

energetic denial. The patient has learned something that he did not know before—the meaning of his symptom—and yet he knows it as little as ever. Thus we discover that there is more than one kind of ignorance. It requires a considerable degree of insight and understanding of psychological matters order to see in what the difference consists. But the proposition that symptoms vanish with the acquisition of knowledge of their meaning remains true, nevertheless. The necessary condition is that the knowledge must be founded upon an inner change in the patient which can

only come about by a mental operation directed to that end.

Freud, *General Introduction to Psycho-Analysis*, XVIII

- 57 While the power of thought frees us from servile subjection to instinct, appetite, and routine, it also brings with it the occasion and possibility of error and mistake. In elevating us above the brute, it opens to us the possibility of failures to which the animal, limited to instinct, cannot sink.

Dewey, *How We Think*, Pt. I, II, 2

6.5 | *Opinion, Belief, and Faith*

The three subjects considered here all tend to bring the meaning of knowledge into sharper focus. Does the man who says “I know” signify a different state of mind from the man who says, of the same matter, “I opine,” or “I think,” or “I believe”? What is the difference? Are there some things of which we can only say “I think,” “I opine,” or “I believe,” but not “I know”? Is faith a belief about things that we cannot know? These and similar questions are dealt with in the passages quoted below.

Employing the phrase “right opinion” to designate an opinion that happens to be true, Plato attempts to point out why it is better to have knowledge than right opinion even though both put the mind in possession of the truth. In a similar vein, Aristotle comments on the difference between knowing the truth of a theorem in geometry because one is able to demonstrate it and believing or opining that it is true on the authority of one’s teacher. In subsequent elaborations of the same insight, knowledge and opinion or belief are differentiated by the distinction between that which the mind necessarily affirms and that to which it voluntarily gives its assent. If I cannot withhold my assent

from the proposition that two plus two makes four, then I know it to be true; I do not opine or believe it. But if what is proposed is something that I can voluntarily accept or reject, then my affirmation or denial of the matter is an act of opinion or belief, not of knowledge. In geometry, for example, an axiom commands my assent, but I am free to accept or reject a postulate which asks me to take something for granted.

As the difference between knowledge, on the one hand, and opinion or belief, on the other, becomes clearer, the door to skepticism is opened by doubts concerning the extent of the area in which men can properly say that they know. This is countered by giving greater weight or credence to opinions and beliefs in proportion as they are well grounded in observed facts or supported by cogent reasons even though the facts and the reasons do not produce the certainty of self-evident or of demonstrated truths. Accordingly, the discussion of opinion and belief becomes involved with considerations of probability, and with efforts to ascertain the degree of probability that, for all practical purposes, is as good as certainty.

In common speech the words “belief”

and “faith” are often used interchangeably, but the word “faith” has a special and distinct significance when it is employed by writers in the Judaeo-Christian tradition of Western thought. The passages quoted here reflecting that tradition set religious faith apart from the ordinary run of secular beliefs by confining it to the things that God has explicitly revealed to men in Sacred Scripture. Having such faith is thought to be

a mark of divine grace. Men may exercise their own will to believe about other matters, but belief in the articles of religious faith is a gift that God himself bestows upon them. Because theology, or at least dogmatic theology, finds its first principles in the articles of religious faith and then attempts to explicate what is thus believed, some quotations dealing with theology are included here.

- 1 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Psalm 119:105

- 2 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate,

And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

Isaiah 6:9–12

- 3 *Socrates.* If a man knew the way to Larisa, or anywhere else, and went to the place and led others thither, would he not be a right and good guide?

Meno. Certainly.

Soc. And a person who had a right opinion about the way, but had never been and did not know, might be a good guide also, might he not?

Men. Certainly.

Soc. And while he has true opinion about that which the other knows, he will be just as good a guide if he thinks the truth, as he who knows the truth?

Men. Exactly.

Soc. Then true opinion is as good a guide to correct action as knowledge; and that was the point which we omitted in our speculation about the nature of virtue, when we said that knowledge only is the guide of right action; whereas there is also right opinion.

Men. True.

Soc. Then right opinion is not less useful than knowledge?

Men. The difference, Socrates, is only that he who has knowledge will always be right; but he who has right opinion will sometimes be right, and sometimes not.

Soc. What do you mean? Can he be wrong who has right opinion, so long as he has right opinion?

Men. I admit the cogency of your argument, and therefore, Socrates, I wonder that knowledge should be preferred to right opinion—or why they should ever differ.

Soc. And shall I explain this wonder to you?

Men. Do tell me.

Soc. You would not wonder if you had ever observed the images of Daedalus; but perhaps you have not got them in your country?

Men. What have they to do with the question?

Soc. Because they require to be fastened in order to keep them, and if they are not fastened they will play truant and run away.

Men. Well, what of that?

Soc. I mean to say that they are not very valuable possessions if they are at liberty, for they will walk off like runaway slaves; but when fastened, they are of great value, for they are really beautiful works of art. Now this is an illustration of the nature of true opinions: while they abide with us they are beautiful and fruitful, but they run away out of the human soul, and do not remain long, and therefore they are not of much value until they are fastened by the tie of the cause; and this fastening of them, friend Meno, is recollection, as you and I have agreed to call it. But when they are bound, in the first place, they have the nature of knowledge; and, in the second place, they are abiding. And this is why knowledge is more honourable and excellent than true opinion, because fastened by a chain.

Plato, *Meno*, 97A

- 4 *Socrates.* Seeing . . . that not only rhetoric works by persuasion, but that other arts do the same, as in the case of the painter, a question has arisen which is a very fair one: Of what persuasion is

rhetoric the artificer, and about what?—is not that a fair way of putting the question?

Gorgias. I think so.

Soc. Then, if you approve the question, Gorgias, what is the answer?

Gor. I answer, Socrates, that rhetoric is the art of persuasion in courts of law and other assemblies, as I was just now saying, and about the just and unjust.

Soc. And that, Gorgias, was what I was suspecting to be your notion; yet I would not have you wonder if by-and-by I am found repeating a seemingly plain question; for I ask not in order to confute you, but as I was saying that the argument may proceed consecutively, and that we may not get the habit of anticipating and suspecting the meaning of one another's words; I would have you develop your own views in your own way, whatever may be your hypothesis.

Gor. I think that you are quite right, Socrates.

Soc. Then let me raise another question; there is such a thing as "having learned"?

Gor. Yes.

Soc. And there is also "having believed"?

Gor. Yes.

Soc. And is the "having learned" the same as "having believed," and are learning and belief the same things?

Gor. In my judgment, Socrates, they are not the same.

Soc. And your judgment is right, as you may ascertain in this way:—If a person were to say to you, "Is there, Gorgias, a false belief as well as a true?"—you would reply, if I am not mistaken, that there is.

Gor. Yes.

Soc. Well, but is there a false knowledge as well as a true?

Gor. No.

Soc. No, indeed; and this again proves that knowledge and belief differ.

Gor. Very true.

Soc. And yet those who have learned as well as those who have believed are persuaded?

Gor. Just so.

Soc. Shall we then assume two sorts of persuasion,—one which is the source of belief without knowledge, as the other is of knowledge?

Gor. By all means.

Soc. And which sort of persuasion does rhetoric create in courts of law and other assemblies about the just and unjust, the sort of persuasion which gives belief without knowledge, or that which gives knowledge?

Gor. Clearly, Socrates, that which only gives belief.

Soc. Then rhetoric, as would appear, is the artificer of a persuasion which creates belief about the just and unjust, but gives no instruction about them?

Gor. True.

Plato, *Gorgias*, 454A

5 Things that are true and things that are better are, by their nature, practically always easier to prove and easier to believe in.

Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1355a38

6 Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Matthew 11:25–27

7 The disciples came, and said unto him, why speakest thou unto them in parables?

He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of *Ē-sāʿās*, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

Matthew 13:10–17

8 Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Matthew 17:20

9 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

Mark 9:24

10 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall

say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

Mark 11:23-24

- 11 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

John 20:29

Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For *E-sai-as* saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Romans 10:13-17

- 13 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

Galatians 3:1-11

- 14 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.

II Timothy 4:7

- 15 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

Hebrews 2:1-4

- 16 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1

- 17 We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.

II Peter 1:16-19

- 18 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

Revelation 1:1-3

- 19 I was glad also that the old scriptures of the Law and the Prophets were set before me now, no longer in that light in which they had formerly seemed absurd, when I criticised Your holy ones

for thinking this or that which in plain fact they did not think. And it was a joy to hear Ambrose who often repeated to his congregation, as if it were a rule he was most strongly urging upon them, the text: *the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life*. And he would go on to draw aside the veil of mystery and lay open the spiritual meaning of things which taken literally would have seemed to teach falsehood.

Augustine, *Confessions*, VI, 4

- 20 I wanted to be as certain of things unseen as that seven and three make ten. For I had not reached the point of madness which denies that even this can be known; but I wanted to know other things as clearly as this, either such material things as were not present to my senses, or spiritual things which I did not know how to conceive save corporally. By believing I might have been cured; for then the eye of my mind would have been clearer and so might in some way have been directed towards Your truth which abides for ever and knows no defect. But as usually happens, the man who has tried a bad doctor is afraid to trust even a good one, so it was with the health of my soul, which could not be healed save by believing, and refused to be healed that way for fear of believing falsehood. Thus I was resisting Your hands, for You first prepared for us the medicine of faith and then applied it to the diseases of the world and gave it such great power.

Augustine, *Confessions*, VI, 4

- 21 I continued my miserable complaining: "How long, how long shall I go on saying tomorrow and again tomorrow? Why not now, why not have an end to my uncleanness this very hour?"

Such things I said, weeping in the most bitter sorrow of my heart. And suddenly I heard a voice from some nearby house, a boy's voice or a girl's voice, I do not know: but it was a sort of sing-song, repeated again and again, "Take and read, take and read." I ceased weeping and immediately began to search my mind most carefully as to whether children were accustomed to chant these words in any kind of game, and I could not remember that I had ever heard any such thing. Damping back the flood of my tears I arose, interpreting the incident as quite certainly a divine command to open my book of Scripture and read the passage at which I should open. . . . So I was moved to return to the place where Alypius was sitting, for I had put down the Apostle's book there when I arose. I snatched it up, opened it and in silence read the passage upon which my eyes first fell: *Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences*. [Romans xiii, 13.] I had no wish to read further, and no need. For in that instant, with the very ending of the sentence, it was as

though a light of utter confidence shone in all my heart, and all the darkness of uncertainty vanished away. . . .

Then we went in to my mother and told her, to her great joy. We related how it had come about: she was filled with triumphant exultation, and praised You who are mighty beyond what we ask or conceive: for she saw that You had given her more than with all her pitiful weeping she had ever asked. For You converted me to Yourself so that I no longer sought a wife nor any of this world's promises, but stood upon that same rule of faith in which You had shown me to her so many years before. Thus You changed her mourning into joy, a joy far richer than she had thought to wish, a joy much dearer and purer than she had thought to find in grandchildren of my flesh.

Augustine, *Confessions*, VIII, 12

- 22 This Mediator, having spoken what He judged sufficient first by the prophets, then by His own lips, and afterwards by the apostles, has besides produced the Scripture which is called canonical, which has paramount authority, and to which we yield assent in all matters of which we ought not to be ignorant, and yet cannot know of ourselves. For if we attain the knowledge of present objects by the testimony of our own senses, whether internal or external, then, regarding objects remote from our own senses, we need others to bring their testimony, since we cannot know them by our own, and we credit the persons to whom the objects have been or are sensibly present. Accordingly, as in the case of visible objects which we have not seen, we trust those who have (and likewise with all sensible objects), so in the case of things which are perceived by the mind and spirit, i.e., which are remote from our interior sense, it behoves us to trust those who have seen them set in that incorporeal light, or abidingly contemplate them.

Augustine, *City of God*, XI, 3

- 23 Men see Him just so far as they die to this world; and so far as they live to it they see Him not. But yet, although that light may begin to appear clearer, and not only more tolerable, but even more delightful, still it is only through a glass darkly that we are said to see, because we walk by faith, not by sight, while we continue to wander as strangers in this world, even though our conversation be in heaven.

Augustine, *Christian Doctrine*, II, 7

- 24 Just as poor as the store of gold and silver and garments which the people of Israel brought with them out of Egypt was in comparison with the riches which they afterwards attained at Jerusalem, and which reached their height in the reign of King Solomon, so poor is all the useful knowl-

edge which is gathered from the books of the heathen when compared with the knowledge of Holy Scripture. For whatever man may have learnt from other sources, if it is hurtful, it is there condemned; if it is useful, it is therein contained. And while every man may find there all that he has learnt of useful elsewhere, he will find there in much greater abundance things that are to be found nowhere else, but can be learnt only in the wonderful sublimity and wonderful simplicity of the Scriptures.

Augustine, *Christian Doctrine*, II, 42

- 25 What I understand I also believe, but I do not understand everything that I believe; for all which I understand I know, but I do not know all that I believe. But still I am not unmindful of the utility of believing many things which are not known. . . . And though the majority of things must remain unknown to me, yet I do know what is the utility of believing.

Augustine, *On the Teacher*, XI, 37

- 26 Although by the revelation of grace in this life we cannot know of God "what He is," and thus are united to Him as to one unknown, still we know Him more fully according as many and more excellent of His effects are demonstrated to us, and according as we attribute to Him some things known by divine revelation, to which natural reason cannot reach, as, for instance, that God is Three and One.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, 12, 13

- 27 The light of faith makes us see what we believe. For just as, by the habits of the other virtues, man sees what is fitting to him in respect of that habit, so, by the habit of faith, the human mind is directed to assent to such things as are fitting to a right faith, and not to assent to others.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, 1, 4

- 28 Unbelievers are in ignorance of things that are of faith, for neither do they see or know them in themselves, nor do they know them to be credible. The faithful, on the other hand, know them, not as by demonstration, but by the light of faith which makes them see that they ought to believe them.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, 1, 5

- 29 Science and opinion about the same object can certainly be in different men, as we have stated above about science and faith. Yet it is possible for one and the same man to have science and faith about the same thing relatively, that is, in relation to the subject, but not in the same respect. For it is possible for the same person, about one and the same thing, to know one thing and to think another. And, in like manner, one may know by demonstration the unity of God, and believe that He is

a Trinity. On the other hand, in one and the same man, about the same thing, and in the same respect, science is incompatible with either opinion or faith, yet for different reasons. Because science is incompatible with opinion about the same thing absolutely, for the notion of science demands that what is known should be thought impossible to be otherwise, but the notion of opinion demands that the thing of which there is opinion may be thought possible to be otherwise. Yet that which is held by faith, on account of the certainty of faith, is also thought impossible to be otherwise; and the reason why science and faith cannot be about the same object and in the same respect is because the object of science is something seen, while the object of faith is the unseen, as stated above.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, 1, 5

- 30 Whatever is in opposition to faith, whether it consist in a man's thoughts, or in outward persecution, increases the merit of faith, insofar as the will is shown to be more prompt and firm in believing. Hence the martyrs had more merit of faith, through not renouncing faith on account of persecution; and even the wise have greater merit of faith, through not renouncing their faith on account of the reasons brought forward by philosophers or heretics in opposition to faith.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, 2, 10

- 31 Other things being equal sight is more certain than hearing. But if (the authority of) the person from whom we hear greatly surpasses that of the seer's sight, hearing is more certain than sight. Thus a man of little science is more certain about what he hears on the authority of an expert in science, than about what is apparent to him according to his own reason. And much more is a man certain about what he hears from God, Who cannot be deceived, than about what he sees with his own reason, which can be mistaken.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, 4, 8

- 32 Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and argument of things which are not seen; and this I take to be its quiddity.

Dante, *Paradiso*, XXIV, 64

- 33 I believe in one God, sole and eternal, who moveth all the heaven, himself unmoved, with love and with desire.

And for such belief I have not only proofs physic and metaphysic, but it is given me likewise by the truth which hence doth rain

through Moses, through the Prophets and through the Psalms, through the Gospel and through you who wrote when the glowing Spirit had made you fosterers.

And I believe in three eternal Persons, and I believe them one Essence, so One and so Trine as to comport at once with *are* and *is*.

With the profound divine state whereof I speak,
my mind is stamped more times than once by
evangelic teaching.

This the beginning is; this is the spark which then
dilates into a living flame, and like a star in
heaven shineth in me.

Dante, *Paradiso*, XXIV, 130

- 34 The principal lesson of theology is that Christ can
be known.

Luther, *Table Talk*, 1353

- 35 Prior to faith and a knowledge of God, reason is
darkness, but in believers it's an excellent instru-
ment. Just as all gifts and instruments of nature
are evil in godless men, so they are good in believ-
ers. Faith is now furthered by reason, speech, and
eloquence, whereas these were only impediments
prior to faith. Enlightened reason, taken captive
by faith, receives life from faith, for it is slain and
given life again.

Luther, *Table Talk*, 2938b

- 36 Faith justifies not as a work, or as a quality, or as
knowledge, but as assent of the will and firm con-
fidence in the mercy of God. For if faith were only
knowledge, then the devil would certainly be
saved because he possesses the greatest knowledge
of God and of all the works and wonders of God
from the creation of the world. Accordingly faith
must be understood otherwise than as knowledge.
In part, however, it is assent.

Luther, *Table Talk*, 4655

- 37 Little children are saved only by faith without
any good works; therefore faith alone justifies. If
God's power be able to effect that in one, then he
is also able to accomplish it in all; for the power of
the child effects it not, but the power of faith;
neither is it done through the child's weakness or
disability; for then that weakness would be merit
of itself, or equivalent to merit. It is a mischievous
thing that we miserable, sinful wretches will up-
braid God, and hit him in the teeth with our
works, and think thereby to be justified before
him; but God will not allow it.

Luther, *Table Talk*, H304

- 38 Faith consists in a knowledge of God and of
Christ, not in reverence for the Church.

Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, III, 2

- 39 Faith is a knowledge of the benevolence of God
towards us, and a certain persuasion of his veraci-
ty.

Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, III, 2

- 40 The principal hinge on which faith turns is this—
that we must not consider the promises of mercy,
which the Lord offers, as true only to others, and

not to ourselves; but rather make them our own,
by embracing them in our hearts.

Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, III, 2

- 41 Perhaps it is not without reason that we attribute
facility in belief and conviction to simplicity and
ignorance; for it seems to me I once learned that
belief was a sort of impression made on our mind,
and that the softer and less resistant the mind, the
easier it was to imprint something on it. . . . The
more a mind is empty and without counterpoise,
the more easily it gives beneath the weight of the
first persuasive argument.

Montaigne, *Essays*, I, 27, It Is Folly

- 42 Some make the world believe that they believe
what they do not believe. Others, in greater num-
ber, make themselves believe it, being unable to
penetrate what it means to believe.

Montaigne, *Essays*, II, 12, Apology for
Raymond Sebond

- 43 We must not give God chaff for wheat, as they
say. If we believed in him, I do not say by faith,
but with a simple belief; in fact (and I say it to
our great confusion), if we believed in him just as
in any other history, if we knew him like one of
our comrades, we would love him above all other
things, for the infinite goodness and beauty that
shines in him. At least he would march in the
same rank in our affection as riches, pleasures,
glory, and our friends.

Montaigne, *Essays*, II, 12, Apology for
Raymond Sebond

- 44 The participation that we have in the knowledge
of truth, whatever it may be, has not been ac-
quired by our own powers. God has taught us that
clearly enough by the witnesses that he has chosen
from the common people, simple and ignorant, to
instruct us in his admirable secrets. Our faith is
not of our own acquiring; it is a pure present of
another's liberality. It is not by reasoning or by
our understanding that we have received our reli-
gion; it is by external authority and command.
The weakness of our judgment helps us more in
this than its strength, and our blindness more
than our clear-sightedness. It is by the mediation
of our ignorance more than of our knowledge that
we are learned with that divine learning.

Montaigne, *Essays*, II, 12, Apology for
Raymond Sebond

- 45 Reason does nothing but go astray in everything,
and especially when it meddles with divine things.
Who feels this more evidently than we? For even
though we have given it certain and infallible
principles, even though we light its steps with the
holy lamp of the truth which it has pleased God to
communicate to us, nevertheless we see daily how,
when it strays however little from the beaten path

and deviates or wanders from the way traced and trodden by the Church, immediately it is lost, it grows embarrassed and entangled, whirling round and floating in that vast, troubled, and undulating sea of human opinions, unbridled and aimless. As soon as it loses that great common highroad it breaks up and disperses onto a thousand different roads.

Montaigne, *Essays*, II, 12, Apology for Raymond Sebond

- 46 I do not at all hate opinions contrary to mine. I am so far from being vexed to see discord between my judgments and others', and from making myself incompatible with the society of men because they are of a different sentiment and party from mine, that on the contrary, since variety is the most general fashion that nature has followed, and more in minds than bodies, inasmuch as minds are of a substance suppler and susceptible of more forms, I find it much rarer to see our humors and plans agree. And there were never in the world two opinions alike, any more than two hairs or two grains. Their most universal quality is diversity.

Montaigne, *Essays*, II, 37, Children and Fathers

- 47 I enter into discussion and argument with great freedom and ease, inasmuch as opinion finds in me a bad soil to penetrate and take deep roots in. No propositions astonish me, no belief offends me, whatever contrast it offers with my own. There is no fancy so frivolous and so extravagant that it does not seem to me quite suitable to the production of the human mind. We who deprive our judgment of the right to make decisions look mildly on opinions different from ours; and if we do not lend them our judgment, we easily lend them our ears. Where one scale of the balance is totally empty, I let the other vacillate under an old woman's dreams. And it seems to me excusable if I take rather the odd number than the even, Thursday rather than Friday; if I am happier to be twelfth or fourteenth than thirteenth at table; if I would rather see a hare skirting my path when I travel than crossing it, and rather give my left foot than my right to be booted first. All such idle fancies, which are in credit around us, deserve at least to be listened to. For me they outweigh only emptiness, but they do outweigh that. Popular and chance opinions count in weight for something, and not nothing, in nature. And he who does not let himself go that far may perhaps fall into the vice of obstinacy to avoid that of superstition.

Montaigne, *Essays*, III, 8, Of the Art of Discussion

- 48 I honoured our theology and aspired as much as anyone to reach to heaven, but having learned to

regard it as a most highly assured fact that the road is not less open to the most ignorant than to the most learned, and that the revealed truths which conduct thither are quite above our intelligence, I should not have dared to submit them to the feebleness of my reasonings; and I thought that, in order to undertake to examine them and succeed in so doing, it was necessary to have some extraordinary assistance from above and to be more than a mere man.

Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, I

- 49 Though the matters be obscure with which our faith is said to deal, nevertheless this is understood to hold only of the fact or matter of which it treats, and it is not meant that the formal reason on account of which we assent to matters of faith is obscure: for, on the other hand, this formal reason consists in a certain internal light, and it is when God supernaturally fills us with this illumination that we are confident that what is proposed for our belief has been revealed by Him, Himself, and that it is clearly impossible that He should lie: a fact more certain than any natural light and often indeed more evident than it on account of the light of grace.

Descartes, *Objections and Replies*, II

- 50 The Scripture was written to show unto men the kingdom of God, and to prepare their minds to become His obedient subjects, leaving the world, and the philosophy thereof, to the disputation of men for the exercising of their natural reason.

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, 8

- 51 Faith of supernatural law is not a fulfilling, but only an assenting to the same; and not a duty that we exhibit to God, but a gift which God freely giveth to whom He pleaseth; as also unbelief is not a breach of any of His laws, but a rejection of them all, except the laws natural.

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, II, 26

- 52 Disputing of God's nature is contrary to His honour, for it is supposed that in this natural kingdom of God, there is no other way to know anything but by natural reason; that is, from the principles of natural science; which are so far from teaching us anything of God's nature, as they cannot teach us our own nature, nor the nature of the smallest creature living. And therefore, when men out of the principles of natural reason dispute of the attributes of God, they but dishonour Him: for in the attributes which we give to God, we are not to consider the signification of philosophical truth, but the signification of pious intention to do Him the greatest honour we are able.

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, II, 31

- 53 Belief and unbelief never follow men's commands. Faith is a gift of God which man can neither give

nor take away by promise of rewards or menaces of torture.

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, III, 42

- 54 As for those wingy Mysteries in Divinity, and airy subtleties in Religion, which have unhing'd the brains of better heads, they never stretched the *Pia Mater* of mine. Methinks there be not impossibilities enough in Religion for an active faith; the deepest Mysteries ours contains have not only been illustrated, but maintained, by Syllogism and the rule of Reason. I love to lose my self in a mystery, to pursue my Reason to an *O altitudo!* 'Tis my solitary recreation to pose my apprehension with those involved Ænigma's and riddles of the Trinity, with Incarnation, and Resurrection. I can answer all the Objections of Satan and my rebellious reason with that odd resolution I learned of *Tertullian*, *Certum est quia impossibile est*. I desire to exercise my faith in the difficultest point; for to credit ordinary and visible objects is not faith, but perswasion. Some believe the better for seeing Christ's Sepulchre; and when they have seen the Red Sea, doubt not of the Miracle. Now contrarily, I bless my self and am thankful that I lived not in the days of Miracles, that I never saw Christ nor His Disciples; I would not have been one of those *Israelites* that pass'd the Red Sea, nor one of Christ's patients on whom he wrought his wonders; then had my faith been thrust upon me, nor should I enjoy that greater blessing pronounced to all that believe and saw not. 'Tis an easie and necessary belief, to credit what our eye and sense hath examined: I believe he was dead, and buried, and rose again; and desire to see him in his glory, rather than to contemplate him in his Cenotaphe or Sepulchre. Nor is this much to believe; as we have reason, we owe this faith unto History: they only had the advantage of a bold and noble Faith, who lived before his coming, who upon obscure prophesies and mystical Types could raise a belief, and expect apparent impossibilities.

Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, I, 9

- 55 How shall the dead arise, is no question of my Faith; to believe only possibilities, is not Faith, but meer Philosophy.

Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, I, 48

- 56 Faith indeed tells what the senses do not tell, but not the contrary of what they see. It is above them and not contrary to them.

Pascal, *Pensées*, IV, 265

- 57 If we submit everything to reason, our religion will have no mysterious and supernatural element. If we offend the principles of reason, our religion will be absurd and ridiculous.

Pascal, *Pensées*, IV, 273

- 58 Instead of complaining that God had hidden Himself, you will give Him thanks for not having revealed so much of Himself; and you will also give Him thanks for not having revealed Himself to haughty sages, unworthy to know so holy a God.

Two kinds of persons know Him: those who have a humble heart, and who love lowliness, whatever kind of intellect they may have, high or low; and those who have sufficient understanding to see the truth, whatever opposition they may have to it.

Pascal, *Pensées*, IV, 288

- 59 The knowledge of God without that of man's misery causes pride. The knowledge of man's misery without that of God causes despair. The knowledge of Jesus Christ constitutes the middle course, because in Him we find both God and our misery.

Pascal, *Pensées*, VII, 527

- 60 We understand nothing of the works of God, if we do not take as a principle that He has willed to blind some and enlighten others.

Pascal, *Pensées*, VIII, 566

- 61 It is a wonderful thing, and worthy of particular attention, to see this Jewish people existing so many years in perpetual misery, it being necessary as a proof of Jesus Christ both that they should exist to prove Him and that they should be miserable because they crucified Him; and though to be miserable and to exist are contradictory, they nevertheless still exist in spite of their misery. They are visibly a people expressly created to serve as a witness to the Messiah (Isaiah 43.9; 44.8). They keep the books, and love them, and do not understand them. And all this was foretold; that God's judgments are entrusted to them, but as a sealed book.

Pascal, *Pensées*, IX, 640–641

- 62 What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That to the highth of this great Argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justifie the wayes of God to men.

Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I, 22

- 63 Thou Celestial light
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Milton, *Paradise Lost*, III, 51

- 64 So spake the Seraph *Abdiel* faithful found,
Among the faithless, faithful only hee;
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshak'n, uneduc'd, unterrifi'd

His Loyaltie he kept, his Love, his Zeale;
 Nor number, nor example with him wrought
 To swerve from truth, or change his constant
 mind
 Though single. From amidst them forth he passd,
 Long way through hostile scorn, which he sus-
 teind
 Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught;
 And with retorted scorn his back he turn'd
 On those proud Towers to swift destruction
 doom'd.

Milton, *Paradise Lost*, V, 893

- 65 Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making.

Milton, *Areopagitica*

- 66 As in the whole course of my investigation I found nothing taught expressly by Scripture, which does not agree with our understanding, or which is repugnant thereto, and as I saw that the prophets taught nothing, which is not very simple and easily to be grasped by all, and further, that they clothed their teaching in the style, and confirmed it with the reasons, which would most deeply move the mind of the masses to devotion towards God, I became thoroughly convinced, that the Bible leaves reason absolutely free, that it has nothing in common with philosophy, in fact, that Revelation and Philosophy stand on totally different footings.

Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, Pref.

- 67 Scripture does not teach philosophy, but merely obedience, and . . . all it contains has been adapted to the understanding and established opinions of the multitude. Those, therefore, who wish to adapt it to philosophy, must needs ascribe to the prophets many ideas which they never even dreamed of, and give an extremely forced interpretation to their words: those on the other hand, who would make reason and philosophy subservient to theology, will be forced to accept as Divine utterances the prejudices of the ancient Jews, and to fill and confuse their mind therewith. In short, one party will run wild with the aid of reason, and the other will run wild without the aid of reason.

Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, XV

- 68 Faith is not built on disquisitions vain;
 The things we must believe are few and plain.

Dryden, *Religio Laici*, 431

- 69 Divine faith itself, when it is kindled in the soul, is something more than an opinion, and depends not upon the occasions or the motives that have given it birth; it advances beyond the intellect, and takes possession of the will and of the heart, to

make us act with zeal and joyfully as the law of God commands. Then we have no further need to think of reasons or to pause over the difficulties of argument which the mind may anticipate.

Leibniz, *Theodicy*, 29

- 70 Though everything said in the text be infallibly true, yet the reader may be, nay, cannot choose but be, very fallible in the understanding of it. Nor is it to be wondered, that the will of God, when clothed in words, should be liable to that doubt and uncertainty which unavoidably attends that sort of conveyance, when even his Son, whilst clothed in flesh, was subject to all the frailties and inconveniences of human nature, sin excepted.

Locke, *Concerning Human Understanding*,
 Bk. III, IX, 23

- 71 Though the common experience and the ordinary course of things have justly a mighty influence on the minds of men, to make them give or refuse credit to anything proposed to their belief; yet there is one case, wherein the strangeness of the fact lessens not the assent to a fair testimony given of it. For where such supernatural events are suitable to ends aimed at by Him who has the power to change the course of nature, there, under such circumstances, that may be the fitter to procure belief, by how much the more they are beyond or contrary to ordinary observation. This is the proper case of miracles, which, well attested, do not only find credit themselves, but give it also to other truths, which need such confirmation.

Locke, *Concerning Human Understanding*,
 Bk. IV, XVI, 13

- 72 Reason is natural revelation, whereby the eternal Father of light and fountain of all knowledge, communicates to mankind that portion of truth which he has laid within the reach of their natural faculties: revelation is natural reason enlarged by a new set of discoveries communicated by God immediately; which reason vouches the truth of, by the testimony and proofs it gives that they come from God. So that he that takes away reason to make way for revelation, puts out the light of both, and does much what the same as if he would persuade a man to put out his eyes, the better to receive the remote light of an invisible star by a telescope.

Locke, *Concerning Human Understanding*,
 Bk. IV, XIX, 4

- 73 I believe that thousands of men would be orthodox enough in certain points, if divines had not been too curious, or too narrow, in reducing orthodoxy within the compass of subtleties, niceties, and distinctions, with little warrant from Scripture and less from reason or good policy.

Swift, *Thoughts on Religion*

74 Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutor'd mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
His soul proud Science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,
Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n;
Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,
Some happier island in the watry waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold!
To Be, contents his natural desire,
He asks no Angel's wing, no Seraph's fire;
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.

Pope, *Essay on Man*, Epistle I, 99

75 For Modes of Faith, let graceless zealots fight;
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.
Pope, *Essay on Man*, Epistle III, 305

76 When any opinion leads to absurdities, it is certainly false; but it is not certain that an opinion is false, because it is of dangerous consequence.

Hume, *Concerning Human Understanding*, VIII, 75

77 Upon the whole, we may conclude, that the Christian religion not only was at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one. Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of its veracity: And whoever is moved by faith to assent to it, is conscious of a continued miracle in his own person, which subverts all the principles of his understanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and experience.

Hume, *Concerning Human Understanding*, X, 101

78 The universal propensity to believe in an invisible, intelligent power, if not an original instinct, being at least a general attendant of human nature, may be considered as a kind of mark or stamp, which the Divine workman has set upon his work; and nothing surely can more dignify mankind, than to be thus selected from all other parts of the creation, and to bear the image or impression of the universal Creator.

Hume, *Natural History of Religion*, XV

79 Mr. Murray praised the ancient philosophers for the candour and good humour with which those of different sects disputed with each other. *Johnson*. "Sir, they disputed with good humour, because they were not in earnest as to religion. Had the ancients been serious in their belief, we should not have had their Gods exhibited in the manner we find them represented in the Poets. The people would not have suffered it. They disputed with good humour upon their fanciful theories, because

they were not interested in the truth of them: when a man has nothing to lose, he may be in good humour with his opponent. Accordingly you see in Lucian, the Epicurean, who argues only negatively, keeps his temper; the Stoick, who has something positive to preserve, grows angry. Being angry with one who controverts an opinion which you value, is a necessary consequence of the uneasiness which you feel. Every man who attacks my belief, diminishes in some degree my confidence in it, and therefore makes me uneasy; and I am angry with him who makes me uneasy. Those only who believed in revelation have been angry at having their faith called in question; because they only had something upon which they could rest as matter of fact."

Boswell, *Life of Johnson* (Apr. 3, 1776)

80 The opinion of a learned Bishop of our acquaintance, as to there being merit in religious faith, being mentioned;—*Johnson*. "Why, yes, Sir, the most licentious man, were hell open before him, would not take the most beautiful strumpet to his arms. We must, as the Apostle says, live by faith, not by sight."

Boswell, *Life of Johnson* (June 3, 1781)

81 Since . . . the most sublime efforts of philosophy can extend no farther than feebly to point out the desire, the hope, or, at most, the probability of a future state, there is nothing, except a divine revelation that can ascertain the existence and describe the condition of the invisible country which is destined to receive the souls of men after their separation from the body.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, XV

82 Personal interest is often the standard of our belief, as well as of our practice.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, XX

83 The most sagacious of the Christian theologians, the great Athanasius himself, has candidly confessed that, whenever he forced his understanding to meditate on the divinity of the *Logos*, his toilsome and unavailing efforts recoiled on themselves; that the more he thought, the less he comprehended; and the more he wrote, the less capable was he of expressing his thoughts. In every step of the inquiry we are compelled to feel and acknowledge the immeasurable disproportion between the size of the object and the capacity of the human mind. We may strive to abstract the notions of time, of space, and of matter, which so closely adhere to all the perceptions of our experimental knowledge. But as soon as we presume to reason of infinite substance, of spiritual generation, as often as we deduce any positive conclusions from a negative idea, we are involved in

darkness, perplexity, and inevitable contradiction.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, XXI

- 84 I maintain that all attempts of reason to establish a theology by the aid of speculation alone are fruitless, that the principles of reason as applied to nature do not conduct us to any theological truths, and, consequently, that a rational theology can have no existence, unless it is founded upon the laws of morality. For all synthetical principles of the understanding are valid only as immanent in experience; while the cognition of a Supreme Being necessitates their being employed transcendently, and of this the understanding is quite incapable. If the empirical law of causality is to conduct us to a Supreme Being, this being must belong to the chain of empirical objects—in which case it would be, like all phenomena, itself conditioned. If the possibility of passing the limits of experience be admitted, by means of the dynamical law of the relation of an effect to its cause, what kind of conception shall we obtain by this procedure? Certainly not the conception of a Supreme Being, because experience never presents us with the greatest of all possible effects, and it is only an effect of this character that could witness to the existence of a corresponding cause. If, for the purpose of fully satisfying the requirements of Reason, we recognize her right to assert the existence of a perfect and absolutely necessary being, this can be admitted only from favour, and cannot be regarded as the result or irresistible demonstration. The physico-theological proof may add weight to others—if other proofs there are—by connecting speculation with experience; but in itself it rather prepares the mind for theological cognition, and gives it a right and natural direction, than establishes a sure foundation for theology.

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Transcendental Dialectic

- 85 Holding for true, or the subjective validity of a judgement in relation to conviction (which is, at the same time, objectively valid), has the three following degrees: opinion, belief, and knowledge. Opinion is a consciously insufficient judgement, subjectively as well as objectively. Belief is subjectively sufficient, but is recognized as being objectively insufficient. Knowledge is both subjectively and objectively sufficient. Subjective sufficiency is termed conviction (for myself); objective sufficiency is termed certainty (for all). I need not dwell longer on the explanation of such simple conceptions.

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Transcendental Method

- 86 When men exercise their reason coolly and freely on a variety of distinct questions, they inevitably

fall into different opinions on some of them. When they are governed by a common passion, their opinions, if they are so to be called, will be the same.

Hamilton or Madison, *Federalist* 50

- 87 Public opinion . . . deserves to be as much respected as despised—despised for its concrete expression and for the concrete consciousness it expresses, respected for its essential basis, a basis which only glimmers more or less dimly in that concrete expression. But in itself it has no criterion of discrimination, nor has it the ability to extract the substantive element it contains and raise it to precise knowledge. Thus to be independent of public opinion is the first formal condition of achieving anything great or rational whether in life or in science. Great achievement is assured, however, of subsequent recognition and grateful acceptance by public opinion, which in due course will make it one of its own prejudices.

Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, 318

- 88 Opinion is like a pendulum and obeys the same law. If it goes past the centre of gravity on one side, it must go a like distance on the other; and it is only after a certain time that it finds the true point at which it can remain at rest.

Schopenhauer, *Further Psychological Observations*

- 89 There is no other revelation than the thoughts of the wise, even though these thoughts, liable to error as is the lot of everything human, are often clothed in strange allegories and myths under the name of religion. So far, then, it is a matter of indifference whether a man lives and dies in reliance on his own or another's thoughts; for it is never more than human thought, human opinion, which he trusts. Still, instead of trusting what their own minds tell them, men have as a rule a weakness for trusting others who pretend to supernatural sources of knowledge. And in view of the enormous intellectual inequality between man and man, it is easy to see that the thoughts of one mind might appear as in some sense a revelation to another.

Schopenhauer, *Christian System*

- 90 Faith is the highest passion in a man. There are perhaps many in every generation who do not even reach it, but no one gets further.

Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, Epilogue

- 91 Mysticism has not the patience to wait for God's revelation.

Kierkegaard, *Journals* (July 11, 1840)

- 92 We are born believing. A man bears beliefs as a tree bears apples.

Emerson, *Worship*

- 93 The test of the true faith, certainly, should be its power to charm and command the soul, as the laws of nature control the activity of the hands—so commanding that we find pleasure and honor in obeying.

Emerson, *Address to Harvard Divinity School*

- 94 Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove.

Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, Pref.

- 95 *Ahab*. If the gods think to speak outright to man, they will honourably speak outright; not shake their heads, and give an old wife's darkling hint.

Melville, *Moby Dick*, CXXXIII

- 96 It is remarkable that the highest intellectual mood which the world tolerates is the perception of the truth of the most ancient revelations, now in some respects out of date; but any direct revelation, any original thoughts, it hates like virtue. The fathers and the mothers of the town would rather hear the young man or young woman at their tables express reverence for some old statement of the truth than utter a direct revelation themselves. They don't want to have any prophets born into their families—damn them! So far as thinking is concerned, surely original thinking is the divinest thing. Rather we should reverently watch for the least motions, the least scintillations, of thought in this sluggish world, and men should run to and fro on the occasion more than at an earthquake. We check and repress the divinity that stirs within us, to fall down and worship the divinity that is dead without us. I go to see many a good man or good woman, so called, and utter freely that thought which alone it was given to me to utter; but there was a man who lived a long, long time ago, and his name was Moses, and another whose name was Christ, and if your thought does not, or does not appear to, coincide with what they said, the good man or the good woman has no ears to hear you. They think they love God! It is only his old clothes, of which they make scarecrows for the children. Where will they come nearer to God than in those very children?

Thoreau, *Journal* (Nov. 16, 1851)

- 97 What we call rational grounds for our beliefs are often extremely irrational attempts to justify our instincts.

T. H. Huxley, *On the Natural Inequality of Men*, fn. 1

- 98 There is the greatest difference between presuming an opinion to be true, because, with every opportunity for contesting it, it has not been refuted, and assuming its truth for the purpose of not permitting its refutation. Complete liberty of contra-

dicting and disproving our opinion is the very condition which justifies us in assuming its truth for purposes of action; and on no other terms can a being with human faculties have any rational assurance of being right.

Mill, *On Liberty*, II

- 99 The usefulness of an opinion is itself matter of opinion: as disputable, as open to discussion, and requiring discussion as much as the opinion itself. There is the same need of an infallible judge of opinions to decide an opinion to be noxious, as to decide it to be false, unless the opinion condemned has full opportunity of defending itself. And it will not do to say that the heretic may be allowed to maintain the utility or harmlessness of his opinion, though forbidden to maintain its truth. The truth of an opinion is part of its utility. If we would know whether or not it is desirable that a proposition should be believed, is it possible to exclude the consideration of whether or not it is true? In the opinion, not of bad men, but of the best men, no belief which is contrary to truth can be really useful: and can you prevent such men from urging that plea, when they are charged with culpability for denying some doctrine which they are told is useful, but which they believe to be false?

Mill, *On Liberty*, II

- 100 Reason . . . is subservient to faith, as handling, examining, explaining, recording, cataloguing, defending the truths which faith, not reason, has gained for us, as providing an intellectual expression of supernatural facts, eliciting what is implicit, comparing, measuring, connecting each with each, and forming one and all into a theological system.

Newman, *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, Pt. II, VII, 3

- 101 From the age of fifteen, dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion: I know no other religion; I cannot enter into the idea of any other sort of religion; religion, as a mere sentiment, is to me a dream and a mockery.

Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, II

- 102 Ten thousand difficulties do not make one doubt.

Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, V

- 103 The Sea of Faith

Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Arnold, *Dover Beach*

- 104 That ancient deception which demands faith in what has no reasonable explanation, is already worn out and we can no longer return to it. . . . Man always understands everything through his reason and not through faith. It was once possible to deceive him by asserting that he knows only through faith and not through reason, but as soon as he knows two faiths and sees men who profess another faith in the same way that he professes his own, he is inevitably obliged to decide the matter by reason. . . . In our time the attempts made to infuse spirituality into man through faith apart from reason, are like attempts to feed a man otherwise than through his mouth.
Tolstoy, *On Life*, Appendix III
- 105 People today live without faith. On the one hand, the minority of wealthy, educated people, having freed themselves from the hypnotism of the Church, believe in nothing. They look upon all faiths as absurdities or as useful means of keeping the masses in bondage—no more. On the other hand, the vast majority, poor, uneducated, but for the most part truly sincere, remain under the hypnotism of the Church and therefore think they believe and have faith. But this is not really faith, for instead of throwing light on man's position in the world it only darkens it.
Tolstoy, *What Is Religion?*, VIII
- 106 Thought in action has for its only possible motive the attainment of thought at rest; and whatever does not refer to belief is no part of the thought itself.
And what, then, is belief? It is the demi-cadence which closes a musical phrase in the symphony of our intellectual life. We have seen that it has just three properties: First, it is something that we are aware of; second, it appeases the irritation of doubt; and, third, it involves the establishment in our nature of a rule of action, or, say for short, a *habit*. As it appeases the irritation of doubt, which is the motive for thinking, thought relaxes, and comes to rest for a moment when belief is reached. But, since belief is a rule for action, the application of which involves further doubt and further thought, at the same time that it is a stopping-place, it is also a new starting-place for thought. That is why I have permitted myself to call it thought at rest, although thought is essentially an action. The *final* upshot of thinking is the exercise of volition, and of this thought no longer forms a part; but belief is only a stadium of mental action, an effect upon our nature due to thought, which will influence future thinking.
C. S. Peirce, *How to Make Our Ideas Clear*
- 107 Whoever has theologian blood in his veins has a wrong and dishonest attitude towards all things from the very first. The pathos that develops out of this is called faith.
Nietzsche, *Antichrist*, IX
- 108 The 'will of God' (that is to say the conditions for preserving the power of the priest) has to be known—to this end a 'revelation' is required. In plain words: a great literary forgery becomes necessary, a 'sacred book' is discovered—it is made public with all hieratic pomp, with days of repentance and with lamentation over the long years of 'sinfulness'.
Nietzsche, *Antichrist*, XXVI
- 109 The logical reason of man operates in this field of divinity exactly as it has always operated in love, or in patriotism, or in politics, or in any other of the wider affairs of life, in which our passions or our mystical intuitions fix our beliefs beforehand. It finds arguments for our conviction, for indeed it *has* to find them. It amplifies and defines our faith, and dignifies it and lends it words and plausibility. It hardly ever engenders it; it cannot now secure it.
William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, XVIII
- 110 Our faith is faith in someone else's faith, and in the greatest matters this is most the case.
William James, *The Will to Believe*
- 111 So far as man stands for anything, and is productive or originate at all, his entire vital function may be said to have to deal with maybes. Not a victory is gained, not a deed of faithfulness or courage is done, except upon a maybe; not a service, not a sally of generosity, not a scientific exploration or experiment or textbook, that may not be a mistake. It is only by risking our persons from one hour to another that we live at all. And often enough our faith beforehand in an uncertified result *is the only thing that makes the result come true*. Suppose, for instance, that you are climbing a mountain, and have worked yourself into a position from which the only escape is by a terrible leap. Have faith that you can successfully make it, and your feet are nerved to its accomplishment. But mistrust yourself, and think of all the sweet things you have heard the scientists say of *maybes*, and you will hesitate so long that, at last, all unstrung and trembling, and launching yourself in a moment of despair, you roll in the abyss. In such a case (and it belongs to an enormous class), the part of wisdom as well as of courage is to *believe what is in the line of your needs*, for only by such belief is the need fulfilled. Refuse to believe, and you shall indeed be right, for you shall irretrievably perish. But believe, and again you shall be right, for you shall save yourself. You make one or the other of two possible universes true by your trust or mistrust,—both universes having been only *maybes*, in this particular, before you contributed your act.
William James, *Is Life Worth Living?*

- 112 These, then, are my last words to you: Be not afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living, and your belief will help create the fact. The 'scientific proof' that you are right may not be clear before the day of judgment (or some stage of being which that expression may serve to symbolize) is reached. But the faithful fighters of this hour, or the beings that then and there will represent them, may then turn to the faint-hearted, who here decline to go on, with words like those with which Henry IV greeted the tardy Crillon after a great victory had been gained: "Hang yourself, brave Crillon! we fought at Arques, and you were not there."

William James, *Is Life Worth Living?*

- 113 It is not disbelief that is dangerous in our society: it is belief.

Shaw, *Androcles and the Lion*, Pref.

- 114 William James accomplished a new advance in Pragmatism by his theory of the will to believe, or as he himself later called it, the right to believe. The discovery of the fundamental consequences of one or another belief has without fail a certain influence on that belief itself. If a man cherishes novelty, risk, opportunity and a variegated esthetic reality, he will certainly reject any belief in Monism, when he clearly perceives the import of this system. But if, from the very start, he is attracted by esthetic harmony, classic proportions, fixity even to the extent of absolute security, and logical coherence, it is quite natural that he should put faith in Monism. Thus William James took into account those motives of instinctive sympathy which play a greater rôle in our choice of a

philosophic system than do formal reasonings; and he thought that we should be rendering a service to the cause of philosophical sincerity if we would openly recognize the motives which inspire us. He also maintained the thesis that the greater part of philosophic problems and especially those which touch on religious fields are of such a nature that they are not susceptible of decisive evidence one way or the other. Consequently he claimed the right of a man to choose his beliefs not only in the presence of proofs or conclusive facts, but also in the absence of all such proof. Above all when he is forced to choose between one meaning or another, or when by refusing to choose he has a right to assume the risks of faith, his refusal is itself equivalent to a choice. The theory of the will to believe gives rise to misunderstandings and even to ridicule; and therefore it is necessary to understand clearly in what way James used it. We are always obliged to act in any case; our actions and with them their consequences actually change according to the beliefs which we have chosen. Moreover it may be that, in order to discover the proofs which will ultimately be the intellectual justification of certain beliefs—the belief in freedom, for example, or the belief in God—it is necessary to begin to act in accordance with this belief.

Dewey, *Development of American Pragmatism*

- 115 Dogmas are at their best when nobody denies them, for then their falsehood sleeps, like that of an unconscious metaphor, and their moral function is discharged instinctively.

Santayana, *Life of Reason*, III, 5

6.6 | Doubt and Skepticism

It is not in the sphere of opinion or belief, but rather with respect to matters about which men claim to have knowledge, that doubt operates critically. Whatever is a matter of opinion or belief, even if appraised as highly probable, is subject to doubt. But when men claim to have certitude in their knowledge or possession of the truth, they

hold what they affirm or deny to be beyond all reasonable doubt. It is such certitude that the skeptic challenges by his doubts.

As the passages collected here plainly show, skepticism is both an attitude of mind and a systematic method of dealing with the whole range of human opinions, beliefs, and claims to knowledge. In its ancient as well as