

Explaining my Faith in 800 Words

At the latest count, two billion people claimed to believe in the Christian faith. Despite this multitude who claim to be Christian, millions (possibly billions) of people still find themselves without a convincing explanation for Christianity. However, this does not indicate no explanation for Christianity; believing it did would merely constitute a bandwagon fallacy. In the majority of cases, one fails to perceive the rationality of Christianity because of one of two obstacles: 1) they do not find evidence for a Creator, or 2) they do not find evidence for the Bible. Once one understands these things, they often find themselves understanding the rationality of Christianity.

One fundamental of many religions is a Creator. There is much evidence for a Creator, particularly cosmological and moral evidence. Some evidence is the existence of microwave background radiation and the high helium level in our atmosphere that suggest an instantaneous beginning. Also, the universe is known to be expanding, meaning one could theoretically shrink it back to a starting point. Moral evidence also exists. World renowned writer C.S. Lewis puts evidence for morality like this, “Think of a country where people were admired for running away in battle, or where a man felt proud of double-crossing all the people who had been kindest to him. You might just as well try to imagine a country where two and two made five” (C.S. Lewis *Mere Christianity*). In other words, certain moral principals are universal. If there is no god, there is no standard by which to call anything right or wrong, it is all one's opinion. If there is a God, all good *is Him*, since we only know evil by knowing good. One only knows a crooked line because of a straight one. Theologian Norman Geisler speaks to this, “I [...] love debating Jewish atheists. Why? Because I've never met a Jewish person that believes the Holocaust was a matter of opinion” (Norman L. Geisler *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*). In other words, even though some may believe morality is opinion, when the rubber meets the road they believe in moral law. This evidence points to an all powerful, all moral (good) God, since atheism can not explain this.

Few religions hold up to the claim of an all powerful, moral God. Although many make this claim, often times there are caveats or holes in their historical reliability. One religion that has no such errors is Christianity. Jesus of Nazareth is evidenced to have existed based upon proofs in historical works and eyewitness accounts. Non-Christian writers living at the same time of Jesus, such as Thallus, Tacitus, Josephus, Mara Bar-Serapion, and Phlegon wrote about Jesus, and gave accounts of him that precisely align with the New Testament Gospels in the Bible. One of these, first century historian Flavius Josephus, wrote (translated), “Now, there was about this time, Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works,-a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure” (Josephus *Antiquities of The Jews* 18.3.4). In other words, Josephus states that there was a truth teaching, wonder working man named Jesus in his time. One issue that many people struggle to find an explanation for is the reliability of the gospels. Many manuscript differences are found, and these often claimed to nullify New Testament claims. Thankfully, most (if not all) of these inconsistencies are small, and can be easily corrected when compared to other manuscripts. Bart Ehrman, a skeptic scholar popular for criticizing the New Testament, penned the following after repeatedly examining the evidence of his mentor, Bruce Metzinger (an ancient manuscript expert who believes the New Testament's accounts are reliable), “If he and I were put in a room and asked to hammer out a consensus statement on what we think the original text of the New Testament probably looked like, there would be very few points of disagreement – maybe one or

two dozen places out of many thousands. The position I argue for in 'Misquoting Jesus' does not actually stand at odds with Prof. Metzger's position that the essential Christian beliefs are not affected by textual variants in the manuscript tradition of the New Testament" (Bart Ehrman *Misquoting Jesus*). In other words, although Ehrman publicly argues against the New Testament's reliability, it is not true that his argument actually effects the essential theology in the gospels. These evidences actively demonstrate the rationality of Christian belief.

In conclusion, once Christianity is explained with evidence, one can more clearly see the rationality of Christianity. The evidence for a creator leads to a good God, and to the God of the Bible. Once one investigates the overwhelming case for Christianity, it is challenging to believe that anything else is true.

Works Cited

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