

Taking a Leap of Faith
Pastor John Hicks
First United Methodist Church

The African impala is an antelope with an amazing ability to leap tall obstacles in a single bound. They can jump to a height of over 10 feet, and one leap can cover a distance greater than 30 feet.

Even with these great leaping capabilities, impalas can be kept in an enclosure in any zoo with a 3-foot high wall. How? Impalas will not jump if they can't see where their feet will fall.

Don't jump if you can't see where your feet will fall. There's wisdom in that, yet in the book of Hebrews we are told "faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." In other words, living in faith sometimes involves leaping without being able to see where our feet will fall.

There's a story of a little boy on the second floor of a burning building. "Jump!" his father calls out to him. "I'll catch you."

The boy cries out, "But, Dad, I can't see you."

His father responds, "Yes, but I can see you."

"Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Faith is jumping even when you can't see the Father's arms ready to catch you below.

The world sorely needs people of such faith today. We've got a world barren of prophets and full of politicians without convictions. We need people of integrity, people of courage, and people of candor who will do the right thing, not the expedient thing.

Churches as organized institutions and many of us as Christians have become too comfortable, too at home with the standards and values of the world.

Our silence in the face of such signs of the times suggests that moral failure is really no more serious than rolling through a stop sign at a deserted intersection.

Let me state that ignoring the approach of a hurricane doesn't offer any protection from its winds. You will fly just as high into the air with your eyes closed as with them open.

Every generation needs leaders who can understand the times and know what to do in light of them. We need to pray: "Lord, help us to understand what's happening, and to know what to do."

This is not a matter of simply understanding the Bible, as crucial as that is. Rather, it's knowing how to apply the truths of God's Word to the issues of our day. Where is the culture going? Why do people think the way they do? What are the real needs of people, contrasted to their felt needs? How can we be effective with the Gospel by correctly perceiving the uniqueness of our times?

The Word of God has always been the answer to every culture and to each generation. How can we apply the truth of Scripture in a meaningful way to our generation?