


  
 James Fowler's Stages of Faith

<p><b>Stage 0</b></p> <p><b>“Primal-Undifferentiated” Faith</b></p>	<p>Ages Birth-2</p>	<p>“This stage is very much like Erik Erikson’s first stage of “trust versus mistrust.” Here, the baby acquires experiences from the outer environment that either instill in him a feeling of trust and assurance (from being comforted, living in a secure and stable environment, and a experiencing a sense of consistency and care from parents). These personalized experiences, according to Fowler, essentially translate into feelings of trust and assurance in the universe and harmony with the divine. Conversely, experiences of parental or environmental neglect and/or abuse at this stage of development, can result in the formation of feelings of mistrust and fear with respect to the universe and the divine, sowing the seeds for later doubt and existential angst. This stage also compares with Jean Piaget’s sensorimotor stage of cognitive development, where thinking takes place in and through the body.”</p>
<p><b>Stage 1</b></p> <p><b>“Intuitive-Projective” Faith</b></p>	<p>Ages 3-7</p>	<p>“Children at this stage have acquired language and the ability to work with symbols to express thoughts. Children at this stage don’t develop formalized religious beliefs, but are instead affected by the psyche’s exposure to the Unconscious, and by a relatively fluidity of patterns of thought. Faith at this stage is experiential and develops through encounters with stories, images, the influence of others, a deeper intuitive sense of what is right and wrong, and innocent perceptions of how God causes the universe to function. This stage aligns with Piaget’s stage of preoperational thinking (lacking consistent logical-mental structures).”</p>
<p><b>Stage 2</b></p> <p><b>“Mythic-Literal” Faith</b></p>	<p>Ages 7-12</p>	<p>“Children at this stage have a belief in justice and fairness in religious matters, a sense of reciprocity in the workings of the universe (e.g. doing good will result in a good result, doing bad will cause a bad thing to happen) and an anthropomorphic image of God (e.g. a man with a long white beard who lives in the clouds). Religious metaphors are often taken literally thus leading to misunderstandings. This stage aligns with Piaget’s concrete operational stages of cognitive development, where true logical thinking begins to develop in the child’s mind.”</p>

<https://www.institute4learning.com/2020/06/12/the-stages-of-faith-according-to-james-w-fowler/>


  
 James Fowler's Stages of Faith

<p><b>Stage 3</b></p> <p><b>“Synthetic- Conventional” Faith</b></p>	<p>Ages 12 to Adult</p>	<p>“This stage is characterized by the identification of the adolescent/adult with a religious institution, belief system, or authority, and the growth of a personal religious or spiritual identity. Conflicts that occur when one’s beliefs are challenged are often ignored because they represent too much of a threat to one’s faith-based identity. This stage (and all subsequent stages) correspond to Piaget’s stage of formal operational thinking, thus making it possible for the adolescent or adult to perceive the divine as an abstract or formless manifestation.”</p>
<p><b>Stage 4</b></p> <p><b>“Individuative- Reflective Faith”</b></p>	<p>Mid- Twenties to Late Thirties</p>	<p>“This stage is often characterized by angst and struggle as the individual takes personal responsibility for her beliefs or feelings. Religious or spiritual beliefs can take on greater complexity and shades of nuance, and there is a greater sense of open-mindedness, which can at the same time open up the individual to potential conflicts as different beliefs or traditions collide.”</p>
<p><b>Stage 5</b></p> <p><b>“Conjunctive” Faith</b></p>	<p>Mid-Life Crisis</p>	<p>“A person at this stage acknowledges paradoxes and the mysteries attendant on transcendent values. This causes the person to move beyond the conventional religious traditions or beliefs he may have inherited from previous stages of development. A resolution of the conflicts of this stage occurs when the person is able to hold a multi-dimensional perspective that acknowledges “truth’ as something that cannot be articulated through any particular statement of faith.”</p>
<p><b>Stage 6</b></p> <p><b>“Universalizing” Faith or “Enlightenment”</b></p>	<p>Later Adult- hood</p>	<p>“This stage is only rarely achieved by individuals. A person at this stage is not hemmed in by differences in religious or spiritual beliefs among people in the world, but regards all beings as worthy of compassion and deep understanding. Here, individuals “walk the talk” of the great religious traditions (e.g. “the kingdom of God is within you”). One good example of this stage in the life of an individual is the life of Count Leo Tolstoy, who in his later years emphasized the importance of equality among people, asceticism in one’s style of living, and the practice of compassion for all”</p>

<https://www.institute4learning.com/2020/06/12/the-stages-of-faith-according-to-james-w-fowler/>