

Words Poorly Used #66 — Faith

G. K Chesterton wrote, “Reason itself is a matter of faith. It is an act of faith to assert that our thoughts have any relation to reality at all.” But I cannot remember ever having made such a leap with regard to reason. I intuit that reason is arrived at by an exercise of inherent capability, whereas faith seems to me an acceptance of stopping from applying reason to the unknowable. Chesterton’s idea works well within the limited scope that he has placed upon it. I will do a couple of paraphrases here, changing the scope, that I feel will make my point.

- Reason itself is a matter, based upon observation of evidence, of expectation. It is an act of expectation to understand that our thoughts have any relation to reality at all.
- Reason itself is a matter, based upon observation of evidence, of understanding probability. It is an act of understanding probability to understand that our thoughts have any relation to reality at all.

I don’t think we need to understand faith at all. To question it is to render it moot. And I don’t think we need to understand reason as a function of faith. I see voluntarism as requiring faith, reason, expectation, and understanding of likelihood.

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