



PACIFIC
CROSSROADS
CHURCH

April 30, 2017

PRESENCE

Reflections

Dear Alfred,

I think that this experience you are having of losing your faith, or as you think, of having lost it, is an experience that in the long run belongs to faith...I don't know how the kind of faith required of a Christian living in the 20th century can be at all if it is not grounded on this experience that you are having right now of unbelief.

As a freshman in college you are bombarded with new ideas, or rather pieces of ideas, new frames of reference, an activation of the intellectual life which is only beginning but which is already running ahead of your lived experience. After a year of this, you think you cannot believe. You are just beginning to realize how difficult it is to have faith ...

The intellectual difficulties have to be met, however, and you will be meeting them for the rest of your life. ...Where you have absolute solutions, however, you have no need of faith. Faith is what you have in the absence of knowledge. ...You can't fit the Almighty into your intellectual categories ...

If you want your faith, you have to work for it. It is a gift, but for very few is it a gift given without any demand for equal time devoted to its cultivation. For every book you read that is anti-Christian, make it your business to read one that presents the other side of the picture; Don't think that you have to abandon reason to be a Christian. ...Even in the life of a Christian, faith rises and falls like the tides of an invisible sea. It's there, even when he can't see it or feel it, if he wants it to be there.

Sincerely,
Flannery O'Connor

Flannery O'Connor, writing to college freshman, Alfred Corn

Scripture

1 Peter 3:8-9, 13-18

⁸ Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. ⁹ Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

¹³ Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.

Sermon

Are You Prepared to Make a Defense?

Rankin Wilbourne

Events & News

Volunteer at Pacific Crossroads, Sign Up Today

Take the next step at Pacific Crossroads by volunteering. Opportunities are available to serve our church, our children and youth, and our city. Sign up on the card in your bulletin or via the PCC website and app.

Special Service, invisible(s) Duffel Bags, May 7

On Sunday, May 7, join us as we collectively pray for, pack, and send out 1000 duffel bags for LA foster kids.

There will only be one service on this day - 11 AM, Santa Monica High School. No 9 AM or 5 PM services.

How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth, May 20

Want to breathe new life into your devotional time? Join us for this seminar on practical strategies for experiencing more of God's power and peace through the scriptures. .

View all events on our app, at PacificCrossroads.org/Events, or in our events brochure available at the Connect Center.

Ministry Resources

Pastoral Care

Our pastoral care team is here to care for you if you are in a difficult place. Email pastoralcare@pacificcrossroads.org or call our office at 310.551.0081.

Celebrate Recovery

Join together weekly with others to celebrate God's healing power in our lives. Visit PacificCrossroads.org/CelebrateRecovery.