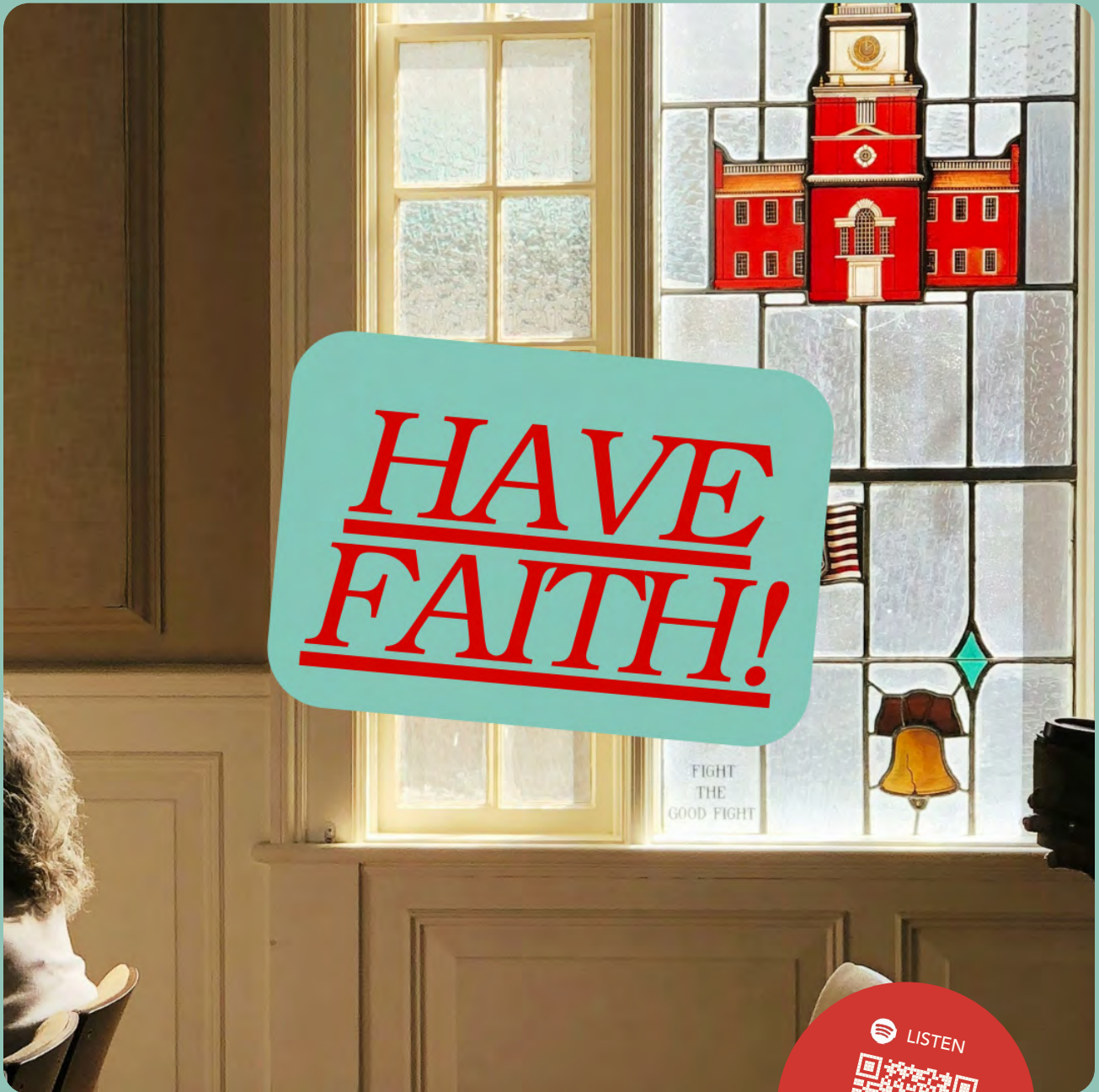


Wednesday, March 12, 2025



Day 07

“So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.”

—MATTHEW 23:3 (NIV)

Reflect

Many of us were raised in faith traditions that have shaped us, whether we like it or not. We cannot easily forget those sensory memories—scratchy Easter outfits, the smell of incense, vacation bible school games, the taste of that one lady’s casserole, or the liturgy you can still recite from memory. But faith is a living thing. Sometimes it grows with us, and sometimes there comes a time in our lives where our faith does not. We might outgrow it, or sometimes it might leave us behind. Our bodies or families or problems seem to get in the way of belonging in our faith traditions for one reason or another. We might find ourselves longing to find a safe space where our faith can grow, and we find belonging. Finding a more honest expression of faith in a community which cares for us and we care for is so hard. So bless you today, as you keep learning and searching. I hope you find a place of belonging that feels genuine and true (even if it isn’t perfect).

Respond

When it comes to faith, we can't solve it all, or understand it all, but we can focus on what we do know that rings true, and follow through with action that matches. What loving action can you take as an act of faith today?

If you have been deeply hurt by the church, we are so sorry that you found pain where you should have found hope. We have created a [Church Hurt Support Guide](#) with resources that may help.



Blessing for honest faith

*Blessed are you
who feel disappointed, even embarrassed,
by what people did in religion's name.*

*Your heart longs for something trustworthy,
something real.
You see through the cultural scripts
that turn faith into a game
of winners and losers—
where faith smells of hustle,
and someone is always selling something.*

*But somewhere in my mind's recesses,
you carry the trace of something truer.
Some moment when you brushed up against
a goodness so pure,
it settled into your heart.
A trustworthiness so vast,
that thereafter you couldn't accept
any counterfeits*

*Blessed are you
who keep searching for that again,
who dare to hope for faith
that is lived out so genuinely,
with gentleness,
with honesty so bright
it lets something beautiful shine through.*

*If you can't get the theology right,
may you not worry too long.
Maybe it's better to live honestly
by the light of what you know to do
That looks most like you,
and let it remain a holy mystery.⁷*

⁷ Kate Bowler. Adapted from "Honest Faith" in *Have a Beautiful, Terrible Day: Daily Meditations for the Ups, Downs, and In-Betweens*. (New York: Convergent Books, 2024). 89.