

12/10/2017 DOUG OLENA
PETER ENNS • SIN OF CERTAINTY

CHAPTER 9

BEYOND TRUST

OUTLINE

- NO FEAR
- GO AND SIN NO MORE

Search me, O God and know my heart
test me and know my thoughts.

Psalm 139:23



NO FEAR

LETTING GO OF THE NEED FOR CERTAINTY IS MORE THAN JUST A DECISION ABOUT HOW WE THINK;
IT'S A DECISION ABOUT HOW WE WANT TO LIVE



NO FEAR

IF CERTAINTY IS CENTRAL, WE ARE MARKED BY TRAITS WE
DON'T VALUE IN OTHERS.

- unflappable dogmatic certainty
- vigilant monitoring of who's in and who's out
(politics as purification)
- preoccupation with winning debates and defending the faith
(often against insiders)
- privileging the finality of logical arguments
(Christianity as apologetics)
- conforming unquestionably to intellectual authorities and
celebrities

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A FAITH LIKE THAT IS IN
CONSTANT BATTLE MODE...
NOT MARKED BY TRUST IN
THE CREATOR

— *Enns, 204*

”

NO FEAR

GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US THE SPIRIT OF FEAR...

- Embrace mysteries and uncertainties as “opportunities to trust more deeply.” 205
- Not binary thinking: inside/outside; black/white; right/wrong
but the curiosity of a child, the faith of a child, the wonder of a child, the trust of a child...
- A process of encounters with God in humility, openness, and vulnerability, not with triumphalism and dominance, but as those on a journey.

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RATHER THAN DEFINING
FAITHFULNESS AS
ABSOLUTE CONFORMITY TO
AUTHORITY AND TRIBAL
IDENTITY...

— *Enns, 206*

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GO AND SIN NO MORE

FREEDOM IS THE ABILITY TO TRUST EVEN WHEN NOTHING MAKES SENSE.



GO AND SIN NO MORE

TRUST IN THE CREATOR DOES NOT REQUIRE
RATIONAL CERTAINTY.

- Categories of human reason or God's?
rational, irrational, non-rational, or transrational: trust in God holds the transcendent in our universe, it is modern incarnation.
- Acceptance of and submission to mystery
- Submitting to God does not require the loss of our own reason or the diminishment of our rationality, but the recognition that it is limited. And that limitation is not a cause for worry, fret, or anxiety.
- We should train ourselves to the highest degree of exactitude, without losing the wonderment of the majesty of God. "Trust in the Lord, lean not on your own understanding."

GO AND SIN NO MORE

THERE IS NO GOLDEN AGE, NO GOOD OLD DAYS

- The Wesleyan quadrilateral: “scripture, tradition, reason, and experience” is the context in which we deliberate about our faith, not the substance of that faith.
- “Do not say, ‘Why were the former days better than these?’ For it is not from wisdom that you ask this” (Eccl. 7:10)
- “Rather than simply protecting the past, our faith communities have a sacred responsibility to protect the future by actively and intentionally creating a culture of trust in God, in order to deliver to our children and children’s children a viable faith...” 208

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THE STORY OF GOD AND GOD'S
PEOPLE IS NEVER STATIC, NEVER
SIMPLY ABOUT REPEATING THE
PAST AND MAINTAINING IT
AT ALL COSTS.

— *Enns, 208*

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MOVEMENT, CHANGE, AND
SURPRISE ARE WOVEN INTO
THE VERY FABRIC OF THE
CHRISTIAN FAITH.

— *Enns, 209*

”

GO AND SIN NO MORE

CHRISTIANS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO BE GOOD, BUT...

- Christians have built schools, hospitals, and orphanages, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, housed the homeless, alleviated pain and suffering, and fought injustice. 209
- But today they are known in the United States as "syndicate thugs" for imposing their eccentricities about science and morality.
- The gospel has become detached from the freedom in Christ and attached to the politics of power, "another ideology claiming the divine stamp of approval added to the long list of such movements past and present that end in coercion, oppression, and violence." 210