

## Radix Fidem Booklet

*Radix Fidem* is Latin for “root of faith.” Religion is a human response to spiritual stirring. Thus, *Radix Fidem* is not a religion, per se, but an approach to growing a religion in the soil of your own life. The only valid reason for taking religion seriously is because you can’t avoid it; something inside of you demands an answer to a call from something much bigger than yourself.

This is not an attempt to draw organizational boundaries. *Radix Fidem* is not an organization and there is no membership, but there are many who share this kind of faith. Our approach to religion is based on seven fundamental assumptions.

**1. Consciously and emphatically non-Western.** This means we exclude the fundamental materialism and rationalism that makes man the measure of all things. We go out of our way to understand what distinguishes Western Civilization so that we can discern how it’s mythology has ruined historic Christian religion.

There is good reason for taking such a path. If we profess that our religion stands on divine revelation as recorded in the Bible, then we must ensure we understand what the Bible says. Simply translating the words does no good if we cannot understand the culture that used those words. It’s not enough to know what it says in our context; we have to know what it meant to those people in their context. If that record of revelation means anything, it is abundantly clear that God didn’t just choose the Hebrew people, but built them up from scratch to create a proper means and context for revealing Himself to the world. The context is a critical part of the message.

We have a considerable amount of scholarly research into that Hebrew cultural and intellectual context. It is radically different from ours today. If you insist on inserting your cultural and intellectual assumptions back into the text of Scripture, you will come up with a false understanding, a false revelation, and a false god. Indeed, the same level of scholarly research applied to our Post-modern Western society shows just how completely different our assumptions are about reality itself, and that our current assumptions come from outside the Bible. Our culture is frankly pagan, the confluence of Greco-Roman pagan culture and Germanic heathen culture.

And that same scholarship shows how the established Christian religion drifted far, far from its Hebraic approach into something those first followers of Jesus would not recognize. If we truly understand the scholarship, we can see clearly how the succeeding generations of Christian leadership embraced the pagan thoughts and assumptions of the dying Greco-Roman Civilization, and then further embraced the Germanic tribal mythology, twisting the message of Christ into something Jesus would disown. So it was with the Hebrew people before them. Embracing the prevailing Hellenism that came with Alexander’s conquest, they left behind their ancient Hebrew religion, adapting to rationalism until their religion hardly resembled that of Abraham, Moses, and quite obviously of Jesus. Still using the same Scripture, the approach went from mystical and symbolic to legalistic and literal. So it has been with both organized Judaism and Christian religion up to this day.

The Bible is an Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) document, Jesus taught an ANE religion, and His Father was an ANE God. That hasn't changed; the common organized religion that claims Him has moved away from that ancient root of faith.

**2. Fundamentally super-rational, not cerebral.** This correlates to the previous point. We reject the notion that reason and intellect are the pinnacle of human capabilities. While we recognize that most people abuse the word "mysticism," making it mean something useless and irrational, we contend that God will scarcely bother with addressing Himself to human intellect, but calls to us from far higher faculties. Revelation is inherently mystical. We assert that He gave us other forms of "knowing" that are hard-wired into human nature. We reject the Western dismissive attitude about anything not rational. Faith is above reason, not below it.

Inherent in this assumption is a uniquely biblical anthropology; human nature has been revealed from Heaven and needs no refinement or replacement. It's not a question of facts, but of function. The Bible takes quite seriously that the core of human moral awareness is not in the brain, but in the heart, and presents the heart in terms wholly different from Western culture. In Scripture, the heart is not quasi-emotional sentiment, but is the seat of faith, of moral will and the place in the human soul where God speaks. The same heart can be wicked, deeply compromised and misleading, and the mind can simply shut out the superior moral awareness of the heart. But God gave us our brains to organize and implement obedience as a servant of the heart. The intellect is fallen and untrustworthy. This is the terminology of the Bible and clearly how God wants us to envision our human nature.

Faith comes from the heart; the heart can directly perceive God's divine moral character as a Person. In our minds we meet that faith coming down, bringing to His revelation our experience and thoughts to form religion as a response to His individual calling on our lives. No two of us can possibly have the exact same religion. Truth is not revealed as objective and codified; there is no such thing as propositional truth. That common notion in our Western world arises from a rejection of genuine faith. It is the mind arrogantly usurping the proper dominance of the heart. In the Bible, truth is personal; ultimate truth is God's Person, His moral character. To imagine truth as objective and concrete is idolatry of man's intellect. Our God is not a static and concrete idea, but a living Person. We know Him in our hearts, not in our heads.

**3. The Spirit Realm is real and beyond comprehension.** There is a distinct realm of existence totally alien and separate from ours. It is in every way superior, and our plane of existence is merely a temporary bubble within that greater realm. The human mind is totally unequipped to handle the Spirit Realm, and it is best understood with other faculties.

This is a corollary to the previous point. A proper biblical anthropology rests on a biblical cosmology. Jesus spoke to his audience in parables, because parables are addressed to the heart, and only the heart can fully grasp the higher truth of things beyond this world. The Hebrew Scriptures used figures of speech for the afterlife that were common throughout ANE cultures. Jesus quoted both Hebrew and ANE parables, from those more ancient images, as well as using figures of speech common to His day. However, it is painfully obvious that His teaching was a direct confrontation of the growing influence of Hellenized rationalism in Judaism, with its attendant literalism and legalism. He taught in parables as a pointed rejection of trying to

reduce God and His truth down to mere cerebral content. The net effect of teaching in parables was to exclude those who refused to rise above mere reason, because true commitment to His Father in Heaven demanded something more than mere intellect.

Thus, Jehovah was no mere national god, but the Creator of all things – this was an audacious claim, unique within the ANE context. The vast expanse of our physical universe is just a small element of Creation. Furthermore, a part of the Curse of the Fall was the confinement of human awareness to time-space constraints. Mortality was not a part of our creation. We were not made like this, but this is our condition now. It is the human perception that is fallen, along with our fleshly existence, not the rest of Creation. Instead, Creation suffers under the perversion of fallen human perception, and cries out for mankind's redemption and restoration to full eternal communion with our Creator; that's what we were made for.

The very nature of the Fall was man's insistence on enthroning the mind over the heart. Human intelligence was never meant to rule man's life. Divine revelation is not addressed to the intellect, but to the moral faculty of the heart. God gave us over to the tyranny of human will, which is the very Curse itself. The intellect is incapable of escaping the Curse of the Fall by its own abilities. Instead, the mind is locked in a struggle to make itself god and to turn this awful fallen state into an imaginary eternal paradise. God says He intends to destroy this world because it is all one big lie. Nothing in the teaching of Christ was meant to make this world a better place, but to help us escape this world. He died to reunite us to our lost divine heritage, and that requires subjecting the mind to the heart. It is with the heart that we restore our awareness of Eternity outside the bubble of the Fall.

**4. We follow Christ.** Jesus Christ as a historical figure was the final revelation of God's moral character. Everything that departs from His teaching is inherently wrong. No living human – past, present or future – could claim to be Christ's proxy on this earth. No organization or institution existing today can justly claim to speak for Him. Rather, we insist that we each must follow Him as best we can discern His calling. His founding of the "church" was not for purposes of control, but fellowship. We fellowship with each other to the degree, and for the duration of, how well we can tolerate each other with a clear conscience.

Jesus asserted and proved that He could have destroyed both the Jewish and Roman governments. A great many were hoping He would do so, and take the reins of ruling directly on earth. But He also quite assertively refused that role, saying that His kingdom was not of this world – the very definition of "otherworldly." His words and actions were an emphatic closure of the Old Covenant; the miracles attending His death on the Cross were God's stamp of authority on that closure. Having demonstrated endless patience and mercy, with astonishing miracles poured out on the nation over centuries, God had shown convincing proof that humanity is unable to adhere to His revelation by the flesh. It had always been a matter of changed hearts.

The Torah itself says it's a matter of the heart. Without a burning, driving conviction within, there is no point in setting boundaries on human behavior. Prior to the Cross, men could take that higher path, but it required a disciplined effort and focus to rise above the self. Fallen human nature proved relentlessly hostile to a culture and national covenant founded on the

mystical call to higher faculties of faith and commitment. It required the discipline of the heart ruling over the mind, a condition that typically required a considerable time studying and contemplating the Law. The history of Israel is one of constant surrender to the Siren Song of compromise with human worldly wisdom, by degrees taking Israel farther and farther from the purity of their divine inheritance. Jesus reversed the order of things, offering by sheer miracle an escape from the bondage of fallen human will. He granted His own Spirit directly, so that humans could then turn and follow the Father's will and learn how to claim the divine heritage lost in the Fall.

Jesus chose willingly to submit to the injustice of crucifixion. Today we willingly take up our individual crosses and walk in Christ's path. Redemption is intensely personal; no two of us pass through the exact same sorrows and trials on the way to the Cross, nor in our calling after the Cross. His dominion is invisible to human senses, and is not bound by human reason, and does not mix with human authority. Holiness cannot be defined by outward compliance with anybody else's sense of calling and the resulting religion. No other human can decide for you what Christ demands. By the same token, none of us can serve Him alone, so a major element in revealing His glory is how we manage to worship and fellowship together.

**5. The Law Covenants symbolize the nature of reality itself.** We are fallen creatures and unable to natively discern how to live. We are beholden to God's Law Covenants in the sense that they manifest how He intends we should live within our existential context. His Law Covenants explain the fundamental nature of reality itself. Living by His revelation means living consistently with how God created things, and such living elicits a positive and supportive response from Creation. It is our duty to abstract our best obedience from the context in which those Law Covenants were revealed. However, the specifics of the Law are not binding outside of its context.

Jesus taught the Law of Moses as it was intended, a body of parables and symbolic teaching aimed at provoking a mystical approach to things. Jewish legalism was foreign to the ancient Hebrew culture. All covenants in the ANE were intensely personal in nature. The Law Covenants were not law in the sense of legislation, but expressions of the divine moral character of the Heavenly Sheik who offered them. Jesus was therefore the Law in Himself, the ultimate expression of God's self-disclosure.

The Torah was couched in terms of ANE feudalism because such feudalism is hard-wired in human nature. God's people living together as a covenant community of faith are His glory, a family operating on ANE feudalism. No other form of religious organization qualifies for the word "church." The feudal sheik of the ANE is nothing without his people, his true treasure. Take everything else away from him and with his covenant people he can rebuild his domain from scratch. They are his own body of life in this world. This is how God deals with us, and it is how Christ rules His kingdom, His sheikdom. It is deeply personal and every individual is personally accountable, with no two individuals experiencing His fatherly love in exactly the same way.

He is always merciful in our failures, forgiving those who genuinely care what He wants from them and for them. He grants power and dominion to His servants for the purpose of carrying

out their assigned roles in His domain. He trains and teaches us patiently in our feudal service of His sheikdom. His dominion, His law and revelation, are not separate from His Person. He makes us into living expressions of Himself.

6. **All Creation is alive.** That is, in the sense of how we conceptualize and act in God's Creation, we cannot get it right if we don't see it as living and active in its own right. It is not passive and neutral, but has a distinct will and interest consistent with God's revelation. It longs to see us living in faith. From the largest celestial objects down to the smallest individual subatomic particles and energy flows, the world around us celebrates with us when we desire holiness. Creation is not fallen; we are. The burden is on us to discover God's provision. Only by embracing God's moral character can we discern His intention in Creation.

The damndest lie of Western Civilization is that most of the natural world around is either inert or lacking sentience. The Bible clearly takes seriously the idea of recognizing that Creation is alive, in whole and in part as we experience it. This is inherent in the Law Covenants. It is flatly asserted in some passages of Scripture. God commanded His prophets to speak to so-called "nonliving" objects as if they were alive, and Christ Himself gave commands to natural forces, commands He fully expected those elements to obey. It is a vile and pernicious prejudice of Westerners to assume it was merely for dramatic effect, or that it was some mythical power of words. The Creator breathed His own life into His Creation, and we blaspheme His name when we treat it as inert.

The primary reason modern believers see so few miracles is because they cannot comprehend that everything around you is alive and unfallen. Mankind was placed within Creation as God's stewards, so we remain responsible for guiding it. There is a certain inertia on Creation due to the effects of the Fall, but as we grow in our moral discernment of the Creator's divine will, we will find the natural world increasingly responsive to those few of us who walk in true faith. Creation's responses will tend to remain small and feeble until humanity as a whole begins to recover the divine truth that Creation is alive and willful.

This issue in particular requires that we pull our sense of awareness up into the heart. The intellect is not up to this task; the voice of God and the many voices of Creation can be heard in the heart alone. We speak to Creation from the heart alone.

7. **All truth is God's truth.** If it works and your conscience is clear, the beliefs and practices you hold are between you and God. We recognize that certain expressions of genuine faith will limit who can fellowship with us, and take no offense at what God prospers outside of His work in our lives. We have more than enough to occupy ourselves with what He has for us. Taking yourself too seriously is a moral failure.

Ultimate truth is moral in nature, not a matter of cerebral facts. Truth is an aspect of God's Person and does not exist outside of Him. There is no objective body of truth somewhere out there that we can somehow reach by our reason. If there were no God, there could be no truth. There would be only human perception of a limited individual experience. We can at best simply agree to be self-deceived together and share our lies. Unless we are linked by heart and spirit to God's Spirit, there can be no appeal to any outside source. Nothing we think we know makes any difference, because we cannot understand what is morally important. He is the

Creator and His moral character pervades all Creation; reality itself is whatever God says it is. Reality is subject to God's whims and no one has standing to question Him.

Human reason is deeply deceptive and self-deceived; it becomes a false god, an idol by which we disguise self-worship. Reason is incapable of objectivity, even as it asserts that it alone is objective. We always manage to rationalize our lustful desires and never seem to notice that our appeals to reason always serve to satisfy some fleshly obsession or desire, until we restore the heart to its rightful place on the throne of the will. The heart alone is capable of discerning the truth.

It is through the heart that we realize no two of us can possibly have the same experiences and perceptions, and no two of us can know God in exactly the same way. No two of us can possibly have the same religion, and no one of us is so wise and holy as to rightly decide what religion must be for others. Any unity among believers must of necessity be pragmatic, a matter of whether we can bear with each other's weaknesses as we bear our own. Our communion and fellowship must be a living thing, not static, because life and reality itself is not static. And God is a real Person who changes His mind; the Bible flatly asserts as much. Our own perception of things must also grow and change. So our fellowship and worship together must build on the assumption that we must change and the only valid question is whether we can still work together without violating our own sense of calling. It's never a question of who is right and who is wrong; God has never delegated that task to anyone but His Son. There is no place in God's revelation for binary thinking and linear logic.

The essence of God's Law on the earth is to glorify Him by living in His heavenly peace while residing in the presence of human tension.

We warn all humanity that the only path of following Christ is a valid biblical covenant. We hold that this covenant is biblically valid; it is our best understanding of how to meet the world in which we live with the ancient faith in the God of the Bible. Radix Fidem is not an organization, but a body of people who agree by this covenant to stand together in faith.