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## FAITH FIRST, THEN UNDERSTANDING

**“The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim). (Romans 10:8)**

**God does not profess to answer in Scripture all the questions that we, in our boundless curiosity, would like to ask about Scripture. He tells us merely as such as he sees we need to know for our life of faith.** And he leaves unsolved some of the problems raised by what he tells us, to teach us a humble trust in his veracity.

**The question, therefore, that we must ask ourselves when faced with these puzzles is not, Is it reasonable to imagine that this is so? but, Is it reasonable to accept God’s assurance that this is so? Is it reasonable to take God’s word and believe that he has spoken the truth, though I cannot fully comprehend what he has said? The question carries its own answer.** We should not abandon faith in anything God has taught us merely because we cannot solve all the problems which it raises. **Our own intellectual competence is not the test and measure of divine truth. It is not for us to stop believing because we lack understanding, or to postpone believing till we can get understanding, but to believe in order that we may understand; as Augustine said, “Unless you believe, you will not understand.”** Faith first, sight afterward is God’s order, not *vice versa*; the proof of the sincerity of our faith is our willingness to have it so.

**Therefore, we should not hesitate to commit ourselves to faith in the Trinity, or to faith in the Incarnation, or to faith in Scripture as the infallible Word of the infallible God, even though we cannot solve all the puzzles, nor reconcile all the apparent contradictions. On all these articles of faith we have God’s positive assurance, and that should be enough.**

**AMEN.**

**~Dr. J.I. Packer**

*“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matthew 28:18 – 20*

