

Why Should I Believe in Christianity?

As we live in a world that is not only pulling away from Christianity, but is actually becoming hostile towards it, I think we should very carefully consider why we believe in Christianity at all. And not just for ourselves. When non-Christians question why we should believe, our answers can be the difference between winning them over or not. At the very least, our answers can show that Christians are not delusional or silly.

And to be perfectly honest, the most vocal Christians tend to not only spread questionable and outrageous ideas about the Faith, but are often uneducated in what they say. One can find this out easily by asking them a few simple questions (my favorite example is: who came first, Adam or Eve?). If we can't explain simple Christian concepts, we certainly can't explain complex ones.

A) What Is The Right Question?: In my experience, most questions that are asked are actually the wrong questions. This should not be surprising. If one doesn't know much about the Faith, how can one know what aspects of the Faith are important? For example, one might question if Mary, the mother of God, was really a virgin, or at least ask how this is possible. This question can be answered any number of ways, and an educated Christian can provide the Biblical references as well. But, deep down inside, there is often a bigger question that wants to be answered. It is often vague and difficult to explain. One can talk of how prophecies and traditions of the Old Testament and the Talmud pointed to a virgin birth, but then one must also debate what constituted a "virgin" in Biblical Judea. And so it can go on *ad infinitum* and *ad nauseam*. Both the questioner and the one attempting to answer often get a sense that the answers, no matter how correct in the technical sense, are missing the point.

I try to be very careful in answering questions, especially ones that seem to be tangential or even ancillary to core beliefs. I try to get a better understanding of what the questioner really wants to find out, and try to remember that he may not really know himself. Continuing the above example, rather than go into Bible trivia, it may be better to start off with something along the lines of "Well, if you believe in a God who can do all things, then this is certainly possible. Are you asking why God chose to go this route, or are you trying to understand how God can do all things?" This alone may not be enough to get us to where we ultimately want to be, but at the very least we are not going to waste breath on a "wild goose chase." Hopefully, this will start a conversation that gets to the core issue. One should at least come across as someone who not only cares about the others interests, but is actually capable of giving intelligent answers. At worst, one might also find out that this person has what I call Immature Faith, and has no real interest in understanding at all. In this case, a few well-placed questions might save one much time and effort from trying to educate someone who has no desire to learn.

It is beyond my ability to predict every possible deep-seated question another may have, but I do want to propose that there is one question that I believe is at the heart of all possible questions one could ever be asked about the Christian Faith: "Why do you believe Christianity is real?" One better have a good answer to this question, even if it needs to be explained over several sessions.

1) The Most Common Answer: The most common answer given, unfortunately, is some variation of "Because the Bible told me so." Now, Holy Scripture is essential to those who *have* Christian Faith, but it should not be the *cause* of the Faith. If one were to ask another "Why do you enjoy baseball?" I suspect one would be quite surprised if the answer was "Because the rule book says that baseball is fun." These are both examples of what I have already called Immature Faith. And I am trying to be kind, as the proper term in philosophy is Bad Faith. To me, all Faith must begin with as a

concept held to be True as told by someone else. I believe the adjective "immature" both recognizes this fact while at the same time encourages one to grow in Faith by seeking a more mature position through study, self-reflection, and comparison of other ideas.

2) Another Answer: A second common response is, "Because it brings me peace." Well, peace is the one and only Earthly reward Jesus promised us for following Him. Peace is real, as it is an emotional state and emotions are real. Unfortunately, an emotion is only real to the individual who experiences it. It cannot be shared. Also, emotions are temporary, one can hardly count on a single emotion to sustain one indefinitely (although there are a select few that actually do).

Peace is just one example of Theosophy, where one believes religion is some type of "feeling." Feelings certainly have their place *in* Christianity, but they are not proof *of* Christianity. Simply telling someone to go home and pray for peace every night for a week is very likely to fail (especially if its a Skeptic running an "experiment"), and now this person is likely going to mistrust promises made by other Christians as well. Even if this advice does "work," we still have an emotional and self-serving reason for believing in God. A great many Atheists consider Christians delusional, and saying that we only believe in Jehovah because we find some emotional satisfaction for doing so fits this outlook they have of us perfectly.

3) A Third Response:

Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance, the only thing it cannot be is moderately important.
-C.S. Lewis

Another popular response is what is known as Pascal's Wager, or some variation thereof. In simplified form, it says that if I am wrong about believing in the existence of Jehovah, then I lose nothing. But if I am right about believing in the existence of Jehovah, then I gain everything. And, of course, the reverse is true. If I deny Jehovah and I am right, then I gain nothing, but if I am wrong, then I lose everything.

This argument has its place, but I find it rather limited in application. Just like the "peace" explanation above, this response is basically an emotional one: fear. I believe one should feel confident in their Faith, not afraid of it. I have no desire for anyone to leave one Bad Faith belief just to gain another. I only use this argument to shake someone out of the complacency of their own Immature Faith views (sadly, this is the legacy of the Post Modern culture we live in). I don't expect them to convert out of fear, only to consider their position in light of what is at stake. In this case, I think C.S. Lewis's revision of Pascal's Wager (above) is a far superior way to approach this matter. Note that he is not attempting to answer the question of what one should believe in, only pointing out the seriousness of choosing wisely on this matter. And so we now come to the last response I want to entertain here.

4) My Response: I want to answer this question with "Because, after looking at all the options, I find Christianity to be the most complete, most rational and most consistent theory of reality." I would hope that everyone who wishes to preach the good news (and all Christians are commanded to do so) would like to say something to this affect as well. If one cannot bring oneself to say this, all I can do is ask "Why?" Is it because one does not believe Christianity is rational and/or consistent? Is it because one is afraid of having to defend this bold position? Is it because one never thought of it that way?

5) Finding the Answer: Ultimately, how one Christian answers "Why do I believe

Christianity is real?" is one's responsibility. It is a responsibility that should be taken seriously, because one day Jehovah will hold one accountable for it. It is my hope that this paper might help one to answer this question in a polite, firm, rational and credible way. I will certainly go deeper here than most people should need, but I figure it doesn't hurt to know more than is necessary.

I will ask a series of questions, each of which will build on the questions before. These questions will often have subordinate questions as well. Almost all of them will address matters before Moses wrote the Pentateuch, so there will be no supporting scripture. Only at the end will I tie some loose ends together through a general reference to the Bible. This may seem like sacrilege to some, but that is okay. Not everyone is ready to have a deeper understanding of their Faith. But for those who are ready, I hope this discussion will be found interesting. The major questions (referenced by Topics) are:

- B) How Did We Come To Be?
- C) What Do We Know About Creation?
- D) What Do We Know About Homo Sapiens?
- E) Is There A Creator God?
- F) Does The Creator God Try To Communicate With Us?
- G) What Did The Creator God Say?

B) How Did We Come To Be?: This question is perhaps the most difficult one to get one's head wrapped around, especially during the last half of the topic. But once we get past it, the rest of the paper should be easier for it.

I mean this question in the most absolute sense. One may say we are here because one's parents begat them, and that their parents were there because they, in turn, were begat by their own parents, and so on. We can theoretically repeat this process until we go back about 200,000 years or so, because at some point we run out of human ancestors. But where did our first human ancestors come from?

"No problem." the Evolutionist will say. "At that point, the parents were non-human while the offspring, through some mutation, were human." So, we begin this game again, theoretically tracing these non-human ancestors back until, at some point, they too were mutations born of a different species. Eventually we reach a point about 800 million years ago when the first single-celled organisms came out of the primordial goo from which future life ultimately can trace its genealogy back to. At this point, we see life coming out of non-life. But where did the primordial goo come from?

"No problem." the astrophysicist will say. "I can take it from here." We then learn that the Earth was just the right size and density, and that it had just the right type of star for a sun that was just the right distance away, to allow the right range of atmospheric conditions necessary for any life to exist, and whose waters and dry land were seeded with just the right type and right amount of chemicals for life to not only form, but thrive and evolve as well. And how could this be?

How this question is answered has changed so much in the last three generations that it is almost indistinguishable from what was believed just a century ago. If the gentle reader will allow me to give a brief history on this change, I think it will help with understanding important concepts later on.

1) How the Secular Answer to "How We Came to Be" Changed: Classical Materialism (not to be confused with *Commercial* Materialism) goes back at least as far as Aristotle, and suggests that

matter was neither created nor destroyed, only that it changed form. While this continues to be a popular theory today, our understanding of it is much different than it was 100 years ago.

As originally conceived, the Earth, the Sun, the Moon, the stars and all other known cosmic elements always existed and will continue to exist for all eternity. Furthermore, the Earth was the central point about which everything else revolved. Although the concept of atoms was known by Aristotle, the idea that atoms could move from one celestial body to another would be absurd to him. Over the millennia since Aristotle's ideas were written down, the "central point" of the universe about which all other things revolved changed from the Earth to the Sun, then to the center of the galaxy, and then to some theoretical point in the universe. But the concept of a central point about which all else revolved was never doubted until relatively recently. The idea that some atoms might move from one celestial body to another (such as from a meteor) eventually was realized as well, but this impact was so small as to be inconsequential to serious thinking on the subject.

The forty years or so between the 1920s and 1960s presented a radical departure from these thoughts, although not without a fight. One can go on YouTube and find videos of scientists in the 1950's mocking the Big Bang Theory. But in the end, Einstein's Theory of Relativity, the Theory of Quantum Mechanics and the Big Bang Theory won out.

Einstein's most famous theory discredited the literal interpretation of Classical Materialism since he showed that matter and energy are the same. But since matter and energy are interchangeable, Classical Materialism was simply reworded to say that matter *and energy* cannot be created or destroyed, only change in form. But his theory paved the way for Quantum Physics, which suggests that matter and energy can spontaneously appear and disappear. The crisis to Materialism was put off by showing that the appearances seem to balance out the disappearances. This led to an uneasy compromise suggesting that matter and energy within the universe as a whole must remain the same, although localized fluctuations were possible. But the real game changer was the Big Bang Theory.

While the original concept of Big Bang has changed quite a bit since it was first formulated in the 1920s, what has not changed is the idea that the universe had a definite beginning, now believed to be about 14 billion years ago. With this starting point, and in using methods too involved to be given proper credit in this paper, cosmologists believe they know approximately how large the universe is, and how much matter is in it. While mind-boggling massive, these numbers are still finite, unless we add Dark Matter into the mix, which is currently theorized to spontaneously fill in the "gaps" as the universe expands. But I beg permission to overlook Dark Matter in this paper, as neither its existence nor non-existence affects my discussion. While celestial bodies do appear to revolve about a central point in each galaxy, the galaxies themselves do not appear to revolve about a central point, but rather move away from the location of Big Bang. Today, a much modified Materialism still has value to the scientist when dealing with localized phenomena, but it has been distorted too much for universal concepts.

2) Key Concepts: Prior to the discrediting of Classic Materialism late last century, the answer to why things were right for life on Earth was answered by Theists of all Faiths as a variation of what is known as Intelligent Design: the god(s) made it that way by mystically manipulating the atoms as they chose. But for any who would doubt the god(s) of any age, it simply happened by Random Chance. For most of man's history, no serious movement was ever made to clarify this point. The Pagan god(s) themselves were born or created by beings that were likewise either born or created. There was an uneasy tension between thinking that causes and effects went back indefinitely (Infinite Regress) or that they had a clear starting point (Ultimate Causation). Only the Hebrews claimed with certainty an

Ultimate Causation in the God Yahweh. All the mysteries and paradoxes the philosophers of other cultures came up with were attributed to a Shadow God that did not speak to the people (more on that in **Topic F**).

It was only in the past 250 years or so, when Atheism became a more formalized belief, that the matters of Infinite Regress and Ultimate Causation became major issues. Science was justifiably proud of being able to predict future effects using present causes. They rightfully applied this logic in looking for the past causes of present events. This, in turn, led to past events being explained with even older causes. And since the curiosity of any honorable scientist is never satisfied, many began to question the need for Jehovah at all as they probed further and further into the past (by now, Christianity had been around for about 1700 years). Before the 1920s, it was just assumed one could keep looking deeper and deeper into an infinite past. While Classical Materialism had always been incompatible with Creationism, mankind came to a point when this paradox could no longer be ignored.

But note that, when the Fathers of Atheism formally discarded Jehovah in favor of Infinite Regress, they likewise discarded Intelligent Design in favor of Determinism (all effects are predictable if one knows the causes, therefore everything that will happen in the future has already been determined by the past). In light of the Deterministic viewpoint, Random Chance no longer suggests chaos, but rather an admittance of unknowable causes that nonetheless must lead to specific effects.

Much of what will come next will rely on how these four concepts work (or don't work) with each other, and why I look for evidence the way I do. Also note that I do not mean here that all scientists are Atheists, as many scientists and mathematicians remained Christian (such as Sir Isaac Newton and Emmanuel Kant). I merely try to explain why the Fathers of Atheism invariably seem to be scientists and/or mathematicians. It was these professions that gave them the tools that forced a crisis on the paradox between Ultimate Causation and Infinite Regress that had existed for millennia.

3) The New Theory of Existence: With all that being said, let us continue where we left off in our query. About 4 billion years ago, residual gases from the hydrogen cloud that made our sun, properly seeded with heavy atoms from distant dead stars, coalesced at exactly the right distance from the sun to form a planet capable of supporting life. Oh, okay. One last question here: Where did the gas clouds come from? The answer, scientists will say today, is the Big Bang.

What we see in the Big Bang is a massive production of subatomic particles that quickly became hydrogen atoms. These atoms gathered together in massive clouds that eventually collapsed in on themselves. As they did, the friction between the hydrogen atoms generated such intense heat that they combined into heavier atoms. As the early stars died and exploded, these heavier atoms spread out and eventually found a home in other hydrogen clouds that had not yet collapsed into a star. At least one such hydrogen cloud had just the right combination and quantity of heavier atoms for life to exist, and when it collapsed in on itself, our solar system was born.

4) Problems Atheists Had with Big Bang Theory: Big Bang Theory was originally a big boon for Christians (indeed, it was a Catholic priest who formulated the Big Bang Theory), as science "proved" that Infinite Regress could not be true: there was an Ultimate Causation for the universe. Coupled with the horrors of (Atheistic) Socialism that became increasingly apparent at the same time, Atheism was on a clear decline for decades, until the terrorist attack on 9/11. But while Atheism temporarily had lost the Infinite Regress debate (more on that soon), they took up the position of Random Chance. The universe was still massive beyond understanding, they reasoned. Certainly things turned out just right for at least one planet and Earth just happened to be that planet.

Or so it seemed. As cosmologists continued to explore and learn about the universe, this concept rapidly became untenable. The universe is massive beyond comprehension, yet science still can give an approximate number to its size. So too with how much [non-Dark] matter is in the universe, which limits how many stars and planets are in it. The incredible age of the universe is still expressed in measurable terms. These limits become critical when assuming that things just happened, because the number of chances one can have to get things right are limited by how many opportunities one has, as well as how long one must wait after a failed attempt before another chance (if any) can be had. Despite the massive number of opportunities and time available to try and retry, the chances for life to come about were so much smaller still that it seems impossible. While I could give a rather long description and still come up short on just how unlikely these things are, I don't want to distract the gentle reader from the main focus of this paper. *Answering the New Atheism* by Hahn and Wiker does an excellent job talking about this very subject. But don't take a Christian's word for it; cosmologists of all Faiths will freely admit as much. They, as a profession, cannot accept that life can exist on even one planet in this universe based on Random Chance. We can see this expressed in the PBS Space Time video "Do Black Holes Create Universes", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFgpKlcpzNM&t=330s>.

And here we have found the first of three crisis points that one must address in order to have a holistic alternative to the question of the existence of God: How did this life giving universe come to be?

5) When Science Becomes Religion: Rather than give up on seeking non-Theistic answers, cosmologists are proposing that the reality of this universe (and others) is the evolutionary result of a previous, larger universe (as shown in the aforementioned video). This larger universe, in turn, was just one of many that came from a yet bigger one still, *ad infinitum*. In other words, science is bringing back the Infinite Regress argument by suggesting there was an infinite number of opportunities for this universe to be just right for life to form on at least one planet. Note, however, that this is not really a setback for Christianity, but rather an attempt for Atheism to catch up. Also note that, if we look at Big Bang in isolation of any other consideration, then it is no more provable than Theism. By not being a falsifiable theory, what the cosmologists have come up with here is not science. Christian or Atheist, one can only believe what one chooses to believe concerning the cause of Big Bang. At this point in our argument, the two theories are at a stalemate.

But is there a way to see if one theory or the other is more reasonable without looking past the Big Bang? The answer is "yes." We can take the cause of the Big Bang out of isolation and see how it fits into other aspects of the universe. Note that, up to this point, we have always been looking at evolution by going *back* in time. There is nothing wrong with looking for a cause for any observable effect, but when we reach a scientific dead end this way, we can only propose predictions and see if things evolve *forward* in time as expected.

C) What Do We Know About Creation?: If science is to be believed, then we actually know quite a bit that is valuable to us for this discussion. First, and foremost, we see that the universe is quite orderly in the sense that matter and energy follow some series of laws that science has been able to understand with a high degree of certainty. This predictability favors Intelligent Design, as predictability is something one expects from a planned activity, not mere happenstance. But let us explore some more specific matters as well.

1) The Universe: We know that the universe is mostly an empty void. We also know that the void is quite hostile to life. There are lifeless clouds of gas. There are starry infernos so hot they can

break atomic bonds. There are barren, rocky hunks of debris. These examples are the normal condition of matter in the universe. But then there is the Earth.

2) The Earth: Here, we can find solid ground and caressing water. While specific lifeforms are often limited to certain regions of the planet, life of some sort is found in even the most inhospitable environs of the crust and waters, and usually in abundance. But there is almost no expectation to find life on any other object in this solar system. This view does not get any better outside of our Solar System. Science tells us that very few star systems have a star that could support life even if a suitable planet were in its system. And even for places with an adequate star and planet, life itself still has to come about. And here we have another important consideration in favor of the Theist.

3) The Uniqueness of Life: We can see just how radically different life is from non-life. This is the second crisis point a non-Theist has to account for. I don't deny that DNA *could* have formed on Earth by Random Chance. I accept that DNA can eventually form given *time*, although I think the time available for it to form by Random Chance was too short in the extreme sense (again, see *Answering the New Atheist*). But even ignoring the massive improbability of DNA forming (not to mention the rest of the cell that needs to materialize in tandem with it), we still have to ask why things with this molecule are so radically different than those without DNA in their makeup. Random Chance suggests that molecules with strong *similarities* to DNA would demonstrate at least some of the abilities that those with DNA have. But there is no such example.

Those with DNA have a [simple] Will, and can, to some degree, manipulate nature to its own benefit. Any molecule may float downstream; it takes life to swim upstream. Any molecule can chemically react with other molecules it comes into contact with; it takes life to seek or avoid what it comes in contact with. The simplest, single-celled organism can do these things; yet no star, nebula or galaxy has shown evidence of this. The simplest form of life is infinitely more advanced than the most complex form of non-life. There is no smooth transitional step between these two states, something evolutionists look for. Life itself is an Ultimate Causation.

One might suggest that the virus is an example of this midpoint, as it can act as if it is alive and not alive. But viruses only act alive when they come into contact with [and invade] life. As such, the virus does not look so much as an evolutionary bridge between life and non-life, but rather as a primitive parasite that evolved in response to life (possibly an example of de-Evolution).

4) Imagination: Once life started, one might remember, it began to evolve into more and more complex forms of life. After about 800 million years, humans came along. And now we find the third and final major crisis point that I want to address in this paper: Imagination.

This is something humans have that no other animal on Earth has. Unlike the other two major crisis points we have explored so far, we can talk very freely and in the highest degree of confidence here. We can do this because we know Imagination firsthand.

Let me first talk about Imagination in terms of art. The oldest known piece of art is some glorified stick figures of cattle in a cave in France. They are believed to have been made about 20,000 years ago. In today's world with dozens of popular art styles and an excellent education available for the arts, the degree of sophistication we now have is nothing short of amazing when compared to what was found in the cave. We can create art so life-like that we don't even question its ability for it to fool us; we sometimes need to ask if what we see is real or not. Some CGI artists deliberately hold themselves back so their art will not be mistaken for photographs. It is easy to trace how art evolved

over the last 20,000 years. But we have a real problem if we take for granted that art itself evolved from nature. After 800 million years of animal evolution, the most sophisticated non-human is no more artistic than the first single-celled organism that came out of the primordial goo. We have an undisputed case of Ultimate Causation within life on Earth. We cannot claim an Infinite Regress on art because we know within a few centuries when art started. Even if older examples were eventually found, only a fool would suggest anything other than that it was created by man. We also cannot claim that we are limited in what we can know, as we had when concerning the other two crisis points. There are untold thousands of animal types with untold millions of variations that have existed over the last 800 million years here on Earth. Not one of them has shown the ability to produce art. Natural beauty for sure, but not art.

And Imagination does more than simply create art. It is what makes logic, mathematics, philosophy, language and religion possible. No other animal can do or has done any of these things naturally. By teaching some primates how to do sign language, we know that the most advanced non-humans do not have these abilities. It is quite doubtful that the "sign language" is really a language for them as opposed to an example of high level training. The only animal known to dream is the dog, and dogs are not nature's creation, but rather man's first and most successful genetic experiment. While evolution does indeed suggest how it is possible for the entity known as *homo sapiens* (**Topic D**) came to be (although not the likelihood of it, **Topic B.4**), it cannot answer why he, and he alone, has Imagination.

There is one more thing Imagination has given man that no other animal possesses, and I think it's perhaps the most important of all: *Free Will*. Animals act on instinct or in response to some prior experience they had. But Imagination can create an experience in the mind that the body never went through. Man can see a reality that does not exist in nature. By having imaginary experiences, man now has options on how to act and can place a value on each option so as to compare one choice to another. In this manner, man can choose beyond instinct and actual experiences. This is what I call *Free Will*: the ability to accept or reject natural and learned impulses by comparing them to self-made impulses.

D) What Do We Know About Homo Sapiens?: We can be even more certain about the human condition than the uniqueness of Imagination because Imagination gave us language. We can share experiences and build a consensus on what the human experience is about. We don't have to create clever tests (that itself is evidence of Imagination) to glean information from a human like we must do for other animals. All we need to do is ask someone we believe will give a truthful answer.

And while the list of things we know about humans is almost endless, here I want to deal with two things in particular: *Disordered Appetites*, and a need for something bigger than ourselves.

1) Disordered Appetites: This is actually the hardest of the two to believe in. Most of its controversy comes from comparing man's behavior to animals. Almost any activity I provide as an example of being unique in humans is sure to have some researcher go off and find some animal that behaves in a superficially similar manner. But this research misses the point. When animals behave in some self-destructive manner, it is invariably because either its instincts and experiences have not adapted to the situation (such as an ant rushing to help a comrade that fell victim to an ant lion) or because man taught them to do so (such as man training fighting dogs). Humans will actively seek out things they know are self-destructive (such as smoking or illegal use of drugs). While many animal species have become extinct because the animal could not adapt to changing external conditions, almost all human cultures topple because they rotted from the inside out with corruption and vice long

before external threats appeared. It is the same lack of honest self-reflection and a denial of responsibility that dooms human cultures as well as individuals. We seek pleasure, and it is pleasurable to consider ourselves as "decent" people. To look at how we could be "better still" takes us out of our comfort zones because we cannot do this and still believe we are truly "decent" at the same time.

2) A Need For Something Bigger Than Ourselves: The emptiness that is inside all of us, interestingly enough, is agreed to by all important philosophers from all times and cultures. It is the feeling of this emptiness, the feeling that something is missing, that drives philosophy. Many ideas of what this emptiness is, as well as possible solutions, have been entertained in the last 4,000+ years throughout the world. But despite this diversity, there remains a remarkable degree of compatibility between most of them. This suggests that there *is* a common Truth man is looking for, even if this Truth is too large to ever be fully understood. I have no reason to compare the details of one culture's ideas against another in this paper; it is the fact that this necessity exists that matters to me. Indeed, Father Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) pointed out that both the Theist and the Atheist recognized a universal Truth, only that the Atheist has separated consciousness from the Truth (see "Prolegomena On The Subject of God" for full account). Clinical psychology studies are suggesting that these desires are innate to our psyche, not learned.

Every other need we have has something in nature to satisfy it. If we have a need for food, we can eat. If we have a need for warmth, we can light a fire. We share this much with all living things. It is the way of nature: when something living is cut off from the source of something it needs, it dies. Evolution cannot accept that a need can exist without a means to satisfy it, as death would cause the species to become extinct. And yet our continued survival suggests that we must be getting enough nourishment for at least a stunted growth. And if the supply is not from nature, then we must come to the extra-natural.

E) Is There A Creator God?: Up til now, I have made a case against the universe existing through Random Chance. I feel the evidence against this simple happenstance is obvious and strong to the point of being overwhelming. But if the Materialistic and Deterministic views are wrong, does this by necessity mean there is a Creator God? We really only have two possible alternatives: a designed universe theory, or a composite theory that contains both Deterministic and Intelligent Design aspects. But if we look at the composite theory, we need to decide which aspect has primacy. If primacy is on Determinism, then we find ourselves on a slippery slope back to the pure Determinism I feel I have discredited. If the primacy is on Intelligent Design, then Determinism simply becomes the means the Intelligent Designer used. Regardless of which theory strikes the fancy of the gentle reader, the weight still comes back to Intelligent Design. Intelligent Design suggests Imagination, Free Will and an ability to act.

If we accept an Imaginative force capable of influencing the universe through its Will, then we certainly have a legitimate definition of a Creator God. At this point, we still don't know if this Creator God actually created the energy and matter that makes up this universe, or merely manipulated the matter and energy that existed from somewhere else. From our perspective, however, there is no meaningful difference between creating and crafting this universe. For simplicity, I will continue to call this being the Creator God until such time as we might be more definitive on this part.

First of all, there are some Creator Gods I believe we can reject out of hand. A Deist god (one who set the universe in motion, but then left it alone) seems incompatible with the idea that we were made with a desire to know this god (**Topic D.2**). I also feel that this Creator God must transcend the universe. If this god does not, then we come back to the problem of how the universe could be formed

just right because this Creator God would be limited in what He could use. His power certainly needs to be able to affect whatever he works with. The most important consideration is the ability to bestow life and to promote Imagination. This makes Pantheism (god and the universe are one in the same) highly suspect at best.

Regardless of what type of Creator God he is, he must be omnipotent. If the universe is indeed planned out, then we can conclude that he is omniscient. If he does indeed transcend the universe, then we *cannot* assume that space and time exist for him. While we do not at this point know for certain, if he does not exist in time and space, then we can assume that he is omnipresent, omnitemporal, and unchanging (with no time or space, change cannot exist). I will address these points again in **Topic G.2**.

F) Does the Creator God Try To Communicate With Us?: This question ties together what was talked about in **Topics D.2** and **E**. If we have a desire to know a Creator God and this Creator God is sentient, then it seems quite reasonable that this Creator God wants to communicate with us. But is there evidence of this? Yes, there is plenty of it. But the evidence also suggests that man just doesn't listen very well.

The Greeks had their Unknown God. Native Americans have their Great Spirit. Hindus have Brahma. This list goes on and on with the Norse being the only notable exception. The Norse exception aside, there is anthropological evidence that nearly all primitive cultures knew of a faceless, and usually nameless, all-powerful Creator God. There is, literally, worldwide testimony that this Creator God transcends time and space, making everything out of nothing. This Creator God is not part *of* reality, it *made* reality.

But if there is all this evidence, what happened? It seems that, worldwide, man actually had communication with this Creator God, but for some reason stopped. Why did this happen?

1) Moving Away From God: Along with Imagination, man has a need to visualize everything. Most animals will simply flee or prepare to fight when a signal that danger is near is perceived. Man wants to know what the threat is and how dangerous it is. I would propose that man felt the same about this Creator God, and began to give names and faces to it. This, perhaps, might not have been a bad thing had not man also been self-destructive with his Disordered Appetites. When man chose to put a name on the Creator God, then man quickly assumed he had at least some control (through supplication) over the god. While images can help explain what something *is*, it does an even better job showing what it is *not*. As a hypothetical example, an image of a crocodile in many ways can represent a Creator God: the raw power as what is needed for creation, the inherent violence necessary in doing so, and, of course, the death of the old in order to make way for the new. But this same image is unapproachable. The image of the Creator God as a crocodile is quite contrary to the idea that this Creator God actually wants to have a relationship with us.

I propose that the Creator God did not stop communicating; man started filtering what was said. The Creator God did not stop doing wondrous things; man became unable to associate everything with this diminutive image of the Creator God. We actually see this reduction in the legends of Brahma from the Hindu myths. I often speculate that the reason the Norse mythology does not have a proper Creator God is because the All Father diminished too quickly into Odin (an alternative theory which I also consider is that the Norse gods look more like deified heroes than deified natural forces: the implication here that the Norse were more concerned with glory than in understanding).

As the diminutive gods were incapable of addressing all the possible needs of a people, different communities joined into larger societies, and their respective gods joined to form a pantheon that provided a means of addressing the diverse needs. But, as we saw earlier, the original idea of an all-powerful creator of all things was not entirely forgotten (except by the Norse), but rather put out of the way and changed into the Shadow God. Abandoned and neglected, but never completely out of mind. Except for the Hebrews. Alone among all the cultures in the world, they steadfastly refused to put a name or face on the Creator God. In return, the Creator God neither diminished nor stopped communicating.

2) Why The Hebrews?: It is not my concern why or how this happened, only that it did. Tested over several centuries (an argument can be made for 2,600 years), their faithfulness in accepting the Creator God as He was instead of how they wanted Him to be was rewarded. The Creator God gave Moses His name. But even here the mystery wasn't clarified much, as it was only recorded by the four consonants YHWY. But about 1,400 years after this, YHWY finally gave this people a proper name they could say out loud (Jesus) and an image to go with it (a slave).

If we accept my proposal that the Creator God does indeed wish to be made known to man, and realize that only one culture in ancient times accepted this god as he was, then it should be clear why they would have been his "chosen people." Now, don't get me wrong. I certainly do not think that this god simply "gave up" on the other cultures. Indeed, it is paramount to my apologetics that this god wanted the strays to one day return. I believe we can see in the wisdom of ancient philosophers worldwide that this god never completely abandoned those who sought him (Aristotle virtually re-created the YHWY on his own). I am only pointing out what I hope is obvious: it is easier to communicate with someone who is actively listening, with someone who accepts you for who you are, and with someone who is not creating artificial barriers to communication.

G) What Did The Creator God Say?: The short answer to this is what is recorded in the Bible and Jewish and Christian tradition. The Old Testament is explained by the Talmud and the New Testament is explained by Apostolic Tradition (as maintained by the Catholic Church in full, and by the Orthodox, Coptic and Anglican Churches in part). But I want to focus on what Jehovah said that helps us understand why one should believe in Christianity. All other questions that could possibly be asked will build from this foundation.

1) Validity of Previous Speculation: If we believe that there is a Creator God, that He wishes to communicate with us, that only the Hebrews were faithful to His wholeness and that they (and later the Christians that came from the Hebrews) were rewarded with His continued communion, then much of what we speculated over has been validated. We are told that Jehovah does indeed transcend this universe. Omnipresence, omnitemporalness, omniscience and being unchanging are all indicated. And by seeing that Jehovah did indeed *create* as opposed to simply *craft* the universe, we find an argument for His omnibenevolence: as there is literally nothing creation can give to Jehovah that did not come from Jehovah, we see that Jehovah is perfectly selfless.

2) Hebrews Yes, but Christianity?: This is indeed a complicated answer, but there are two facts that I feel support the Truth of Jehovah as expressed by Christianity. The first is that if we accept that the Hebrews were indeed the chosen people of the Creator God as arrived at in **Topic F.2**, then it makes sense that the prophecies they received would be reliable. Jesus fulfilled no less than 300 prophecies (some claim as many as 700 by interpreting certain scripture through the lens of hindsight), and at least 39 in one day (his execution). The second is the prophecies of Jesus himself. Jesus claimed to be God on many occasions (despite Skeptics who nitpick specific passages of scripture) and

claimed He would come back from the dead. Hebrew law claimed that the proof of a prophet was found in his predictions coming true. If Jesus did indeed come back from the dead as He predicted, then Hebrew law validates what Jesus said, including His divinity. I will not go into a proof of this here, as I have covered it in detail in other works, but the evidence suggesting the resurrection far exceeds Skeptical alternatives.

3) What About Islam?: I just want to say up front that I am not saying that Jehovah has not spoken to Muslim people in the name of Allah, only that I do not see Islam as a legitimate successor to Christianity. It is not my intention to insult Muslims here, but the fact that Islam is almost as big as Christianity (1.6 billion followers as opposed to 2 billion Christians) makes this an issue I must address.

Muslims claim that Islam builds on Christianity like Christianity claims it builds on Judaism. I could address this in many ways, but here I will address four specific facts that suggest to me that Islam is not an outgrowth of Christianity. I will continue with the idea that the Hebrews are the chosen people of the Creator God, as all three religions accept this.

The first is the prophetic foundation Islam uses to justify its position as successor to Christianity. Islam relies on finding prophecies pointing to Mohammad in the Old and New Testaments. The problem is that Hebrew prophecies claimed that the Messiah would be like them, an Israelite. Mohammad's own claim to Abrahamic succession is that he came from the line of Ishmael, the first born of Abraham. But Abraham disowned Ishmael. The problem of lineage is not unique to Mohammad, many others were rejected for this very reason (including King Herod the Great, who tried to obscure his lineage for his own bid for Messiah-ship). As for the New Testament, Muslims claim that the one who would come after Jesus was Mohammad, not the Holy Spirit. Based on the second argument for prophetic fulfillment, Islam and Christianity cannot co-exist as Islam's claim destroys the very fabric of Christian belief. Muslims, however, claim that these "paradoxes" come from corruption of the scripture, and that it was one of Mohammad's duties to correct them.

Secondly, the Messiah was to enter triumphantly on a mule, not a horse. In Jewish symbology, this meant entering the capital in peace, not war. Jesus fulfilled this literally and symbolically a few days before his death. At this time, I do not know if Mohammad entered Mecca on a horse or not, but he did enter it as a commander of an invading army that did indeed fight a short skirmish to overthrow the existing government there. A common response to this are several references in the Book of Revelation of the warrior like nature of Jesus in the second coming. But so far, I have not heard a satisfactory answer as to why God wants the world to resort to warfare instead of peace before the second coming, especially considering just how important the message of peace was to the ministry of Jesus.

Thirdly, the military, political and legal aspects of Islam for its first 150 years more closely resemble the teaching of the Old Testament than the New Testament. We see in the Old Testament that man's relationship with God was that of a judge to the accused, whereas the New Testament changed the relationship to father and children. Islam, by denying the divinity of Christ, brought back the judge/accused relationship. Not only that, and for reasons I'll mention shortly, Islam more closely resembles the early Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, and 1&2 Samuel) than the history and prophets of later times (1 & 2 Kings onward). In this respect, Islam seems to actually tear down existing understandings rather than build on them. Again, we are told that there are errors in the Bible that Mohammad was sent to correct.

Finally, there is the moral and ethical aspects of Islam and Christianity. I believe that most Muslims interpret the moral teachings of Mohammad in a manner consistent with Christianity. In fact, such Muslims often times do a better job acting like a Christian than some professed Christians. But if Islam is to build on Christian morals, one should expect significant improvements on the old, or at least one fundamental insight that impacts how one interprets previous moral teachings. I have yet to hear a credible argument that any such insights have been made. And as far as ethics go, there is an inconsistency in Islam that does not exist in Christianity. While there have been those who have twisted Christian scripture to do horrific acts, all one needs to do is look at the gentle lamb pinned to the cross to see the perversion for what it is. But there are many things most people (including perhaps 99.9% of Muslims) consider heinous that are nonetheless allowed by the Quo-Ran and were performed by Mohammad in the Hadiths (Muslim traditions). It is this part of Islam's teaching and history that suggested to me that it is closer to early Jewish history than as a new revelation of God.

In short, the ties Mohammad claims to Jewish and Christian Faiths only exist by being very selective in what one looks at and in dismissing (or "correcting") scripture that contradicts it. While I certainly accept the idea that the Bible can be interpreted incorrectly and that some things are metaphorical instead of literal, I believe such an approach should be to bring enlightenment, not self-justification. Furthermore, I do not need to become a Muslim simply to act like a Christian, and I should find a consistent yet deeper message in anything that claims to build on Christianity.

Conclusion: I said way back in **Topic A.4** that I believe in Christianity "Because, after looking at all the options, I find Christianity to be the most complete, most rational and most consistent theory of reality." I believe I have just supported my statement. I have looked at why this universe exists, how life can come out of non-life, and how man alone has Imagination, Disordered Appetites and a hunger for the Truth. I have looked at the full spectrum of Atheistic and Theistic answers to these matters and narrowed it to the three Abrahamic religions. From these three, I explained that the Jewish Faith seems to point to Christianity while Islam seems to regress in our understanding of a God that wants to be known.

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