

THE FOUR STYLES OF FAITH
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in Will Our Children Have Faith?

EXPERIENCED FAITH: develops first in young children by observing, exploring, testing, trusting parents - world - God. Is very fresh and personal.

AFFILIATIVE FAITH: (von Hugel's institutional faith, Avery Dulles' fiducial faith, Paul Tillich's heteronomous faith) develops during the school years as the child learns the story and rules of the church. Learning who "we" are, how to belong, how to participate.

Authority is external in the community, in parents, in tradition.

Religion is really institutional affiliation.

Focus is on conserving tradition.

Basic concern is right trust and relationships.

Decisions made on the basis of feelings.

If arrested in adults, it becomes pietism (anti-intellectualism), exclusivism, authoritarianism and fundamentalism (closed mind).

SEARCHING FAITH: (von Hugel's ideological faith, Dulles' intellectual faith, Tillich's autonomous faith) develops during teenage years along with independence and personal identity, where questioning others and oneself is prominent, along with critical judgment of one's tradition, experimentation with alternatives, doubting, searching with an active intellect.

Authority is internal, the self.

Religion is seen as belief and knowledge based on logical analysis.

Focus is on prophetic judgment and retraditioning.

Basic concern is right thinking and belief.

Decisions made on the basis of reason.

If arrested in adults, it becomes agnosticism, skepticism and anti-institutionalism.

OWNED or MATURE FAITH: (von Hugel' mystical faith, Dulles' performative faith, Tillich's theonomous faith) is based on the 3 prior styles and involves a personal union with God through an integration of one's will, intuition and intellect into a life of contemplation and action.

Authority is the unity of God and the self.

Religion is seen as the incarnational life in obedience to God's will.

Focus is on life in the paradox of catholic substance and protestant principle.

Basic concern is right action based on holistic reflection.

Decisions are made on the basis of Scripture, tradition, experience and reason.

Typical of late adulthood and assumes the character of a life-long pilgrimage of sanctification.