

Does the Christian God Exist?

“Was Jesus an Advocate of Blind Faith?”

Dr. Craig Hazen (Biola University)

Christianity is testable

1. 1 Cor. 15 (see next page)
2. Resurrection of Jesus is the best attested miracle in the ancient world.
3. Christianity is TRUE TRUE.
4. We can KNOW Christianity is true via objective investigation.
5. Faith is NOT “believing what you know ain’t so”.
6. Prophets in OT believed God was real.

“FOR WE DID NOT FOLLOW CLEVERLY DEvised TALES WHEN WE MADE KNOWN TO YOU THE POWER AND COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, BUT WE WERE EYEWITNESSES OF HIS MAJESTY.”
(2 PETER 1:16)

The apostles were obsessed with the reality of Christianity

1. 2 Peter 3:16
2. 1 John 1:1

“WHAT WAS FROM THE BEGINNING, WHAT WE HAVE HEARD, WHAT WE HAVE SEEN WITH OUR EYES, WHAT WE HAVE LOOKED AT AND TOUCHED WITH OUR HANDS, CONCERNING THE WORD OF LIFE...” (1 JOHN 1:1)

Jesus was obsessed with the reality of Christianity

1. Mark 2
2. “So that you will know that the son of man has the authority on Earth to forgive sins, rise and walk.” (strongest words in Greek text for “they were astonished.”)
3. Jesus doesn't want blind leap.
4. Christianity is a knowledge tradition.
5. What sign did Jesus give them? The resurrection.
6. There is a world out there dying to know the truth of these matters through a tremendous trail of evidence God has left us in history.

“BUT SO THAT YOU MAY KNOW THAT THE SON OF MAN HAS AUTHORITY ON EARTH TO FORGIVE SINS”
—HE SAID TO THE PARALYTIC,
“I SAY TO YOU, GET UP, PICK UP YOUR PALLET AND GO HOME.” (MARK 2:10-11)

1 Corinthians 15:4-19

Chapter 15

Important points:

1. How often do we reduce our evangelism to the least powerful argument possible (v. 8): our own changed life? Paul didn't merely rely on personal testimony, but on the resurrection itself! (it doesn't matter that we live 2,000 years later)
2. Paul doesn't to merely teach us WHAT to believe in 1 Cor. 15. He makes everything hinge on the publically knowable, discoverable, investigateable reality of Jesus' resurrection.
 - a. If Christ raised → resurrection is not impossible
 - b. If resurrection is impossible → Christ was not raised
 - c. If Christ not raised → faith and preaching are pointless
 - d. If dead are not raised → Christ has not been raised
 - e. If Christ was not raised → faith is worthless, still in sins
 - f. **If faith is merely hope → we are to be pitied (so faith must be grounded belief)**
3. Mere BELIEF is inferior to knowledge. Paul wants us to KNOW Christianity is true.
4. Paul says we can KNOW Christianity it true on the basis of
 - a. Historical facts – Jesus resurrection (v. 4)
 - b. Eyewitness testimony to the miraculous (v. 5-6)
 - c. Personal testimony (v. 7)

The Fact of Christ's Resurrection

- 1 Now ^aI **make known to you**, brethren, the ^bgospel which I preached to you, which also you received, ^cin which also you stand,
- 2 by which also you are saved, ^aif you hold fast ^tthe word which I preached to you, **unless you believed in vain.**
- 3 For ^aI delivered to you ^{as} of first importance what I also received, that Christ died ^bfor our sins ^caccording to the Scriptures,
- 4 and **that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day** ^baccording to the Scriptures,
- 5 and that ^aHe appeared to ^bCephas, then ^cto the twelve.
- 6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some ^ahave fallen asleep;
- 7 then He appeared to ^aJames, then to ^ball the apostles;
- 8 and last of all, as ^vto one untimely born, ^aHe appeared to me also.
- 9 For I am ^athe least of the apostles, ^vand not fit to be called

- an apostle, because I ^bpersecuted the church of God.
- 10 But by ^athe grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I ^blabored even more than all of them, yet ^cnot I, but the grace of God with me.
- 11 Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.
- 12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that **there is no resurrection of the dead?**
- 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, **not even Christ has been raised;**
- 14 and ^aif Christ has not been raised, then **our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.**
- 15 Moreover **we are even found to be false witnesses** of God, because we testified ^vagainst God that He ^araised ^cChrist, whom He did not raise, **if in fact the dead are not raised.**
- 16 For if the dead are not raised, **not even Christ has been raised;**
- 17 and if Christ has not been raised, **your faith is worthless; ^ayou are still in your sins.**
- 18 **Then those also who ^ahave fallen asleep in Christ have perished.**
- 19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are ^aof all men most to be pitied.

Philosophical Apologetic He wins either way!	Practical Implications of a failed apologetic
If Christ raised → resurrection is not impossible (i.e. it is possible) (I WIN!)	If Christ not raised → faith and preaching are pointless
(or)	If Christ not raised → faith is worthless
If resurrection impossible → Christ was not raised (HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THE EVIDENCE?! I WIN!)	If Christ not raised → we are still in our sins
	If (all above are true) and we only hope, but faith believe in Christ → we are be pitied

Importance of laying an apologetic foundation →

