264–68 and *passim*). In this tacit dimension of our outlook and understanding are to be found those fundamental commitments, the basic and generally unquestioned trust, conviction, and assurance, that are vital elements of one's faith. I will have more to say about Polanyi's views in a later chapter.

What would a sound and healthy existential faith look like? The well-known interpreter of world religions Wilfred Cantwell Smith has provided us with an instructive statement to this effect:

Faith . . . is a quality of human living. At its best, it has taken the form of serenity and courage and loyalty and service; a quiet confidence and joy which enable one to feel at home in the universe, and to find meaning in the world and in one's own life, a meaning that is profound and ultimate, and is stable no matter what may

happen to oneself at the level of immediate event. Men and women of this kind of faith face catastrophe and confusion, affluence and sorrow, unperturbed; face opportunity with conviction and drive; and face others with cheerful charity. (Smith 1987: 12)

Smith tends to overstate the stability and imperturbability of faith in this characterization, for one's faith may be battered by threats, insecurities, uncertainties, challenges, or catastrophes of various kinds in the course of one's life—sometimes even to the point of causing one to abandon one kind of faith in favor of another. But the faith of which he speaks, whether religious or secular in its form, is obviously well worth having or aspiring toward. Far from being opposed to reason, it commends itself to reason even though, as I argued earlier, it would be a mistake to think of it flowing *exclusively* from considered argument or explicit reasoning.

Existential faith has inchoate but nonetheless extremely powerful experiential, emotional, intuitive, volitional, and active aspects about it that cannot be reduced to reason alone. It is not just a claim to know that something is true; this faith also is an eminently practical process of living in the world, responding to its challenges, and aspiring to grow in one's capacity to do so.

Do we ever act *against* our faith and thereby betray its ideals and demands? Of course we do, and sometimes with sad or even disastrous consequences for ourselves and for others. We may on those occasions experience profound regret, and yearn for forgiveness and renewal.

For some, the principal source of this empowering sense of forgiveness and renewal may be trust in some sort of transcendent and perhaps personal, gracious, and loving being, presence, or power. For others, it may be help or inspiration from a particular person, a circle of friends, a supporting community, or fellow participants in working together for a significant cause, whether secular or religious in character. For others, it may be the healing and rejuvenating powers of nature. For still others, it may be discovering new resources within oneself for living in fuller attunement and accord with the ideals of one's faith, and finding there the motivation and will to draw on those resources. The release from regret, shame, or guilt and the source of forgiveness and renewal might well be a combination of two or more of these factors. In any event, as the Protestant theologian Paul Tillich insists, existential faith and the ongoing struggles of existential faith are centered acts of the total person, not just of the rational part of the person (Tillich 1958: 4–5). Reason is profoundly involved in sound and healthy faith, but such faith amounts in its fullness and entirety to more than reason.

Moreover, faith is not just a matter of belief, as important as belief is to the whole of faith. It would certainly be a travesty to view faith merely as a set of beliefs stubbornly adhered to *without* or *against* evidence or reason,

as it is so often and unfortunately viewed. One's existential faith underlies and supports one's whole way of life. It is confidence and commitment of the whole person in all the aspects of the life of that person. It is the generally stable, predictable, regular character of persons as they go about living their lives, relating to other persons, and taking their places in the world. As Smith rightly says, "Faith is a quality of human living." I would add that it is the *most basic* quality and character of any trusting, hopeful, and affirming human life. Faith, then, is not just a way of thinking or believing but the font and focus of each person's most basic and comprehensive commitments and aspirations.

Let me suggest an analogy by way of illustrating the difference between mere belief and faith. Suppose that a crowd is at the circus and watching the performance of an expert knife thrower. He places his female assistant up against a large board at the back of a stage and proceeds to throw a series of knives at her. The knives come frighteningly close to the assistant and trace out a pattern around her head and upper body, but none of them injure her. When the performance is concluded, the tense crowd applauds loudly, giving vent to its feelings of amazement and relief. The knife thrower addresses the crowd, "Do you believe that I am accurate and precise in the throwing of knives?" They all vigorously nod their assent. Then he asks a further question: "Would one of you like to take the place of my assistant for another round of knife throwing?" The crowd shrinks back. No one volunteers. The knife thrower has expected this reaction. He raises the second question only in order to reinforce the crowd's impression of his remarkable prowess and showmanship.

The crowd firmly *believes* in his ability. They have been given convincing evidence of it! But not one of them is willing to stake his or her life on that belief. Such commitment requires a large amount of emotional as well as intellectual confidence, and it calls for a courageous act of will. It draws on deep reservoirs within the self. There is great risk involved, because accidents happen, and a person in the crowd cannot be sure that such an accident would not happen to the knife thrower, perhaps nothing more than a small reflexive twitch in his arm as he hurls his deadly blade. The degree of confidence required to submit one's own body and physical well-being to the test of the knife thrower's accuracy is perhaps justified by the rational evidence at hand, but it is certainly not compelled by it.

Theologian and social theorist Reinhold Niebuhr makes a related point when he notes that there is "an element of illusion in the [secular but quasi-eschatological] faith of the [Marxist] proletarian" that a truly egalitarian and even classless society can be permanently established by his revolutionary actions in concert with those of his peers. Such an element of possible error or illusion is present in all forms of faith, Niebuhr contends, because they require concerted action and commitment in relation to an

uncertain future and in the absence of absolutely decisive rational evidence or proof of the attainability of envisioned goals. But resolute confidence and risky action, and not mere contemplation of theoretical statements or beliefs, are required if, for example, perceived and experienced social inequities are to be effectively redressed. "The inertia of society is so stubborn," Niebuhr observes, "that no one will move against it, if he cannot believe that it can be more easily overcome than is actually the case." The "moral potency" of the proletarian's protest against the evils of present society is "the faith of the man of action. Rationality belongs to the cool observers" (Niebuhr 1960: 221; see also 154, 156, 159). We do not have to share every detail of the Marxist vision and faith to recognize that rationality is not the sole ingredient in an actively committed life of faith. Rationality's contributions and role are necessary but not sufficient.

Accordingly, faith as I am endeavoring to describe it here, is not a mere matter of belief or even belief of a particular kind, although it generally will have a content of belief. It is, as I have already pointed out, something markedly existential, something to which one courageously devotes one's whole life and one's whole being in the face of the grave uncertainties and ambiguities of the world. It is, again as Tillich affirms, a centered act of the total person. Whatever the style, pattern, or path of a person's life may be, and whether it is religious or secular, faith of this sort is both profoundly involved and required. It is required to the extent that a person has any modicum of confidence, trust, or hope in his or her manner of life. A person's reason will typically reflect and help to give form and expression to his or her faith. It will be a significant part of faith, but not the whole of faith. More than reason lies at the heart of faith, and more than reason informs its hope.

French philosopher and mathematician Blaise Pascal once observed that "[t]he heart has its reasons, which reason does not know" (Pascal 1941: #277, 95). His assertion could be taken as an endorsement of the idea of a purely emotional conception of faith, devoid of reason or even set against reason. I would reject that conception of faith, as did Pascal. But he was within his rights in reminding us that there is more to faith than reason. Intimations and discernments of the heart or of the deepest recesses of one's being are also involved. This claim need not mean that reason has no place in the life of faith, only that faith is something more comprehensive and profound than reason. One can have a reasonable faith without one's faith being reducible to or based on reason alone. To put the point in another way, it is entirely reasonable to recognize the role of faith in confident human life and to see reason as rooted to a significant extent in the whole character, focus, and direction of a life of faith.

On the other hand, we should certainly aspire toward a reasonable faith, a faith that is well grounded in experience and reason, well equipped

to support the whole course of a person's life, and one that takes careful account of optional paths of life and thought. We should aspire toward a faith that is humble and open-minded not merely assertive, a faith that is devoted throughout life to learning from the outlooks and commitments of others. And we should be ready to acknowledge that no single path of life, no matter how relentlessly thought about and pursued, can exhaust the enormity of mystery and wonder packed into the world. All of our respective paths and forms of faith are like teaspoons dipped into an enormous, inexhaustible ocean of reality and truth. We can live these teaspoons with courage and conviction even while acknowledging their final limitation and inadequacy. This kind of humility is an essential element in a sound, healthy, and reasonable faith. Of course, we can and should also adjudicate consciously and carefully among different kinds of faith. Some are worse and some are much worse than others. Some are more challenging and richly fulfilling than others. Here both our moral and our theoretical reasoning, and the whole of our ongoing experience of ourselves and the world, should be put to vigorous use.

It may sound paradoxical to combine deliberate and active critical adjudication among forms of faith with openness and humility about the mysteries and uncertainties to which forms of faith are responses. But it is not a simple matter of either-or. Rather, it is a tension that needs constantly to be recognized and upheld. The phrase I like to use to characterize such an attitude is *convictional openness*. There is no such thing as faith without convictions. But a dogmatic and close-minded faith affords little possibility of correction, revision, or growth, and it cannot enter into mutually constructive and meaningful dialogue with those whose lives are based on and give expression to other forms of faith.

Highly relevant in this regard is Mohandas K. Gandhi's attitude toward the human search for truth in its various aspects—epistemic, ontological, moral, and existential—and, by implication, toward the different forms of faith that may motivate and guide this search. Joseph Prabhu provides us with this description of Gandhi's outlook: "We humans with our finite capacities can have access . . . only to relative truth, an assertion Gandhi uses to justify epistemological humility and tolerance. All our perceptions of truth are inevitably partial and therefore claims of cognitive absoluteness are both unwarranted and dangerous." Prabhu adds that for Gandhi, "Given that one's grasp of the truth is at best partial, it is imperative to see and appreciate the truth in the position of the other and to try and achieve a higher or dialectical reconciliation of conflicting ends" (Prabhu 2008: 166, 168). I heartily endorse these statements, but in doing so I do not mean to claim that *anything* goes in the realm of faith. I do want to insist that more than one thing goes, because any one stance of faith and the outlooks giving expression to that stance can be, as Gandhi rightly recognizes, only

partially adequate at best. All such stances are in need of constant criticism and revision. And reason—especially careful, sustained consideration of the reasoning of those with different kinds of faith from one's own—has a crucial role to play in this regard.

There is no viable faith that does not take fully into account the resources of reason, then, and there is no possibility of having a reason that does not reflect and draw in significant ways on some kind of deep-lying faith. This is the two-sidedness of faith and reason. There is a substantial place in every affirming human life for both reasonable faith and faithful reason. I want now to turn our attention a bit more specifically to the topic of faithful reason by looking briefly at the critical role of faith in both our *moral* outlooks and practices and in the practices and achievements of *scientific* thought. The discussion here is encapsulated and merely suggestive. I take up these two topics in more depth and detail in subsequent chapters.

Our moral outlooks and practices are given impetus, strength, and credibility by our tacit conviction that moral life is worthwhile, that we live in a universe in which it can make a difference, that others will be responsive to our moral ways of living, and that it is possible to live together in such a way as to bring about a morally better world. Thus, we must be convinced that we are genuinely responsible and free and that the universe is amenable to the moral efforts we exert in our freedom. We are not like cogs in a machine, manipulated by forces beyond our control, but creative agents capable of bettering our own lives and contributing to the well-being of others, not only human others but the others of the natural world as a whole. We also must be convinced that the lives of these others are intrinsically valuable and worth our moral effort and respectful regard.

I hope you begin to see how much implicit faith is involved in morality thus described, how it reflects a whole way of life and not just a set of intellectual propositions explicitly entertained or rationally defended. The propositions can and should be defended, of course, but they also can and have been attacked, and sometimes with considerable rational and persuasive force. I submit that more than reason is involved in their confident assertion or assumption, and especially in their being put into consistent and lifelong practice. Commitment to them and the active living of them exemplify faithful reason.

Scientific outlooks, for their part, also rest on and give expression to sometimes tacit and sometimes explicit testaments of faith. Scientific investigation would make no sense without reliance on the uniformity and order of the universe; the reliability at some critical points of the five senses; the applicability and usefulness of logical and mathematical reasoning; the general reliability of past scientific findings and understandings; the extreme value and importance of devoting one's life to scientific investigation and seeking to understand fundamental principles, constituents, and laws of

the world; the honesty and integrity of one's scientific colleagues; and the hope of making steady and significant progress in scientific understanding. Uncertainties are involved in all of these commitments, even though they are essential to scientific theorizing. In theoretical physics in particular, the element of uncertainty and risk is especially evident. Physicist Lee Smolin comments that theoretical physics of the currently most basic, open-ended, and cutting-edge type simply cannot be done without great risks of being wrong even in one's most confident assumptions, beliefs, or assertions at any given time (Smolin 2007: xvi).

Let me elaborate for just a bit on two particularly telling examples of what I have in mind. One example is from the thought of one of the most widely recognized and respected scientific thinkers of all time, Albert Einstein. The other is from the thought of a Noble Laureate in physics who made profound contributions to subatomic physics. His name is Paul Dirac. Let me take Dirac first, because I want simply to quote a statement of his that gives evidence of his unquestioning confidence in the power of mathematical reasoning not only to unlock the secrets of the world but also to reveal what he believed to be its deep mathematical structure and character. In describing his personal affinity with Erwin Schrödinger, with whom he shared the Nobel Prize, Dirac had this to say:

Schrödinger and I both had a very strong appreciation of mathematical beauty, and this appreciation . . . dominated all our work. It was a sort of act of faith with us that any equations which describe fundamental laws of Nature *must* have great mathematical beauty in them. It was like a religion with us. It was a very profitable religion to hold, and can be considered the basis of much of our success. (quoted in Olive 1998: 89; emphasis added)

Dirac here acknowledges the central role in his life and thought of faith in the beguiling beauty of mathematics and in its power to provide profound insight into the character and workings of the physical world. His statement thus gives clear expression to what I am calling faithful reason, a reasoning deeply informed by faith. Now one might want to object that the so-called *faith* of which Dirac speaks is not that at all, but simply a general hypothesis that seems to be well borne out by the history of a mathematically based science and its successes in explaining the world and enabling us to put aspects of the world to solid practical use.

But adherents and practitioners of secular and religious faith of whatever sort would be inclined to say something quite similar, namely, that their faith enables them to make sense of their lives and to live with evident confidence and success in the world. We may well regard all forms of faith, secular and religious, scientific and moral, and so on, as deep-lying

hypotheses that must be put constantly to the test of thought and experience. To regard them as such is to have a healthy view of the legitimate role of faith. A faith that is not open to ongoing confirmation or possible disconfirmation either in whole or in part is a species of faith that should be called seriously into question. This caveat is a central part of what I mean by the phrase *reasonable faith*.

But to get back to the idea of *faithful reason*, let me cite the example of Albert Einstein. Einstein had such complete and unquestioning faith in absolute causal determinism and in the idea that the universe is utterly law like, mathematically structured, thoroughly rational, and in principle intelligible through and through, that he was never able to accept or even seriously consider the idea that, at the quantum level or elsewhere, there is a significant role for chance and indeterminacy.³ The result was that in his later years he fell into the backwaters of the creative science of his time, insisting throughout his life that the quantum indeterminism that was coming increasingly to be accepted by the scientific community had to be wrong. He also failed to achieve the grand unified theory of the universe that he felt to be possible and that he worked on with relentless, unquenchable faith until his dying day.

Einstein felt a deep and abiding reverence for the universe as he conceived it, and no amount of putative empirical evidence was sufficient to convince him to the contrary. In other words, his scientific reasoning was deeply informed by his scientific faith, and his scientific faith merged easily into his religious faith. He was quite honest and upfront in recognizing and announcing this intimate intermingling of the two in his thought and life. Einstein's favorite philosopher was the seventeenth-century philosopher Baruch Spinoza. Spinoza's universe is mathematical, tightly ordered, and deterministic in its every detail, and he spoke of it not only as Nature but also as God. The same is true of Einstein, for whom the wondrous complexity, order, and rationality of the universe showed it for him to be identical with or deeply suffused with the presence and power of God.

Einstein's profoundly compelling religious vision in its connection with his scientific theorizing, a prominent example of what I am calling *faithful reason*, lay strongly behind his conception of the role and competency of natural science and provided much of the motive and impetus of his scientific achievements. He was happy to assert that this was so (see Crosby 1994b; Jammer 1999). His reason was solidly rooted in and inspired by his existential faith, and his lifelong practice as a scientist gave evidence of this faith. I am arguing that his and Dirac's faiths are not isolated instances, but that something like such modes of faith—again, religious or secular—permeates all scientific endeavors. The practices and accomplishments of scientists in general illustrate the concept of *faithful reason*, as do the practices and accomplishments of all who seek to interpret the character

of and put into practice a moral life. The same is true of other modes of thought and life.

Let me summarize what I have been saying about existential faith in this chapter. I have been asserting that it:

- Is not just equal to belief or a particular set of beliefs, although it has an important aspect of belief;
- Is not opposed to reason but underlies and works in concert with reason;
- Is not just emotional but involves and incorporates emotion;
- Is not an arbitrary act of the will but requires practical choices and actions;
- Can be secular or religious;
- Lies at the heart of morality, science, and other significant modes of thought and life;
- Gives fundamental shape and direction, purpose and character, to the whole of a person's life and work;
- Is indispensable for all or nearly all forms of human life.

Thus, it would be as much of a mistake to impugn or dismiss faith regarded in this existential manner as it would be to impugn or dismiss critical reason. Neither can function without the other. Both are necessarily involved in any kind of affirming, responsible intellectual endeavor, and both are essential to any kind of flourishing, meaningful life. This is the important and far-reaching idea I have sought to emphasize and explain here. I shall develop it further as this book proceeds, and it is the book's central theme.

TWO

FACETS OF FAITH

No matter what we encounter in life, it is faith that enables us to try again, to trust again, to love again. Even in times of immense suffering, it is faith that enables us to relate to the present moment in such a way that we can go on, we can move forward, instead of becoming lost in resignation or despair.

—Sharon Salzberg¹

There is no such thing as a simple faith. All forms of existential faith, religious or secular, are complex and multifaceted. Although it is true that some forms are, by their adherents and by the traditions in which they may stand, brought to fuller, more intricate, and more explicit levels of development than others, none can be said to be simple. In this chapter I indicate and analyze six critical aspects of faith in order not only to show how complex existential faith is but also to exhibit in this way the profoundly important and pervasive role it plays in the whole of human life. The six ingredients of faith I discuss are worldview, trust, devotion, hope, courage, and doubt. Seen together and in light of their relations to one another, they can serve to provide further elucidation for the concept of faith introduced in the previous chapter. I begin with investigation into worldviews and the role they play in the life of faith.

WORLDVIEWS AND FAITH

What is a worldview? It is a comprehensive vision, apprehension, or intimation of the whole of things and of the levels of importance and value among things—both human and nonhuman—that is implicit in the outlooks, practices, and patterns of behavior of individuals and groups. Worldviews lie in the background of particular scientific pronouncements, arguments, and activities no less than of religious or philosophical ones, and they are con-

stitutive elements in moral principles and ideals as well as in legal systems and political institutions. Worldviews find expression in past and present cultures and in current interpretations of the past. They are ingredient in artistic works such as those of architecture, painting, and literature. And they are essential components in all forms of secular and religious faith. I focus here on the role of worldviews in forms of faith.

To have faith is to have a deep-lying sense of orientation to and within the world, and a part of that sense is convictions about the nature of the world and one's place within it. Such convictions are not only descriptive in character but also have a strong normative quality. They not only comprise beliefs about what the world is like but about what it ought to be like, and about society's and one's own opportunities and responsibilities to help make it so. Worldviews can be more or less coherent and clear, but none can be completely so because there always will be tension between the internal coherence and clarity of a belief system and the adequacy of that system to encompass and make intelligible a stubbornly complex, elusive, and ever-changing world. Moreover, elements of one's worldview will be rooted in aspects of one's experience, attitude, and sensibility that lie below the level of clear and conscious awareness, as I point out later in this section and in other parts of this book. The struggle to give conceptual form and clarity to the worldview accompanying one's faith may be seen as an important part of the life of faith, but having faith is also a way of being, living, and acting in the world, not just of thinking about oneself and the world.

Mary Midgley offers a definition of faith that calls attention to the all-important distinction between beliefs associated with a worldview and the faith to which the worldview can give only partial indication or expression: "A faith is not primarily a factual belief, the acceptance of a few extra propositions like 'God exists' or 'there will be a revolution.' It is rather the sense of having one's place within a whole greater than oneself, one whose larger aims so enclose one's own and give them point that sacrifice for it may be entirely proper" (Midgley 1985: 14). We tend to confuse worldviews that are ingredient in faith with the whole nature of faith itself. We are inclined to identify the faith of an individual or group solely with its professions and claims, with its ideas about the nature of reality and about the responsibilities of human beings to what is said to lie at the heart of reality. In other words, we are tempted to identify faith with a determinate set of beliefs. Consequently, we sometimes if not frequently go about describing the faith of individuals, groups, or traditions as only a compendium of beliefs.

But as seen in the previous chapter, faith should not be identified with belief. Beliefs are a part of faith but not the whole of faith. Similarly, worldviews can give conceptual content to faith but should not be thought to be the same thing as faith. C. S. Lewis provides a useful metaphor that

can be applied to thinking about faith. I do not merely see the sun when it rises, he says; by means of it I am enabled to see everything else (Lewis 1980: 140; cited in Keller 2008: 122). Similarly, faith frames everything else in one's outlook on the world and one's way of living in the world. One's worldview is framed by faith and in a fundamental sense gives expression to one's faith.

Here are some familiar examples of aspects of specifically *religious* worldviews that can be associated with, but should not be thought to be identical with, particular forms of faith. The worldview of the Buddhist is one in which there is no permanence in the world, including a permanence or substantial persistence of the self. The worldview of the Advaita Vedantist is one in which such things as individuality, diversity, and temporal passage are finally unreal, and the sole reality is Brahman. The worldview of the Muslim, Jew, or Christian includes the idea of a personal God who has created the universe and all things in it, and who communicates his will and purpose to human beings by means of definitive special revelations. The worldview of the Hindu who follows the path of *bakhti* or devotion allows for many *avatars* or incarnations of deity, whereas that of the Christian allows for only one, and the Muslim and the Jew allow for none, seeing the idea as sacrilege. The evangelical Christian may insist that there can be only one path to salvation, whereas a person living in China has no problem embracing various elements of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, and a person living in India may be convinced that there are numerous ways to find, worship, or experience the religious ultimate. The range of worldviews that can be associated with particular forms of religious faith is vast, and these are only suggestive examples of this fact.

Worldviews are also important aspects of *secular* forms of faith. Doctrinaire Marxists regard the whole of human history as a saga of unrelenting struggles among economic classes and confidently predict the ultimate victory of an oppressed proletarian and agrarian class, whose members are regarded as the only truly productive persons in society, with the subsequent inauguration of a classless society having no need of governmental restriction and control. This idea of inexorable historical and materialistic or economic forces bringing about an inevitable utopian end—together with the Marxists' putatively scientific elaborations of and arguments for the idea—express an underlying confidence that we live in a finally just world where the rights of the oppressed will be vindicated and fulfilled and where their oppressors will at last be brought low and reap the consequences of what they have sown. Assurance that human nature can and will be molded by social and historical forces in such a way as to bring about its transformation into something instinctively and entirely just and good also enters into this vision. Marxists reject religion, seeing it as aiding and abetting social injustice and the position of the oppressor classes, rather than as a force

working for good. Much more than an explicit worldview is involved in this form of faith, although the worldview is an important part of it.

Secular humanists, for their part, have a worldview that like the Marxist one denies any role to supernatural forces, realms, or beings. Secular humanists deny that the soul is separable from the body or that there is such a thing as personal immortality. They insist that human beings are responsible for their own destinies and that humans can act freely from their own resources to bring about a more open and just society. They insist that the scientific attitude is a more reliable guide to the good life and a good society than any religious one. They dismiss religion in general as the bastion of outmoded superstitions and irrational, unscientific beliefs. They espouse democracy, education, and the natural sciences, along with human resourcefulness and freedom, as the routes to social, political, and economic betterment in the world. They place their trust in human intelligence and in concerted human effort, rather than in divine guidance and salvation, or in supposedly inexorable forces of history. The faith that finds expression in their worldview is centered on distinctively human purposes and ideals (see Kurtz 1983, esp. ch. 2). But again, there is more depth and detail to their form of faith than is explicitly proclaimed in their worldview. The other facets of faith already mentioned and soon to be discussed also are essential parts of the committed secular humanist's orientation in the world.

We should also again take note of the important fact that not everything about a worldview admits of explicit statement or definitive articulation. Worldviews rest on multiple assumptions, intuitions, hunches, habits, feelings, and socially and culturally conditioned attitudes that are not exposed to the clear light of consciousness but that nevertheless function to give character and shape to the worldview. The overt, distinct beliefs and claims of a worldview shade off into more covert, complexly entwined ones, and finally into the murky depths of the human unconscious. Much is vaguely assumed or felt to be important, valuable, or true, therefore, which does not reside in clear conscious awareness and is not focused on or entertained in the form of clear and distinct propositions or specific arguments.

This realization is a key to the vital role played by stories, symbols, images, metaphors, rites, sacraments, and the like in supplementing discursive, purely conceptual language and shedding light, in their own distinctive ways, on the full breadth and depth of worldviews. Louis Dupré makes a crucial point when he observes that “[a] symbolic structure is by its very nature irreplaceable. Definitions of nondiscursive symbols are *per se* impossible, for the definition leaves out the unspeakable element by which a symbol transcends both itself and all other discourse” (Dupré 1972: 163). Definitions or other attempted prosaic renderings of the symbolic structures that generally play an essential if often insufficiently recognized or appreci-

ated role in worldviews are indeed impossible. This is so partly because these structures reach down into and probe levels of insight and apprehension that may be intensely felt but that cannot be otherwise elicited, pointed to, or expressed, and partly because worldviews with any semblance of adequacy must be open to depths of experience and encompassing mysteries of the world that are “unspeakable” in the sense of not being reducible to clear literal or conceptual statement. However, these mysteries, that is, the opaque or at best translucent features of the experienced world, can be *symbolically* evoked in ways that heighten rather than reduce both their mysterious, elusive character and their insistent, irreplaceable relevance as critical dimensions of life in the world.

Explicit propositions and arguments as components of worldviews, then, are like the proverbial tip of an iceberg, much of whose massive structure lies concealed in the depths of the sea. Lee Smolin notes of himself and his colleagues in the physical sciences, “if we required proof of everything, we would never believe anything” (Smolin 2007: 300). Similarly, if in order to be explicitly aware of anything, we had to be fully aware of everything, we would be aware of nothing. Awareness rests on a base of extremely complex factors in experience and the mind about which we are not wholly aware. Some of these factors are significant features of our stances of faith. We look at this matter of the tacit underpinnings of explicit beliefs and belief systems in greater detail in the next chapter, as part of our inquiry into the relations of faith and knowledge. The major point to be made here is that worldviews in both their explicit and inexplicit aspects are important components of faith but do not constitute the whole meaning of faith. We turn next to a second principal ingredient of existential faith, the ingredient of trust.

TRUST AND FAITH

The story about the knife thrower in the previous chapter illustrates a fundamental difference between mere belief and faith, namely, that believing that something is true is different from being willing to stake one’s life on its alleged truth. I can firmly believe in the accuracy and precision of the knife wielder’s art without being willing to take the risk of entrusting my life to it. As the Epistle of James in the New Testament points out, “Even the devils believe—and shudder.”² But they remain devils. That is to say, they refuse to place their trust in God and to commit their lives to God despite their unquestioning belief in God’s existence and supreme power. This belief is indeed a trait of their worldview even though they set themselves against God. The devils’ evil dispositions and actions are based not in lack of knowledge or weakness of belief but in sheer willfulness and

hardness of heart. Their trust lies elsewhere. Their belief does not give rise to trust in God.

In other words, the devils believe in God but do not have faith in God's purposes or ways of acting in the world. The God part of their worldview is subordinated to other parts of it that for them have more alluring force and effect, so far as the actual course of their lives is concerned. By the same token, to say, for example, that someone lacks *faith* in inevitable historical progress, the innate goodness of human beings, a triune God, Vishnu, Tao, or *sunyata* is at least partly to say that someone fails to place *trust* in such things. It is not just that one fails to believe in them or have them as part of one's worldview, although that may also be true.

The sorely beleaguered Job in the book bearing his name in the Hebrew Bible cries out in agony, making reference to God, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him!"³ He is not asserting here that he believes in God's existence, although the belief is implicit in his statement. Much more importantly, he is stating his unshakable trust in God's ultimate justice, a trust that he declares will stay firmly with him even if God were to put him to death. Job persists in his demand for an audience with God, not because he doubts God's justice but simply because he yearns better to understand it. His trust in God is unwavering throughout the book despite his horrible sufferings and deprivations.

This trust is a critical part of his faith, and Job is a classic example of a person of staunch, unyielding faith even in the face of horrible misery and threatening despair. There is much that he finds he cannot understand about the ways of God, and at the end of the book God reminds him that it would be impossible for him, a mere human being, to understand fully the policies and decisions of an overpowering, stupendous, majestic deity who has created the vast world and everything in it and who must continually preside over and govern its every aspect, down to its tiniest details. Job learns not to rely on his understanding in every matter but to continue to trust a God who knows what he is doing in all his ways, a God whose justice is steady and real even though at times inevitably beyond human comprehension. Not all forms of faith will incorporate Job's type of trust, of course, but it is characteristic of faith that it will have an indispensable element of trust.

Trust can also fail, and with its failure particular forms of faith can die. One such failure of trust, and with it the death of a faith, is described in Arthur Koestler's essay in a book containing six essays by former enthusiastic supporters of Soviet Communism and entitled *The God That Failed: A Confession*. In the book, which was widely read in the 1950s and is still in print today (Crossman 2001, first published in 1949), Koestler wrote of his increasing disillusionment with the Communistic social and political program in which he had once placed ardent trust. His trust was finally shattered beyond repair by the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact, which allied the Soviet Union with Nazi Germany on Aug. 23, 1939, and endorsed sepa-

rate spheres of influence together with the carving up of smaller countries between the two nations.

Koestler gave seven years of his life to actively committed participation in a movement whose leaders finally violated his earnest trust in them and in their cause by repeatedly using flagrantly unjust means, claiming the necessity of these proximal means for achieving distant goals; by engaging in systematic lying; by holding rigged show trials and imposing sentences of exile or execution to rid themselves of rivals or suspected enemies; and by sending friends and acquaintances of Koestler himself on trumped-up charges to forced labor camps in Arctic Siberia. With his collapse of trust, Koestler's once forceful and compelling faith in the ideals, pronouncements, and sociopolitical programs of Soviet Communism was brought to an abrupt end. In the absence of such trust, his formerly intense faith in Communism's revolutionary promise became impossible. Koestler's faith in "the God that failed" was secular, not religious, but trust was every bit as essential to it as was trust to the faith of Job.

The role of trust in the life of faith tells us something extremely important about the nature of faith. It is obviously unwise to put one's trust in something that that is undependable and thus undeserving of that trust. But this is especially so when we are talking about the trust that functions, in the context of faith seen as an act of one's whole being, to provide guidance and direction for the entire course of one's life. This kind of trust must be constantly assessed and tested for its adequacy lest it fail to provide the bedrock support required for a life that is equipped to search and aspire for what is of true worth and value; that grows, strengthens, and flourishes within itself; that can cope with the exigencies, threats, and uncertainties of mortal existence; and that is constantly driven to find effective ways to contribute from its distinctive resources to the well-being of others.

To put the point in its starkest form, reliable trust within the life of faith can be that only when it is informed by an appropriate amount of healthy *distrust*. Unthinking, uncritical, immovable trust is not only radically inadequate as a recipe for life; it can also be dangerous to one's own well-being and to that of others affected by one's outlook and actions. The quiet assurance and certitude of one's faith and of the important factor of trust within one's faith should be tempered, then, by an element of persistent, guarded questioning and uncertainty. This realization suggests the need to understand the crucial role of existential doubt in meaningful faith, a topic to which we return later in this chapter. But I now discuss devotion as a third component of existential faith.

DEVOTION AND FAITH

In his *Confessions* fourth- and fifth-century theologian Augustine, bishop of Hippo, speaks of his faith in the God of the Christian religion by using

what has become a famous metaphor, that of the natural weight or tendency of a thing.

The body by its own weight strives towards its own place. Weight makes not downward only, but to his own place. Fire tends upward, a stone downward. They are urged by their own weight, they seek their own places. . . . When out of order, they are restless; restored to order, they are at rest. My weight, is my love; thereby am I borne, whithersoever I am borne. We are inflamed, by Thy Gift we are kindled, and are carried upwards; we glow inwardly and go forwards. We ascend Thy ways that be in our heart, and sing a song of degrees; we glow inwardly with thy fire, and we go; because we go upwards to the peace of Jerusalem. (Augustine 1961, Bk. XIII, p. 233)

This beautiful passage shows clearly that the faith of a human being is not just the possession of a worldview or the living out of some kind of pervasive trust. It also is a matter of deep and abiding devotion to that in which one fervently believes and to which one gives one's trust.

It is possible to trust something to which one is not devoted. One can trust and give due attention to the law of gravity while skiing down a steep slope or climbing a risky part of the mountains without being devoted to that law. One can trust a partner in business but not be devoted to that person. One can trust a reporter's story in a newspaper without being devoted to either the story or the reporter. Devotion adds to trust an aspect of intense reverence, heartfelt commitment, glad acquiescence, and consuming desire directed toward that in which one places one's trust. Sharon Salzberg's statement contained in the epigraph to this chapter calls attention to the fact that faith, in times of crisis, can not only empower us to persist in *trusting* but also in *loving* the object of our faith. In Augustine's case his faithful devotion was the weight or tendency of his entire being, centered firmly and with joyous abandon on God. His weight was his love. And his life gave eloquent testimony to that fact.

Do we simply *choose* our faith and devote ourselves to it by an act of the will? Or are we drawn to it emotionally, and does it consist primarily in complexes of *feeling*? Or, again, do we just *reason* ourselves to the faith that will best suit, challenge, and inspire us? In truth, all of these three factors are involved because faith is an act of the whole personality, not just of some particular part of it. Each of the three factors has intricate reciprocal relations to the others. Norwegian social and political theorist Jon Elster notes that "[j]ust as the emotions arise from beliefs, they also influence them in turn" and that the urgency of our emotions can sometimes decisively affect the character of our actions (Elster 2009: 43). The devotion aspect of faith

is especially strongly informed by emotion as the affective connotations of the term *devotion* clearly imply. I am devoted to something when I love it intensely, am willing to sacrifice greatly for its sake, and am committed to it heart and soul. What we consider to be beliefs warranted by reason are not only closely connected with our emotions, especially at the deepest levels of our being, but both also have important influences on our choices and actions. The consequences of choices and actions, in their turn, can greatly influence subsequent beliefs and emotions. These observations are true in general, but they are true especially of existential faith, which is rooted in and brings to focused expression a person's entire being.

There also is a sense in which we are already grasped and engaged by that in which we place our faith and thus our devotion, even as we begin to reflect and meditate on our faith and consider how we shall choose and act in accordance with it. We do not so much create our faith, especially in its initial stages, as *discover* it and thereafter work at refashioning or refining it. The journey of faith is thus an ongoing journey of self-discovery as well as a journey of seeking how best to understand the world and to adjust our lives to it. Our emotions and affections are involved deeply in this process, and our reason can serve to give ongoing clarity, coherence, and direction to that which commands our faith and devotion. Our will is engaged as we respond to the requirements of our faith, because that to which we are devoted elicits fervent response, and this response can place stringent and far-reaching demands on the decisions we make in the course of our lives.

Faith should not be regarded, however, as something static or fixed at any point in one's life, and would be a grave mistake to recommend such a notion of faith to those who are in the early years of their lives. I strongly endorse Don Cupitt's insistence that faith should "be seen as a continual quest rather than as a guaranteed deposit in our present possession" (Cupitt 1988: 80). We must strive to be thoughtful, critical, and even sometimes ruthlessly skeptical about that in which we have faith and about the beliefs, emotions, and decisions involved in our faith, because no form of faith, however well grounded or well conceived, can be completely adequate. The issues involved in faith and confronting faith are too elusive and profound for that to be possible. Furthermore, not all forms of faith are equally adequate, some are patently inadequate, and some can be radically destructive. Responsible lives of faith should therefore endeavor to sustain a constant tension between tenacity and tentativeness, conviction and openness. The devotion of faith, however ardent and unstinting it may be, must be accompanied by a healthy amount of honest and deliberate circumspection. I made a similar point earlier in this chapter and shall return to it again when I discuss more fully the role of doubt as a necessary ingredient of viable faith. But let me turn now to the fourth aspect of faith, that of hope.

HOPE AND FAITH

A poignant but fascinating story from Ancient Greece that children in the West are likely to learn about in their schools or at their mothers' (or fathers') knees is the story of Pandora's jar. Pandora was given a large, chock-full jar by the gods, who would not tell her what was in it and forbade her to open it. However, her curiosity soon got the best of her, and she pried the lid from the jar. Out flew all kinds of disasters and evils, afflictions and sorrows, toils and miseries. These spread quickly throughout the world. Only one thing was left within the jar, and that was hope. Pandora hastily jammed the lid back on the jar and thus kept the hope inside. Pandora and her irresistible curiosity as well as the manifold evils she released were the creations of Zeus. They were intended as a punishment for the sins of Prometheus, who had given fire to humans without Zeus's permission and who had also craftily arranged matters so that the gods received only the bright fat and bones of sacrifices on the altar, not the good meat, which could then be consumed by human beings.⁴ It is significant that despite his visiting terrible and revengeful ills upon humankind, Zeus also had mercy on them and gave humans grounds for hope in the midst of their tribulations. Such hope is the power of saving, restoring, and rejuvenating faith in the face of destructive and ever threatening contingencies and evils within oneself and in the world. The place of hope in ancient Greek religious faith is shown forth by the story of Pandora and her jar.

This story is similar in some ways to the story of Noah and the flood in the Hebrew Bible. While wiping out most of the world in a vast and devastating flood, and thus inflicting on humans the full measure of his wrath for their failure to be obedient to him, God saved Noah, Noah's family, and representatives of the other creatures of earth, and fixed a rainbow in the sky as the symbol of his promise never to flood the earth in this way again.⁵ The rainbow is thus a symbol of humankind's hope for the future and of its confidence in God's enduring love and protection in the future. Its symbolism is similar to that of the one remaining thing in Pandora's jar. These two stories illustrate how fundamental hope is as part of the texture of faith. To lose all hope is to lose the will to live. To have existential faith is to be possessed of life-giving hope.

We may tend to think of hope as being oriented exclusively toward the future. But it also has important connections with the past and present, as we shall see. Let us first take note of a few examples of hope for the future as a major component of faith. As I indicated earlier, convinced Marxists will devote their lives to striving, working, and hoping for a worldwide proletarian revolution, a final withering away of the state, and achievement of the classless society. Many Jews ardently hope and prepare themselves and their communities for the advent of the Messiah and for the final setting

right of the evils and injustices of the world, particularly as these pertain to oppressions of the Jewish people throughout history. Many Christians have a similar keen hope for the second coming of Christ, and Shiite Muslims await with fervent anticipation the return of the Mahdi or Twelfth Imam. Adherents of the three religious traditions mentioned here will typically be comforted and girded by hope not only for the ultimate redemption of the world as a whole but also for their resurrection as individual persons into newness of life and blissful closeness to God beyond the grave. They will endeavor in this life to live in accordance with these earnestly hoped for outcomes.

Protestant theologian Reinhold Niebuhr had a starkly realistic and dark view of covert machinations of egoistic power, hypocrisy, and conflict in human societies and institutions, but he was nevertheless sustained in his hope for social and institutional betterment by his resolute faith in the sovereign lordship of God over human history. In *Moral Man and Immoral Society* he writes,

Religion is always a citadel of hope, which is built on the edge of despair. Men are inclined to view both individual and social moral facts with complacency, until they view them from some absolute perspective. But the same absolutism which drives them to despair, rejuvenates their hope. In the imagination of the truly religious man the God, who condemns history, will yet redeem history. (Niebuhr 1960: 62)

Postmodernist Roman Catholic theologian John D. Caputo speaks in a similar vein when he explains that what he calls a “spectral hermeneutics” turns one’s face to the future and haunts one with “possibilities harbored in events—by the fragile ‘perhaps’ in things—which promise a new life, a new being, a new creation.” He goes on to say that for those who share in this kind of faith, *amor fati* is replaced by “*amor venturi*, a love or affirmation of what is to come . . .” (Caputo 2007: 51). This last statement shows a close connection between hope and devotion. One loves that in which one places one’s deepest hopes, and one’s deepest hopes are centered on what one intensely loves.

Elsewhere, Caputo observes that “[l]iterature and theology are places where we dream of what is coming, where we pray and weep for something that eye has not yet beheld nor ear heard, where we venture upon the plane of what does not exist and wonder indeed why not.” He proposes that we regard the “name of God as the name of an event that is greater than anything that exists” (Caputo 2007: 56). The name of God is thus at least in significant part the name of hope, and hope is for Caputo an essential if not the most essential feature of a postmodern form of faith in God. The God

of this faith is not an ontological being. It is “not the name of the most real thing but of what is most real *in things*,” namely, their hopeful prospect of radical newness of life, of universal justice, forgiveness, and peace. This prospect is not automatic but calls for acceptance of a significant burden of responsibility on our part (Caputo 2007: 65–66). We participate in this prospect or ever unfolding and beckoning “event” and can be inspired and enriched by it. What Caputo terms the *event* is deeply mysterious and not just something of our own human creation or imagining. He speaks of it as “undeconstructible” and as a “*dynamis* that pulses through things . . . urging them, soliciting them, to be what they can be, and it is in that sense what is most real about them” (Caputo 2007: 56, 65). God thus named and conceived suggests the kind of transcendence and absoluteness of perspective over present historical conditions and limitations of which Niebuhr, in his characteristic fashion, also speaks.

Secular humanists, for their part, may work to realize their hope for the triumph of democracy and individual rights and freedoms throughout the world, for bringing scientific knowledge and awareness to the fore, and for ridding the world of the scourge of religious superstition and religiously motivated bigotry and violence. Those who follow the Buddhist path of life will hope for an ever-deepening and authentic realization of their Buddha nature as they devote themselves to Buddhist instruction, teaching, discipline, and practice. As two final examples, consider first the new convert to a religious tradition who has formerly been locked into a crippling addiction or other destructive pattern of life and who is now exhilarated by the hope of experiencing a radical, ongoing reformation of outlook, practice, and character. Or picture as a contrasting example the person who has recently been won over to a secular outlook and form of faith and is now gripped by an intense hope for deliverance from a formerly debilitating, guilt-ridden, and unfulfilling religious commitment and for entry into an affirming, liberating way of thinking, feeling, and living. In all these cases, hope is a central part of faith, whether that faith be religious or secular, and whether it be the faith of a new convert or that of the seasoned traveler on a particular path of life.

The hope of which we are speaking and which is an aspect of faith is not only the hope for particular goals that lie in the future. It is a posture, a stance, a quality of one’s whole life. And its orientation is toward one’s whole future, not just a particular part of the future. It is a positive, expectant, resilient attitude that gives assurance of being able to take in stride whatever the future may bring—its disappointments, threats, and sorrows as well as its contentments, joys, and accomplishments. It is a hope that is marked by patience, is grateful for small steps toward large goals, exhibits fortitude in the face of obstacles and setbacks, and is willing to work with others and with

the assistance and guidance of others toward these goals. Those who possess it do not give up easily and are not easily discouraged throughout their lives. The strength and stamina of hope are part of the meaning of faith.

Hope has connections with the past and present, as well as with the future. This is partly because, as an aspect of faith, it is a trait of the whole person as that person continues to live out of the past, into the present, and on into the future. But it also is because hope is a quality of one's present life, giving energy and strength to the present as one faces out toward the future. And hope relates to the past because the aspirations, experiences, and accomplishments of one's past can build up what philosopher Patrick Shade calls "habits of hope" that become part of one's established character as one encounters new opportunities and challenges for hope in the course of living. Those who are habituated to hope, Shade asserts, do not just have isolated hopes but can be characterized as having "hopefulness" as a pervasive trait of character (Shade 2001: 20–22, 135–36). One's faith helps to give focus, direction, context, and empowerment for one's hope (or hopefulness) and thereby equips one to live with confidence despite the hazards and uncertainties of the future. One's faith also strengthens one to persist in hope despite setbacks and failures in the past and to find ways to learn from and deal constructively with those setbacks and failures. The lifelong development of habits of hope is a significant part of what it means to have an ever-evolving faith.

A final thing about hope is its necessary element of uncertainty. There is no guarantee that either one's particular hopes or one's stance of hopefulness always will be vindicated. One's hopes can be dashed and one's hopefulness severely tested by the vicissitudes of life and its sometimes sudden setbacks, frustrations, and disappointments. Shade makes a significant distinction between hopefulness and optimism:

The key to optimism is the belief that goodness *will* triumph, that things will work out for the best. . . . A hopeful person is uncertain that goodness will prevail but nevertheless commits to investing in its cause. Consequently, hopefulness is best identified not with optimism but with meliorism. . . . [H]opefulness differs from optimism in having risk and *involvement* at its heart; goodness *may* win the day *if* we act on behalf of its cause. (Shade 2001: 139–40)

Hopefulness, then, is a melioristic posture that frankly acknowledges the risks of facing toward an uncertain future that may set formidable obstacles in the way of one's fondest aspirations and most determined efforts. But with hope, and the faith that grounds and supports it, one can continue to work with assurance if not certainty for a better future for oneself, for one's

family, friends, and community, and for the larger world of which one is a part. One can do so in concerted action with those who share one's visions and hopes for the future.

This mention of "visions" alerts us to the fact that one's hopes are typically set forth in or at least implicitly contained within one's *worldview*. I also noted above, when describing an aspect of Caputo's postmodern theology, the close relation between hope as a part of one's faith and *devotion* as another part of it. Hope is not merely venturesome. It is, in his words, *amor venturi*, the devoted love of what one hopes most ardently for and ventures to experience and accomplish under the stimulus of that love. The aspect of *trust* in the life of faith is also reflected in one's hope because hopefulness means among other things a stance of receptive, open-hearted trust in the future and in the promise of being able to work effectively toward a better future for oneself and others. With these four interrelated aspects of existential faith in mind, let us now consider a fifth crucial aspect, that of courage.

COURAGE AND FAITH

I want to revert once more to the story of the knife thrower in Chapter 1. I commented earlier in this chapter on the critical importance of having *trust* in the knife thrower's skill if one were to volunteer to be the next test of that skill. I used this example to illustrate the role of trust in existential faith. But it also is apparent from this example that much *courage* would be required if one were to endanger one's life in this way, and the same is true of venturing out upon a life of faith. We may tend to underestimate how much courage is required even for a seemingly ordinary kind of life because we underestimate the formidable threats to meaning, stability, and assurance that must be confronted by the faith that undergirds a person's life. Every form of faith is risky and uncertain in high degree, and thus must incorporate a considerable amount of courage. This is so for a number of reasons.

The first of these reasons is that faith places demands on one's life, the demands of a lifetime of commitment to and dogged pursuit of specific values, goals, and ideals. Faith not only is an impetus to searching contemplation but also to resolute action. A complacent, too easily satisfied and too easily lived faith is hardly sufficient to sustain one throughout one's life. Daniel Dombrowski points out that it is in our nature as so-called higher animals that we "can be discontented in various ways," in contrast with the more settled natures of less complex beings such as scallops, earthworms, or snails (Dombrowski 2004: 158). As humans, we hunger for meaning, and this hunger is for something rich and deeply satisfying, for a mode of life that puts us to the test and calls for strenuous effort and response. But to stake our lives on any particular course of life out of all the other courses that might have been embarked on and to rise to the persistent challenges and demands of that course of life require courage.

I recently visited the restoration, on a high hill in my city of Tallahassee, Florida, of the Mission San Luis. This mission, one of many scattered across northern Florida, was established in the year 1656 by Spanish Franciscan friars in order to Christianize the Apalachee Native Americans and bring them within the orbit of Spanish governance and control. By 1675, more than fourteen-hundred Spaniards and Apalachees lived under the jurisdiction of the mission. It lasted until 1704, when it was burned and evacuated by the Spanish and the Apalachees as hostile British-led troops advanced toward it. Some of the buildings of the mission have been rebuilt on the basis of archeological evidence. One of these is the building in which the friars themselves lived. Each friar had a tiny cell in which to study, meditate, and sleep. The cell had a dirt floor, a rustic wash stand, and a rather rugged-looking bed.

The sight of these cells helped to make me aware of the tremendous sacrifice these friars made in traveling across the ocean to an alien and relatively undeveloped land, encountering a strange people speaking an unknown tongue, and finding ways to work with them in order to set up over time a flourishing, self-sustaining village life. There must have been many hurdles and frustrations, uncertainties and risks to be overcome. There must have been poignant times of yearning for the familiar things of home. There must have been feelings of doubt, misgiving, and outright fear. And yet the friars stayed in the land to which they had come and were obedient to what they regarded as the demands of their faith. We may be hesitant to subscribe to these demands, because the friars were committed to usurping an indigenous culture and way of life, replacing them or fundamentally altering them with externally imposed European ideas and practices. But we cannot deny the courage of the friars or fail to acknowledge the indispensable role of that courage in their lives of faith.

A responsible life of faith involves not only persistence and stability of commitment in response to the demands of faith. It also requires resilience and flexibility, and ability to adapt to changing circumstances in one's environment and to changes within one's self. This requirement is a second reason for affirming a close association between courage and faith. There is much about the world that is precarious and uncertain. We do not know what the future may bring. It may confront us with unanticipated losses, sorrows, disappointments, anxieties, disasters, conundrums, and the like that sorely test the strength of our faith. Salzberg, speaking from the context of her commitment over many years to Buddhist principles and meditational practices, makes this point well.

Faith enables us, despite our fear, to get as close as possible to the truth of the present moment, so that we can offer our hearts fully to it, with integrity. We might (and often must) hope and plan and arrange and try, but faith enables us to be fully engaged while

also realizing that we are not in control, and that no strategy can ever put us in control, of the unfolding of events. Faith gives us a willingness to engage life, which means the unknown, and not to shrink back from it. (Salzberg 2002: 87–88)

Courage clearly is required, then, for us to face up with faith to an uncertain future, not knowing in advance what shocks or deprivations it may introduce into our lives or what severe questions it may raise about the adequacy of our faith.

It is not only the precarious and changeable character of the *world* that calls for courage. Courage also is needed for dealing with the inevitable changes within *oneself* that are brought about as one develops and matures throughout one's life. These changes also pose their own kinds of risk and uncertainty. What one was formerly at ease with and confident about may now be called seriously into question. New experiences, new events, new ways of thinking, and new possibilities for action have intervened, and one is uncertain about how to proceed. What was formerly felt to be adequate in one's faith is now seen to be in need of revision and change, and sometimes to a radical degree.

One must accept the risk of such changes without being able to know with certainty what the outcomes of those changes will be. Will one's faith be strengthened? Will it be put severely to the test? Will fundamental alterations in the character of one's faith be required? Courage is needed in order for one to undertake such changes. Things that are untested and new must be taken aboard; some formerly comforting, assuring, and perhaps deeply meaningful old things must be jettisoned and left behind as one sets sail into the future. The voyage of faith may also sometimes require one to chart new courses and to steer toward new destinations. The courage of resilience and adaptability, and of allowing the character of one's faith to absorb seemingly needed changes despite the risks and uncertainties of such changes, are demanded if faith is to give adequate support to one's whole self and one's whole life.

There is a kind of "leap," then, in the life of faith, a venturing into the future without full knowledge of what the future may bring either in the unfolding of external events or in the course of one's own life. The need for this leap is especially evident when significant changes in one's self or one's environment make evident an urgent need for alterations and adjustments in important aspects of one's convictions and commitments. Charles Taylor suggests that we speak of the requisite leap of faith as "anticipatory confidence." This is a good suggestion and provides us with a useful alternative term for what I am calling the courage of faith. Taylor writes regarding forms of faith that, although experience may increase our confidence in them, "we never move to a point beyond all anticipation, beyond all hunches, to the

kind of certainty that we may enjoy in certain narrower questions . . ." (Taylor 2007: 550–51). His statement brings to our attention the risk and even peril implicit in the act of faith. Facing up to this risk and peril requires a stance of not only steadfast but also resilient and adaptive courage.

A third reason for regarding courage as an essential part of faith is recognition of the need for courage in coping with what is obdurate and cannot be changed in the human condition, what is an inevitable concomitant of the finitude and limits of that condition. Paul Tillich does an inestimable service in developing this theme in his book *The Courage to Be*. He identifies three basic types of anxiety that must be confronted and dealt with in every human life, and he insists that the three are ontological in character, as opposed to types of anxiety he characterizes as pathological. In speaking of the former as *ontological*, Tillich means that they are inseparable from the human condition and cannot be annulled or removed, in contrast with pathological anxieties which, as kinds of sickness or disease, are in principle capable of being cured (Tillich 1952: 39–57, 64–70). The three types of ontological anxiety are marks of human finitude.

One of them is the anxiety of guilt. There is no escape from the threat of guilt because we are finite and will at least sometimes misuse our freedom and commit evil, make mistakes and miscalculations in our moral life, or respond inappropriately to the complexity, demands, or conflicts of good in moral situations. Guilt can even bring in its train the dark threat of self-loathing and loss of the sense of ability to be a moral person or to do the right things. The second form of anxiety is the threat of fate and of one's own impending death. There is no way in which finite beings can be in complete control of the future or know with certainty what the future will bring. And unless we commit suicide, there is no way in which we can know how or when we shall die. I talked about the uncertainty of the future above, when discussing the second reason that faith requires courage. Tillich's third form of ontological anxiety turns on the threat of aimlessness, of failure to find purpose and meaning in one's life, and of possible ultimate despair. The courage to be is the ability to take these anxieties honestly and fully into account without being overcome or destroyed by them. I am urging, as does Tillich, that such courage is a manifestation of faith and is rooted in faith.

The specific form of faith Tillich champions is faith in what he calls the "God above God" or the power of being-itself, the power that sustains us in the face of the three fundamental threats of nonbeing I have indicated. He calls this form of faith "absolute faith" and defines it as "the state of being grasped by the power of being-itself." He asserts that "[t]he courage to be is an expression of faith and what 'faith' means must be understood through the courage to be" (Tillich 1952: 186, 171–72). The desperate need for this courage, in view of the inevitability of these three types of anxiety and their

profound threats to one's overall confidence and powers of self-affirmation, points in turn to the central place of faith in human life.

A final reason for the intimate relation between courage and faith is the fact that the life of faith is a life of experiment and adventure, with an ever-present risk for possible failure. A particular form of faith may fail in whole or in part, and one must be able to take the risk for this failure and to be constantly open to and prepared for what can be learned from its possibility. I discussed earlier Arthur Koestler's devastating experience of loss of faith, recounted in his essay in the book *The God that Failed*. But loss of faith need not be a total loss. We sometimes learn more from our failures than from our successes.

A little child learns to walk partly by frequently falling and accepting the risk for falling. When as adults we learn to fall and perhaps even to question some of our deepest convictions, we may, as Phillip Simmons observes, "find victory in the falling itself, in learning how to live fully, consciously in the presence of mystery. When we learn to fall we learn to accept the vulnerability that is our human endowment, the cost of walking upright on the earth" (Simmons 2003: 11). The acceptance of vulnerability of which Simmons speaks calls out resoundingly for courage. It is the courage of readiness to experience possible failures in important features of one's faith, if not the wholesale loss of one's faith—a loss that puts one in need of a new and untried form of faith. I discuss at length three striking examples of this kind of experience in Chapter 7 and illustrate it with my own journey of faith in Chapter 8.

The requirement for such readiness becomes obvious when we contemplate the unfathomable complexity and mysteriousness of the world and of one's life in the world. Krista Tippett speaks of "[t]he anthropology of faith—its insistence that critical aspects of life are unquantifiable, unsolvable, flawed, and nevertheless blessed . . ." (Tippett 2008: 92). One must live despite the mystery and uncertainty of these critical aspects of life, and the faith involved in one's living must be able to accept the possibility of getting things wrong, of not having found the form of faith or aspects of faith best suited to equip one to interpret and cope with life's intractable mysteries. One cannot have a meaningful life of adventure and experiment without the risk for failure. The life of faith for finite beings such as we are offers much needed assurance and guidance, but it cannot offer absolute, unchangeable certitude. The risk-taking of faith requires the risk-taking of courage.

My talk of the risk and uncertainty of life and of the faith that lies at the basis of one's life points us not only in the direction of courage as an essential part of faith but also toward the role of doubt as the sixth vital ingredient in faith. In the next section I present reasons for concluding that resolute doubt and firm faith belong necessarily together, a contention that may at first blush seem counterintuitive if not contradictory. The

assumption that faith and doubt must stand in stark opposition to one another is, in my judgment, wholly unwarranted. It is a widely held but generally unexamined assumption that betrays a serious misunderstanding of the nature of faith.

DOUBT AND FAITH

The doubt under consideration here is *existential* doubt. Properly understood, it is a necessary component of existential faith. Such doubt is awareness of the inadequacy of any stance of faith to do full and final justice to what is of ultimate importance, value, and meaning for oneself or in the world. Doubt as a part of faith is inescapable for finite beings such as we are; hence, there is a necessary tension between existential certitude and existential doubt. We humans are but tiny parts of an incredibly vast universe, stretching over unimaginable regions of space and eons of time. This universe does not focus exclusively on us and our particular problems and concerns. As previously indicated, our faith enables us to find a place for ourselves in the universe and to find orientation and direction within it. It does so with conviction and assurance enough to light our path and give us strength and purpose to live. But by its very nature no version of faith can do so with absolute certainty. Plenty of room and justification are left for an attitude of ongoing questioning, not for just intellectual questioning—although that too is important—but for intense wondering and being healthily inquisitive and concerned about the adequacy of one's particular form of faith to be the basis for the framing and living of one's entire life.

Existential doubt also is natural and appropriate as we confront the different forms of faith of other people, communities, cultures, traditions, and times. Not only can such confrontations make us more fully aware that ours is but one of many possible stances of faith, each with its own commanding insights and strengths, these encounters also can make us receptive to what the faiths of others can reveal about what possibly is inadequate or lacking in one's own faith, and what might be in need of rectification, expansion, or improvement. Healthy misgivings about the complete sufficiency of one's faith also can alert one to the possibility that other faiths can usefully complement one's own, adding from their own particular perspectives important and plausible alternative ways of orienting oneself and one's communities and cultures in the world.

All of us humans are presumably struggling with our respective faiths to learn how better to understand and live the central values and truths of our existence in the face of the stubborn obstacles that stand in the way of our struggles. Behind our many differences lie our common humanity and the inescapable commonalities and limitations of our finite human condition. We can learn a great deal from one another and even can be

mutually transformed by the process of sharing our different paths, each positively questioning and thereby conceivably challenging and enriching the faith of the other.

John B. Cobb, in his book *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism* (Cobb 1982), offers an intriguing example of the possibilities of this kind of mutual transformation. Cobb presents a convincing and detailed case for how Mahayana Buddhism and Christianity can be brought into dialogue with one another and be shown to offer complementary lessons and strengths in relation to one another. He shows how lacunae in the one can be filled by observations and insights of the other, and how each can retain its distinctive character but with newly acquired augmentations and gains. Were there no feelings of doubt, uncertainty, or inadequacy on the part of proponents of particular forms of faith, there would be little felt need for such shared inquiry, and each form of faith might thereby lose much that could be acquired from it. Understood in this way, doubt is an essential aspect of a faith that is keenly aware of its limitations, of its ongoing need for stimulus, growth, and change, and thus of the value and importance of being open to what can be learned from the faith of others.

I spoke earlier of the importance of and need for symbolic expressions of one's faith in addition to whatever literal statements one might be able to make about it. This point, as I intend now to show, relates critically to the role of doubt in the life of faith. Symbolic expressions employ suggestiveness, allusiveness, and indirection to probe the depths of what is meaningful and important in one's faith. A part, but only a part, of a faith's fullness of meaning can be rendered into literal beliefs or proposals for belief. The latter require supplementation with symbols and are often themselves interpretations of important symbols. The symbolic aspects of one's faith can include analogies, metaphors, myths, stories, songs, parables, koans, sacraments, rituals, and the like. Symbols and symbolic practices may speak with focused power and capture, convey, or point to significant aspects or dimensions of one's faith. They can help to bring into forceful expression the five facets of faith already discussed. And they can do so with penetrating insight and awareness not possible with literal means of expression or practice.

A telling metaphor, for example, will provide a kind of insight or immediate awareness that a literal expression does not. We can speak of "thinking outside the box," to cite a commonplace example, or of having to "sink or swim," and it becomes instantly apparent what is meant. Similarly, India was once characterized as "the jewel in the crown" of the British Empire.⁶ A good metaphor gives concrete embodiment and specificity to something whose literal expression may be less adequate or communicative because it tends to be too prolix or abstract. In a nomadic, sheep-herding society to imagine, as in the twenty-third Psalm, one's God as a shepherd

whose rod and staff will protect one in the presence of evil may well be more accurate and truthful as an expression of one's faith than to think of God in abstract terms borrowed from Greek philosophy. Similarly, to speak prosaically of one's God as loving and forgiving is one thing. The parable of the prodigal son in the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel of Luke in the Christian New Testament conveys the meaning of that assertion not so much by way of further elaboration or description as by *showing* with the concreteness, vividness, and evocative power of a gripping story what divine love and forgiveness amount to, in a down-to-earth, everyday manner.

The symbolic force of koans accompanied by the guidance of an astute Zen Master has the power to jolt discovery, insight, and awareness in a way that straightforward doctrines or descriptions cannot. In fact, for Zen Buddhists, the latter are to be distrusted as mere surface ideas that cannot substitute for and often inhibit the profound experiences that the koans are more likely to awaken and invoke. Koans can do so partly because they bring to the surface and call into question deep-lying assumptions of which one was previously unaware and that stand in the way of genuine growth and understanding. Symbols of faith are vitally necessary, then, in addition to literal statements regarding the content and character of one's faith.

Effective symbols can bring people together in communities of faith with shared ways of giving expressive embodiments to the central meanings of their faith. Such symbols help immeasurably to give strength and purpose to those living within such communities. Philosopher and theologian Robert Neville calls our attention both to the complex levels of meaning and the vital communal role of religious symbols when he remarks that "[r]eligious symbols, or rather the concrete habits of thought, feeling, and behavior shaped by religious symbols, stack up in a person in many layers and interweaving connections. By analogy they do the same thing in communities" (Neville 2009: 106). What he says about religious symbols applies to symbols of faith in general. And what philosopher Susanne K. Langer asserts about artistic symbols such as those represented by painting, sculpture, poetry, and music, applies as well to paradigmatic symbols of faith, or at least to large numbers of them. "Artistic symbols . . . are untranslatable; their sense is bound to the particular form which it has taken." They cannot be disassembled and fully analyzed or interpreted in specific statements of discursive language because their artistic import is borne by the symbols *as a whole*. "To understand the 'idea' in a work of art is . . . more like *having a new experience* than like entertaining a new proposition. . . ." Thus the adequacy of a work of art "must be judged on our experience of its revelations," and "[t]he worst enemy of artistic judgment is literal judgment" (Langer 1961: 220, 222–23).

All of this is not to say that more literal, discursive, and descriptive language has no place in giving expression to one's own faith or that of

communities. It is only to insist on the essential role that is also played by imaginative symbols in the language of faith. The truth of deeply meaningful whole symbols is not the same thing as the truth of particular prosaic statements. The two can have important relations to one another, but neither can be collapsed into or serve the same purposes as the other.

However, even at their best, the key symbols of faith, whether envisioned or enacted, only partly can convey the full import of that to which they point. It is important that we not confuse the symbols themselves with that to which they allude. Adequate symbols of faith, or at least ones that are adequately regarded and used, speak not only with focused power and with meanings powerfully expressed and contained within themselves but also in ways suited to remind us of their final limitation and inadequacy. They contain, as Tillich puts the matter, an element of their own self-negation or self-transcendence (Tillich 1958: 97).⁷ What has all of this to do with doubt? Doubt in the life of faith is in significant measure frank recognition of the limitations of even the most cherished symbols of one's faith, a recognition that drives one to search for ever richer, more compelling, more insightful, more deeply probing symbols, and always to be on guard against overestimating the power of any set of symbols to do justice to the central discernments, meanings, and demands of a given form of faith. Doubt is a healthy part of faith to the extent that it enables proponents and practitioners of particular forms of faith to see through and beyond the symbols to the elusive depth, intricacy, wholeness, and centeredness of what the symbols are meant to convey. Dombrowski rightly reminds us that powerful imaginative symbols *expand* rationality and do not just transcend it (Dombrowski 2004: 77). But it also is important to note the extent to which basic symbols of faith also have a self-transcending quality in their relations to the profound meanings they seek to express and evoke.

Is it possible *not* to have faith as I have described it here? I can answer this question by noting two things. The first is that existential faith in all its forms involves positive self-affirmation and affirmation of the world in which one lives. The second is that human lives can manifest not only different *forms* of faith but also different *degrees* of faith. If one despairs of one's own life and cannot find some way in which to affirm the world but, on the contrary, can only negate them, that is, deny in a wholesale manner any semblance of their meaning, purpose, and value, then one could be said to lack faith. There also can be degrees of affirmation contrasting with degrees of denial, so that we can say of some not that they lack faith entirely but that their faith is weak rather than strong, tending toward a degree of negation that threatens their possession of faith. To be in the grip of deep despair is to have experienced the erosion of faith, perhaps to the point of its extinction or near extinction. One may still have a worldview, but it is a dark and negative one, not a positive, affirming one. One suffers from a

profound and lamentable absence of the trust, devotion, hope, and courage that characterize faith. One's existential doubts have come to eclipse other aspects of existential faith.

In this chapter I examined six critical aspects of faith and explored some of the interrelations of those six aspects. I have emphasized that the faith under discussion is existential and thus more than a conceptual worldview or set of beliefs, although it includes beliefs. I have stressed the indispensable role of nonliteral, nondiscursive, self-transcending symbolic expressions in the complex life of faith. I have noted the necessary tension between resolute trust and devotion, on the one hand, and a sustained posture of critical questioning and doubt and of constant openness to the mysteries of oneself and the world, on the other. I have insisted that an adequate and fully meaningful faith is not something completely fixed or settled at any point in one's life but rather should be regarded as a matter of persistent inquiry, experimentation, and adventure, and of receptive dialogue and interaction with the convictions and commitments of others. I have examined relations of hope and courage as well as of doubt and courage. Let us keep these six interrelated features of faith in mind as we turn our attention in the next chapter to important connections of faith with the search for knowledge and with claims to knowledge.