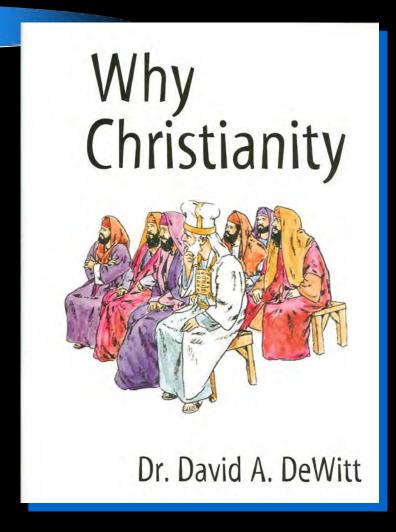
# Relational Concepts School of Discipleship Presents



# **APOLOGETICS**

"Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence."

(1 Peter 3:15)

- Greek: απολογιαν, apologia, meaning "to make a defense"



```
Paul: "made a case...
reasoned...
```

persuaded...
gave evidence...
explained...

testified.... from the Scriptures."

(Acts 17:2-4; 18:4,19; 19:8-9; 28:23<sub>3</sub>24)

#### **APOLOGETICS**

CHRISTIANITY has the distinction of being reasonable. The message of the Bible, taken in a plain, ordinary, normal way, can be logically verified as **TRUE**.

In order to make a complete case for **CHRISTIANITY** we must determine:

- What TRUTH is
- How TRUTH should be tested
- The view about TRUTH which passes the test, and therefore, proves the existence of God
- That biblical CHRISTIANITY is the TRUTH revealed by God

**TRUTH** is the way things actually are

**RELATIVE TRUTH** says true things are *sometimes* true

...but...

ABSOLUTE TRUTH says true things are always true



**RELATIVE TRUTH** says true things are *sometimes* true

Relativists say: Truth is relative with respect to time, space, and people.

**TIME:** What was true in the past is not necessarily true now or in the future.

Example - "In the past people believed the sun moved around the earth."

Question - Is this statement | still true today and will it be in the future?

YES, of course. It is true today
"In the past peopl

**CONCLUSION:** Truth is not 1



ne future that . . .

n moved around the earth."

is absolutely true for all time.

**RELATIVE TRUTH** says true things are *sometimes* true

Relativists say: Truth is relative with respect to time, space, and people.

**SPACE:** What is true here is not necessarily true there.



Example: If I'm facing you and say, "The pencil is to the right of the pad", that may be true from here, but not from there.



Question - Where (space) is the above statement true, "here" or everywhere?

**EVERYWHERE**, because it is true every here that the pencil is to the right of the from here".

**CONCLUSION:** Truth is not relative to space. Truth is absolutely true everywhere.

# **RELATIVE TRUTH** says true things are *sometimes* true

Relativists say: Truth is relative with respect to time, space, and people.

**PEOPLE:** 

What is true for you may not be true for me



Example: I may say, "I am sick". It may be true for me but not for you.

Question - Is it true for me only or is it true for everyone that I am sick?

EVERYONE... it is true for you and your that I am sick, regardless of eirs.

**CONCLUSION:** What is true for incertain the for everyone.

Truth is absolutely true for everyone.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

**TRUTH** is absolute with respect to time, space, and people.

Therefore, the case from the truth is disproved.

Absolute truth is not to claim absolute knowledge of any truth.

Absolute truth and absolute knowledge of truth are not the same.

• Time and space are inseparable from truth.

If no time and place is meant, then it is neither true nor false with respect to a truth claim. A truth claim must say or imply when and where.

• Truth is changeless, but there can be / always will be new truth.

Old truths cannot change but new truths can come to be.

# **APOLOGETICS**

CHRISTIANITY has the distinction of being reasonable. The message of the Bible, taken in a plain, ordinary, normal way, can be logically verified as **TRUE**.

In order to make a complete case for **CHRISTIANITY** we must determine:



- The view about TRUTH which passes the test, and therefore, proves the existence of God
- That biblical CHRISTIANITY is the TRUTH revealed by God

NOTE: These are tests to see if someone's idea is true or not. They are NOT world views.

# 1. AGNOSTICISM ... says truth cannot be known

Greek: γνοσιs = "to know"

Negative prefix

"no knowledge"

Agnostics say knowledge is a synthesis...
...a changing body of what we observe to be true.

Therefore, we can never know the truth about anything

#### **Problems**

- It is self-defeating: If truth cannot be known, then the statement, "Truth cannot be known", cannot be known.
- So some truths must be knowable (which ones?) and agnosticism is defeated.
- Something must be known about everything in order to know that nothing can be known about anything. (omniscience ??)
- Knowledge is indeed a changing synthesis, but knowledge and truth are not the same.

# 2. SKEPTICISM ...says truth must always be doubted

Skeptics say, judgement about a truth must always be suspended because ...

- ...knowledge comes through the sensations and ideas of the mind but ...
- ... the mind learns based upon customs, which must always be doubted.

#### **Problems**

- It is self-defeating: A skeptic who is truly skeptical ... must be skeptical about his skepticism.
- If the skeptic's statement is known undoubtedly, then some truth is not to be doubted, and the skeptic is defeated.
- Granted, we all acquire knowledge through social customs, but all (normal) people also know and think with basic logic:

 $A \neq -A$  A thing and its opposite cannot both be true.

# 3. FAITHISM ...says truth must be believed

Liberal Faithism says truth is tested in one's life, personally, not by human reason.

Religious truth requires a leap of faith.

Conservative Faithism says everybody must ultimately base their ideas on faith. Ultimately, there is no evidence for anything; faith alone is the way to God.

#### **Problems**

- If a faithist offers a justification for his faith it is not faithism, it is rationalism.
- If a faithist offers no justification there is no reason to believe it.
- If faithism is a test for truth, then one is faced with contradictions being true, because different people can believe contradicting things. But  $A \neq -A$
- It is impossible to have an intelligent belief in God unless one first has some way to know whether there is a God in whom to believe.

# 4. EXPERIENTIALISM ... says truth must be experienced

Experientialists say experience is the consciousness or awareness by which we come to know what we know. One's experience is more basic than one's concepts and is the only all inclusive test for truth.

Limited words cannot express ultimate truth; it can only be experienced.

#### **Problems**

- An experience is, in and of itself, neither true nor false. It does not come with a true/false label; it is neutral and may be interpreted in various ways.
- Therefore, it is a mistake to speak of a "true experience". Truth and experience are in different categories.
- Meaning must be brought to the experience which then allows interpretation.
- An experience cannot be used to prove the truth of that experience.
   That's circular reasoning.
- Therefore, experientialism is either meaningless, circular, or self-defeating,

# 5. EVIDENTIALISM ... says truth must be factual...

A fact is a distinguishable piece of reality.

- 1. Truth must be based empirically in facts or events, not in ideas or theories.
- 2. Facts stand by themselves apart from the framework of different points of view
- 3. "Some things just speak for themselves" and can't be interpreted differently.
- 4. Truth must be observable, objective, and general, not privately subjective.

#### **Problems**

• Facts don't give off meaning.

For example: "Godisnowhere." What is it saying?

• Facts and events have meaning only in the light of some world view.

For example: What does the incredible mechanism of the eye prove?

• Facts don't speak for themselves.

Therefore, evidentialism is defeated.

# 6. PRAGMATISM

# ...says truth must be practical

- 1. Religion is not to be judged by its roots, but by its fruits.
- 2. The testing ground for truth is, "Does it work in the lives of people. Is it livable?
- 3. It is not the present individual experience, but... the general future experience seen over the long haul which determines truth.
- 4. The proof of a theory of religion or philosophy is, "Does it work for people?"

#### **Problems**

- Success is not truth. Results show only what happens to work now, not truth.
- Truth is more than expedient. Courts could never determine truth by swearing to tell the expedient, telling only what worked.
- It is impossible to tell the long-term consequences of anything ahead of time.
- From a pragmatic standpoint, opposing world views can work equally well. Yet both cannot be equally true, because  $A \neq -A$

# 7. RATIONALISM

# ...says truth must be logical

- 1. That which is logical can be known for certainty because it can be tested with the law of non-contradiction (A = -A)
- 2. There are some truths innate in the human mind, independent of experience. One of those truths is that the mind always evaluates logically.
- 3. The rationally inescapable is real.

#### **Problems**

- This view is almost true. Points (1) and (2) are correct. Innate reason does indeed provide us a valid way to test observations.
- The rationally inescapable is NOT necessarily real. (Point 3)
  - For example, "If mermaids exist, they must live in the sea" is a rational statement, but does not establish that mermaids exist. It can't eliminate "If".
- It has no rational way to establish itself. It can't argue that "the law of non-contradiction is valid because it is a contradiction to deny it. That's circular reasoning.

# Some have suggested that the best test for truth is a COMBINATION of several of the above discussed methods.

**Problems** 

Several leaky buckets hold no more water than one leaky bucket.



# 8. UNDENIABILITY ... says truth must be undeniable

- 1. Truth is that which is unable to be avoided, therefore unable to be denied. Example: "I exist" is undeniable because I must exist to deny it.
- 2. Logic (non-contradiction) applied to reality is true because it is inescapable.

  To say, "the law of non-contradiction is false" is based on non-contradiction.
- 3. Even though mysteries exist, there are no actual contradictions.

  We just lack the information as to how they fit together.

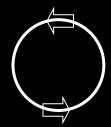
  Example: Light appears to be both pure energy waves and particles.
- 4. There is some inclination of the mind toward truth, otherwise nothing could ever be known and no possibility for truth. But agnosticism is self-defeating. The mind does not come through the senses and universally pursues reality logically.
- 5. The real is rational, even though the rational is not always real (mermaids). This is true because it is undeniable.

# CONCLUSION

As we look at the universe around us we can make certain observations that are undeniable -

Matter ... energy ... our own existence ... other people ... animals ... others Also ideas ... such as the Law of Non-Contradiction (A  $\neq$  -A).

Non-contradiction seems to be the only test for truth which is undeniable.



...But is it circular reasoning to say undeniability is true because it is undeniable? Yes, but....

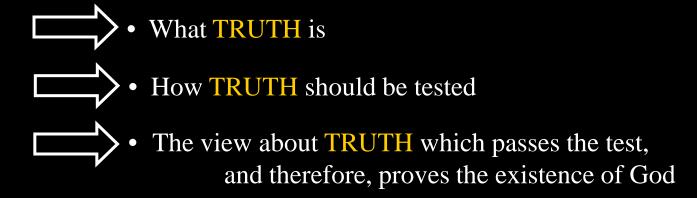
# Undeniability is true because it is inescapable

We can't get away from it......We're stuck with it!... therefore, it is TRUE.

# **APOLOGETICS**

CHRISTIANITY has the distinction of being reasonable. The message of the Bible, taken in a plain, ordinary, normal way, can be logically verified as **TRUE**.

In order to make a complete case for **CHRISTIANITY** we must determine:



• That biblical CHRISTIANITY is the TRUTH revealed by God

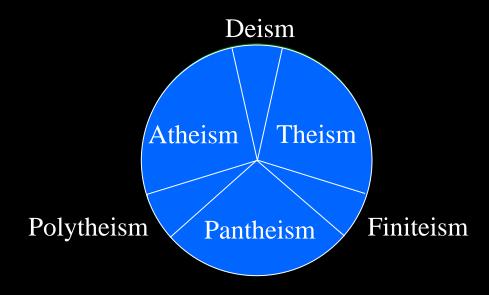
A world view is simply a mental view we have of the world.

It's a position from which we interpret all the things we encounter. It's like a pair of glasses which focus and color reality so as to make sense to us in a particular way.



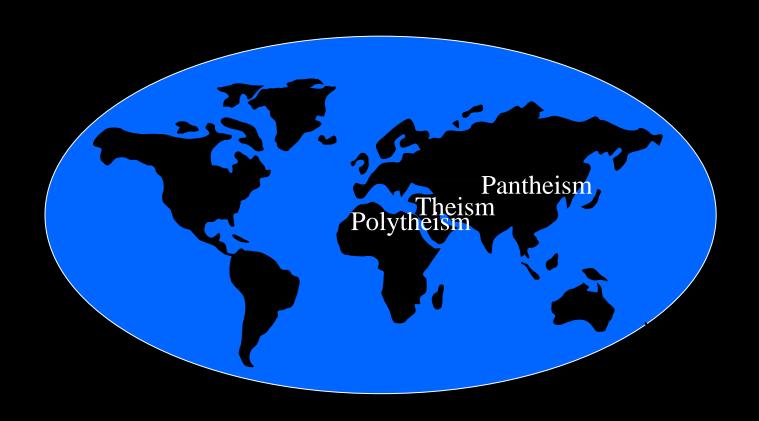
# Today, there are three major and three minor world views

The three minor views are:

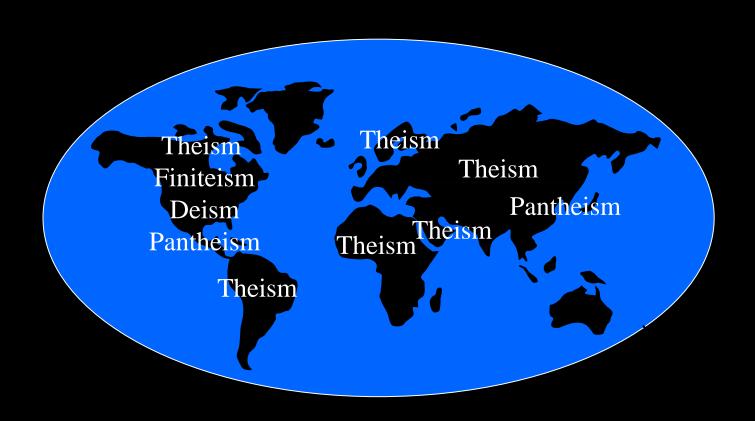


Note: Sectors are not shown to scale

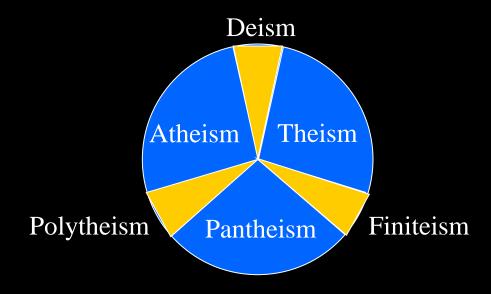
# **Ancient World**



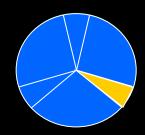
# Modern World



# **Three Minor World Views**

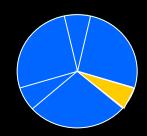


# FINITEISM ... God is not infinite



- 1. God is personal.
- 2. God is the Creator
- 3. God is limited. He is temporal, changing, and involved to the extent that He is capable, but He is not omnipotent.
- 4. God believes in justice but can't always make it work out that way.
- 5. God is all loving but not all powerful. A world of free creatures limit His ability. He can't sin or do certain things like make square circles.
- 6. Most finiteists don't believe in miracles.
- 7. Evil is real and it limits God. Our job is to help God struggle against evil, but the outcome is uncertain.
- 8. God is mutable, that is, He changes. Therefore, there are no moral or ethical absolutes because as God changes and develops so do they.

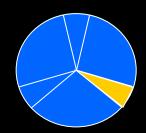
## FINITEISM ... God is not infinite



#### The case *FOR* Finiteism

- 1. If God were all powerful He *could* destroy evil.
- 2. If God were all loving (good), He would destroy evil.
- 3. Evil is not destroyed.
- 4. So either there is no God or He is limited.
- 5. But there is evidence that God exists.
- 6. Therefore, He must be limited.

# FINITEISM ... God is not infinite



#### **Problems**

- 1. A finite God needs a creator and hence is not the ultimate cause.
- 2. Anyone or anything finite is not worthy of worship (idolatry). He is a creature.
- 3. Presence of evil does not eliminate an infinite God. He has not destroyed evil *yet*.
- 4. If God is not infinite, then by what standard do we measure God?
- 5. God is *restricted* to righteousness, holiness, and consistency. He is not *limited*.
- 6. It is arbitrary and wishful thinking to limit God in the area of power but not love.
- 7. A finite God offers no hope because there is no guarantee that evil will lose.

# POLYTHEISM ... There are many gods



- 1. There are many personal gods who vary in power and attributes.
- 2. Except for Mormanism and in a few other places, it is mostly extinct today.
- 3. The gods vary in attributes, but all are limited.
- 4. Most polytheists believe in miracles as part of human experience.
- 5. Evil is real and its outcome is uncertain. Both men and the gods struggle with it.
- 6. Most ancient polytheisms believed man was mortal but the gods were immortal.

There is no apologetic case made for polytheism

# POLYTHEISM ... There are many gods



#### **Problems**

- 1. Many finite gods are no better than one finite god or none as an ultimate cause.
- 2. An ultimate cause is inherently singular. It's impossible to have many ultimates.
- 3. Many finite (non-ultimate) beings face the same problems that finiteism does:
  - Worship of a non-ultimate is idolatry.
  - Multiple finite gods leave us with no single standard of goodness.
  - The characteristics must be assigned to these gods arbitrarily.
  - Many finite gods offer no guarantee of ultimate victory over evil.

Therefore, POLYTHEISM IS DENIABLE and not true.

# **DEISM** ... There is one uninvolved God



- 1. There is one eternal, personal, ultimate God who created the universe from nothing. He created it and will not intervene again until it runs down.
- 2. Man is to learn about God by applying logic to the revelation in nature.
- 3. None of the miracles reported in the Bible or elsewhere are real; they do not exist.
- 4. God is unitarian in nature. Believing in the Trinity would be polytheism.
- 5. God established moral laws to be discovered in the natural universe. Adherence to these laws will determine reward and punishment in an afterlife.

# **DEISM** ... There is one uninvolved God



The case *FOR* Deism

- 1. Miracles are rare.
- 2. The evidence for regular things is greater than it is for rare things
- 3. It is always wise to base one's belief on regular things not rare things.
- 4. Therefore, it is never wise to believe in miracles.

# **DEISM** ... There is one uninvolved God

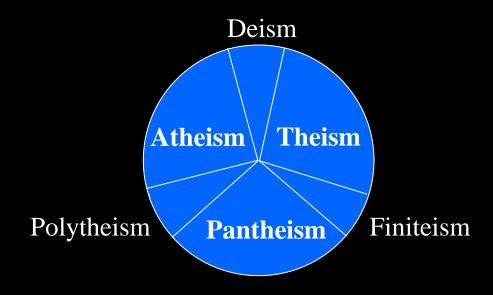


#### **Problems**

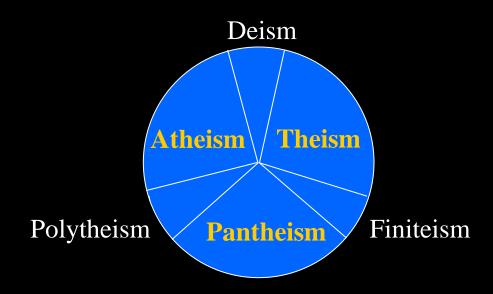
- 1. It is inconsistent to say that God created the universe, but doesn't do miracles.
- 2. Regularity and rarity of events is not a valid basis for belief. Belief should be based upon truth which is determined by undeniability, not by regularity.
- 3. Deists' concept of God is one of a master machine maker who is now uninvolved. But one would expect a *personal* God to be personally involved.
- 4. Belief in the Trinity is not polytheism. It is the concept of God which is more complex than unitarianism. God is one in ultimate essence but three in roles.
- 5. A belief in the supernatural interventions by God in the Bible is just as valid as belief in the supernatural intervention by God for creation.

Therefore, DEISM IS DENIABLE and not true.

# **Three Major World Views**



## **Three Major World Views**

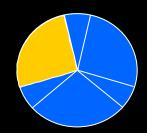


## ATHEISM ... There is no God



- 1. There is no God; there is only natural matter and energy
- 2. All "mystical or supernatural" powers will one day be explained naturally.
- 3. The universe is eternal. It may expand, contract and evolve, but did not originate from someone or from something else.
- 4. Human nature is in a state of evolution and so:
  - Their values are temporal and so moral truth is relative.
  - Their goal is human utopia.
  - Education is "salvation" and the means of achieving utopia.

## ATHEISM ... There is no God



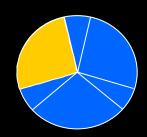
#### The case *FOR* Atheism

- 1. Cause and effect do not logically lead to God since there is no cause for God.
- 2. Evil exists. If God were all powerful, He *could* defeat evil. If He were all loving, He *would* defeat evil. Evil is not defeated. Therefore, there is no all powerful, all loving God.
- 3. A belief in God is anti-humanitarian. When people experience suffering, they are experiencing an act of God, because God is assumed to be in control. If one helps people, he is opposing God.

  If one doesn't help, he is anti-humanitarian.
- 4. It is logically impossible to have an omnipotent God. Some things just cannot be done. For example, God could not go out of existence, or make a one ended stick.

## ATHEISM ... There is no God

Energy For Useful Work



#### **Problems**

- 1. Atheism is a "nothingbutism" which is illogical and meaningless because, if it were true, there would be nothing to compare it to for identification.
- 2. It is unreasonable and unscientific to conclude that the universe is eternal because the Second Law of Thermodynamics says useful energy is decreasing:

3. If there is no God life is absurd and meaningless because man and the universe face only death Total Energy in the Universe purpose.

- 4. The existence
  - An etern
  - The exister
  - Belief in G

destroy evil.

to suffering.

• Inability to do the impossibly absuringles not invalidate an all-powerful God.

# PANTHEISM ... God is everything, everything is God



- 1. The universe is nothing but spirit. It is a manifestation or mode of God.
- 2. Creation is out of God (ex Deo). He is the source of everything good and evil.
- 3. God is neither personal nor conscious, not HE but IT like a force or aura.
- 4. God cannot be understood or expressed logically, but by mystical intuition.
- 5. Humans emanated from God and are God, god, or godly. Man as an entity does not exist apart from God.
- 6. Humans repeatedly reincarnate trying to burn up **karma** (badness?) by good living until they have no more passion or desires. Then, like a drop of water entering the ocean, they rejoin God / the Force for blissful happiness.

# PANTHEISM ... God is everything, everything is God



- 7. Truth and values are relative for our emanation on earth. Good is not right and evil is not wrong. They are simply the cycle of things as part of God.
- 8. The power of God and work of God are mystical, not supernatural. They are unable to be known or reasoned.
- 9. All religions are okay as long as they don't interfere with each other. They are all simply climbing paths up the same mountain.

#### -The case *FOR* Pantheism-

Since pantheists believe that logic does not apply to ultimate reality, no logical "case" can be made for pantheism - by definition.

# PANTHEISM ... God is everything, everything is God



#### **Problems**

- 1. Pantheism is a "nothingbutism", like atheism, therefore it is illogical and meaningless.
- 2. Atheism says, "I exist but God does not". Pantheism says "God exists, but I really do not". This is self-defeating for Pantheists because one must exist to make the assertion.
- 3. Pantheism says, "Reason does not apply to ultimate reality", which is self-defeating because it is a statement of reason about ultimate reality.
- 4. Pantheism does not adequately explain evil. If good and evil are equally the manifestations of God and simply the way things are, why is it *good* to get rid of **karma** and why is the ultimate objective of bliss away from evil, good? Also, if evil is an illusion why does it seem so real?

  More ...

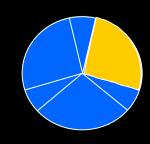
# PANTHEISM ... God is everything, everything is God



#### **Problems**

- 5. For the individual, pantheism results in the same outlook as does atheism because man personally ceases to exist at death.
- 6. If God is infinite and yet one with the finite creation, then either the infinite is finite or the finite is infinite both are impossible.
- 7. Pantheism claims that all religions are climbing paths up the same mountain. This is illogical, unreasonable, and self-defeating, because atheism and theism make claims totally opposite to pantheism. Atheism says everything is only material; nothing is spiritual. There is no God of any kind. Christianity and Islam each say their way to God is the *only* way. So if Christianity or Islam is *a* way, then pantheism cannot be *a* way.

THEISM ... One eternal personal involved God exists



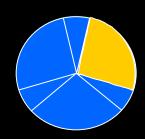


## **Summary Case for Theism**

- 1. Every effect has a cause.
- 2. The universe is an effect.
- 3. The universe has a Cause.

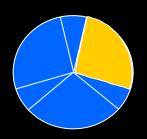
Now, a detailed case for THEISM....

## THEISM ... One eternal personal involved God exists



- 1. Every effect has a cause (by observation).
- 2. Every effect has a cause which is equal to or greater than (more complex) itself. (i.e. bird nest, house, computer, etc.) By observation, procreation seems to be the only effect which is equal to its cause.
- 3. The universe exists. (by observation)
- 4. Therefore, the universe must have a Cause which is equal to or greater then (more complex) itself.
- 5. Therefore, a Cause greater than the universe exists.
- 6. The universe contains personality and morality (by observation).

## THEISM ... One eternal personal involved God exists



- 7. Therefore, at least a <u>personal moral Cause</u> (creator) for the universe exists. This "Creator" can then be designated "He" or "She", not "It". "He" is preferred both historically and traditionally because it designates headship.
- 8. The universe has never been observed creating something from nothing.
- 9. Since the universe exists (as an effect), a personal moral existing Cause for the universe can create.
- 10. If the creator (cause) were finite, then he would have another creator (cause) who would in turn have another creator (cause) and so forth.

This would lead to:

Cn 
$$\rightarrow$$
 ...C3 $\rightarrow$  C2 $\rightarrow$  C1 $\rightarrow$  ?

## THEISM ... One eternal personal involved God exists

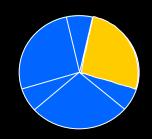


$$Cn \rightarrow ...C3 \rightarrow C2 \rightarrow C1 \rightarrow U$$

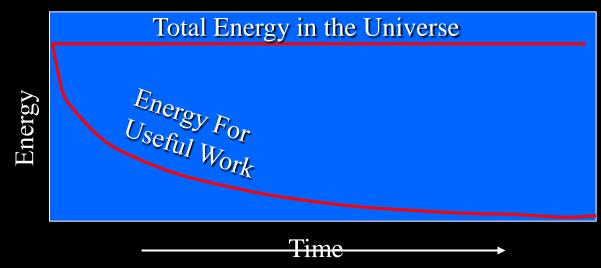
This would mean that eventually at least one finite creator-cause would be either self-caused or uncaused. But both are impossible.

- 11. Therefore, all the causes cannot be finite causes.
- 12. Therefore, the personal moral existing Creator-cause must be non-finite (infinite). That is, there must be one infinite or Ultimate Cause.
- 13. No meaningful statement can be made about space without reference to time.
- 14. The infinite Cause must also be eternal, because eternality is simply infinity applied to time.

## THEISM ... One eternal personal involved God exists

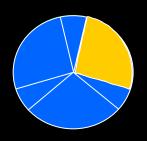


- 15. The universe cannot be self-caused because it is not eternal. The Laws of Thermodynamics say:
  - (1) there is a fixed constant amount of energy in the universe
  - (2) the amount available for useful work\* is decreasing.



<sup>\*</sup> Energy required to cause physical, chemical, or electrical action or reaction.

## THEISM ... One eternal personal involved God exists

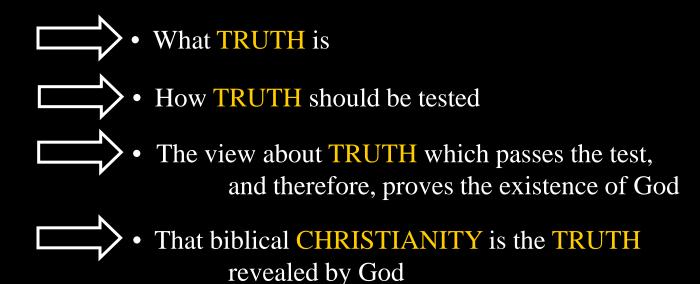


- 16. An infinite eternal Cause would be unchanging (immutable), because anything He would change into He would already be.
- 17. Therefore, the Creator-cause must be all-knowing, all-powerful, all-perfect, otherwise He could change.
- 18. Therefore, a personal, moral, infinite, eternal, immutable, all-knowing, all-powerful, all-perfect Creator exists.
- 19. Such a being is worthy of worship and therefore can be called God.
- 20. Therefore, God exists

## **APOLOGETICS**

CHRISTIANITY has the distinction of being reasonable. The message of the Bible, taken in a plain, ordinary, normal way, can be logically verified as TRUE.

In order to make a complete case for **CHRISTIANITY** we must determine:



## Overview of Topics

- 1. IS JESUS CHRIST THE ONLY WAY TO GOD?
- 2. ARE THE MIRACLES OF THE BIBLE POSSIBLE?
- 3. IS THE BIBLE RELIABLE?
- 4. WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD?
- 5. ISN'T CHRISTIANITY ONLY A PSYCHOLOGICAL CRUTCH?
- 6. WHY DO THE INNOCENT SUFFER?
- 7. WHAT ABOUT HYPOCRITES?

#### A PERSONAL CONCLUSION

## 1. IS JESUS CHRIST THE ONLY WAY TO GOD?

- Isn't sincerity enough?
  - No. Sincerity has nothing to do with reality, the way things are truth.
- What's the difference between Christianity and the other religions? Christ claimed to be God who became a man to provide the **only** way to God.
- Aren't Christians too narrow minded?
  - Christianity is based on news of events, not views of people. Truth is inherently narrow.
- Is it reasonable to say, "That's okay for you but not for me?"
  - No. If something is true, it is true for everyone. If not, it is not true for everyone.
- Could Jesus Christ be one of many ways to God?
  - No. That's the opposite of what He claimed. So if it is true, He is wrong and not a way.

#### 1. IS JESUS CHRIST THE ONLY WAY TO GOD?

- 1. It is <u>undeniable</u> that Jesus claimed to be the only way to God "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (John 14:6)
- 2. It is <u>undeniable</u> that Jesus' claim is reasonable.

Therefore, we can conclude that Jesus Christ could very well be the only way to God.

#### 2. ARE THE MIRACLES OF THE BIBLE POSSIBLE?

• Do miracles produce faith?

No. God gave them to authenticate that the message and messenger were from Himself.

• Why do we not find miracles in science and history?

Because science and history deal with the "natural", not the "supernatural".

• Should we expect to see miracles today?

No. Most people in Bible times didn't either. God's message is already authenticated.

• Is life full of miracles?

No. We observe wondrous "natural" occurrences, but miracles are "supernatural" and rare.

• How did supernatural miracles happen?

They were the normal capabilities of a supernatural being beyond our understanding.

#### 2. ARE THE MIRACLES OF THE BIBLE POSSIBLE?

1. It is <u>undeniable</u> that the Bible records supernatural events.

"Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him. (Matthew 16:6)

2. It is <u>undeniable</u> that these real events could have happened.

Therefore, it's <u>undeniable</u> that the miracles of the Bible are possible.

#### 3. IS THE BIBLE RELIABLE?

## Uniqueness

The Bible is 66 books written by 40 authors over 1500 years in three languages on three continents. It includes history, poetry, romance, teaching and prophesy with a cast of 2, 930 characters in 1,551 places. It is written about the most controversial subjects known to man with perfect harmony and continuity. It has been translated into 1,700 languages, stood the test of time, and is the most valuable book in the world.

#### Character

The Bible claims to be the <u>revelation</u> of God through <u>inspiration</u> of its authors to record God's message about Himself and the world <u>without error</u> in its original writing.

## Canonicity

The church determined which books were authentically from God to make up the Bible. This was based on the book's internal claims about inspiration, consistency with the other books, apostolic authority, and that it was already being used within the churches.

#### 3. IS THE BIBLE RELIABLE?

## Development

OLD TESTAMENT: Old Testament has been passed down from meticulous Hebrew scribes who reliably hand copied the manuscripts.

NEW TESTAMENT: New Testament has been similarly hand copied resulting in over 24,000 manuscripts making it the most credible ancient document in history.

## Archeology

Modern archeology has repeatedly verified large numbers of Biblical references.

## Prophesy

A very large number of highly improbable prophesies have been historically fulfilled, thereby authenticating the credibility of biblical claims.

## Credibility

Significant internal evidence within the Bible itself supports the claim that it is the work from God Himself.

#### 3. IS THE BIBLE RELIABLE?

- 1. The authenticity of the Bible cannot be denied.
- 2. The Bible made certain truth claims, including the basic claims of Christianity, which cannot be denied.

Therefore, the truth claims of Christianity are <u>undeniable</u>.

[Note: This validates Christ's truth claims, made from the <u>Bible</u>, not denominational claims, those from any sacred traditions, or any other source.]

#### 4. WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD?

• How can we say God is fair if He sends people to hell who have never heard of Him?

Whatever God does about those who have never heard of Jesus Christ will be the most just thing to do. *Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?* (Genesis 18:25)

• What about people who have been completely isolated from Christianity? How can they respond to Christ?

Every person, regardless of geographical location, has at least two sources of information about God:

- 1. The general revelation about God from nature. (Romans 1:20)
- 2. The revelation about God and morality from conscience. (Romans 2:15)

#### 4. WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD?

• How could someone in an isolated area know about Jesus Christ, even if he wanted to?

God has obligated Himself to respond to those who sincerely seek Him. (Luke 19:10) Experience shows this to be the case by numerous testimonials to this truth.

• Couldn't people be worshipping Jesus, but calling Him by a different name?

There is no other religion or religious figure even close to Christ in claims or teachings. Furthermore, the name of someone is his unique identifier and Christianity requires a spiritual connection with the Person of Jesus Christ Himself, not just His teachings.

...he who does not believe has been judged already because he has not believed in the <u>name</u> of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:18b)

#### 4. WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD?

• Couldn't those who have never heard of Jesus be let into heaven some other way?

God *could* do anything He wishes to within His own righteousness. But He has clearly stated that no man comes to Him except through Jesus. (John 14:6) This excludes all other possibilities.

• What about babies and insane people who can't believe in Jesus?

Admittedly, it is difficult to find biblical evidence about salvation for infants or the mentally disordered. However, biblical evidence does indicate that those who are unable to consciously choose are not asked to do so.

It appears that when David's infant son died, David expected to go to him eventually. (2 Samuel 12:23)

As Abram said, Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly? (Genesis 18:25b)

### 4. WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD?

- 1. It is undeniable that a just God will do what is right in terms of justice for everyone.
- 2. Isolation limits what a person is likely to hear, but does not limit God's ability to bring a person to someone who is seeking Him.

Therefore, having never heard the message of Christianity does not deny the truth of the Christian message.

#### 5. ISN"T CHRISTIANITY ONLY A PSYCHOLOGICAL CRUTCH?

## • What if I don't need religion?

Every human seeks meaning for life such as, Who am? Why am I here? Am I significant? Where am I going? All societies have exhibited this human trait. It is a natural characteristic of all people and indicates maturity and stability, not a condition of emotionalism, weakness, or mental deficiency.

## • Isn't religion just a crutch for people who want to believe something?

The issue is finding the truth then believing it. Jesus said, *I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man comes to the Father, but through Me*. (John 14:6) It is only by finding and believing the truth that our condition is (greatly) improved. It is not the believing in something that makes it true (Faithism). Believing in something that is false will worsen our condition. So belief in a false religion is an unreliable crutch.

#### 5. ISN"T CHRISTIANITY ONLY A PSYCHOLOGICAL CRUTCH?

- 1. It is undeniable that all humans everywhere have thoughts of morality, significance, purpose, and destiny.
- 2. Biblical Christianity is undeniable.

Therefore, it is reasonable to meet our unavoidable need for morality, purpose, and destiny in biblical Christianity.

#### 6. WHY DO THE INNOCENT SUFFER?

• Why is the world full of suffering?

There are many reasons for suffering, but man himself is a major cause. People cause most of the suffering we observe.

• Why doesn't God wipe out all suffering right now?

In order for God to wipe out all suffering He would need to wipe out all people because all of us cause at least some suffering.

• Why doesn't God make people unable to cause suffering?

To do that, God would have to make people unable to choose. But love requires a choice. To love God and one another requires that we have freedom of choice,

• Why does God make us suffer things like disease and natural disasters?

God provided us with the option of rejecting Him. The consequences of that choice included the perversion of nature. Disease and natural disasters are part of that pergersion.

#### 6. WHY DOTHE INNOCENT SUFFER?

• Why did God make the results of Adam's choice so bad?

A choice without significant results is not a significant choice. Choosing or not choosing to believe God should be expected to have significant results.

• Why are we suffering because of Adam's sin?

For us to avoid the results of Adam's sin God would have to eliminate the results of Adam's sin. If He did it for Adam's sin, God would have to do it for everyone's sin to keep suffering from starting. As reasoned above, that would be choosing without any significant results.

• Why not create man like angels - creatures with free will who do not choose evil ?

Ultimately, we cannot say why God created us the way He did. But while evil is never in God's will, it obviously is in His plan. As a result of our sin and evil, we have come to know about God's great compassion, mercy, grace, and plan of redemption. Without evil we may have never known these things about God.

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#### 6. WHY DOTHE INNOCENT SUFFER?

- 1. The reality of suffering is undeniable.
- 2. The reality of suffering does not deny the existence of a sovereign God.
- 3. Suffering is logically explained by the Bible.

Therefore, biblical Christianity has an undeniable explanation for suffering.

#### 7. WHAT ABOUT HYPOCRITES

• Why are there so many hypocrites in Christianity?

First, one must be certain that those deemed hypocrites are indeed biblical Christians. Second, hypocrites in anything worth while is just a fact of life. Third, the attraction of hypocrites is a good indication. Light tends to attract bugs.

• If Jesus had the true religion, why doesn't He keep His followers from turning into hypocrites?

For Jesus to do this He would need to remove their free will and deny them the process of spiritual growth. There is no biblical claim that believers ever become perfect in this life. (1 John 1:8) Christianity changes people from the inside out. Hypocrites change the outside, only.

Jesus was harder on religious hypocrites than any other group. (Matthew 23) He taught that hypocrites *do all their deeds to be noticed by men*. (Mathew 23:5) Biblical believers should seek to please God only (Romans 6:5-6; Col. 3:23; Eph. 5:10)

#### 7. WHAT ABOUT HYPOCRITES

• If Jesus really changes people, why aren't all Christians better than all non-Christians?

God does not make all believers mature at once. It is a great complement to Christianity that people expect Christians to be better people. The issue is an individual one. What kind of change has occurred in each Christian's life?

• If some Christians are hypocrites, doesn't that suggest that Christianity has some mistakes in it?

We must encourage people to consider Jesus Christ and the Bible, rather than what people do with them. We evaluate the quality of a new car based upon the car's merits alone, not on the basis of how some owners drive them.

#### 7. WHAT ABOUT HYPOCRITES

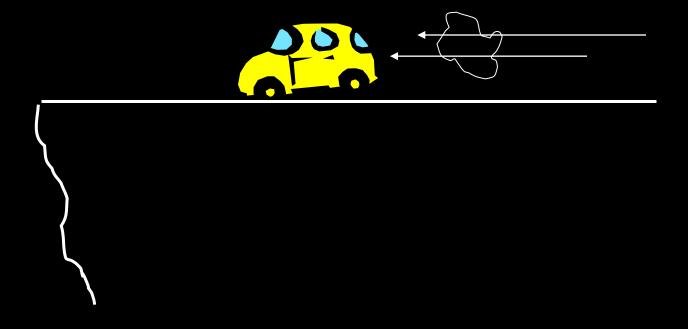
- 1. It's undeniable that there are hypocrites within the ranks of those called Christians.
- 2. To forcibly eliminate hypocrisy would eliminate free will and growth.
- 3. Jesus condemnation of hypocrisy is undeniable.
- 4. Biblical Christianity does not claim perfection for believers in this life.

Therefore, biblical Christianity cannot be denied because of hypocrisy.

**Personal Conclusions:** Only these few ways to go ...

## 1. Decide to not decide (no action)

We are all going to die and face some sort of eternity, so that's like being in a speeding car heading for a cliff and taking no action.



**Personal Conclusions:** Only these few ways to go ...

## 1. Decide to not decide (no action)

We are all going to die and face some sort of eternity, so that's like being in a speeding car heading for a cliff and taking no action.

## 2. Decide to rely on ourselves

The problem is that we're all wrong at least sometimes, and that's too big a risk to gamble on for all eternity.

## 3. Decide to follow one of the other world religions

The problem with that is that we have shown them all to be deniable (untrue) and they reject the Bible which is undeniable.









**Personal Conclusions:** Only these few ways to go ...

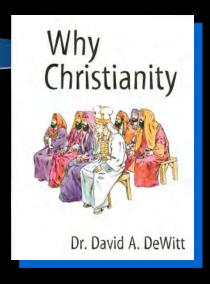
## 4. Decide biblical Christianity is correct and receive Christ as God

We have shown that the prior three answers are deniable and therefore are false.

We have also shown that Jesus and the Bible are true in the sense that they are undeniable - the only sound way to test for truth.

Only biblical Christianity provides us with undeniability and the only wise choice in view of this life and eternity

Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life." (John 6:68)



## This concludes "Why Christianity"

