

How do we know Christianity is true and we are not deceived? [by Matt Slick](#)

There are a lot of competing truth-claim systems in the world. How do we know that we as [Christians](#) are believing what is true and are not deceived? The answer is three-fold.

First, Christianity is only as true as the person of [Jesus](#). He fulfilled prophecy, claimed to be [God](#) in flesh, performed many miracles, died, and physically rose from the dead. Christianity is about Jesus, his claims, and his deeds. It is based on him and it is only as true as he is true.

Second, Christianity is consistent with reason, facts, and shows evidence of God's inspiration in the [Bible](#).

Third, all other religious systems are either unverifiable or irrational in their teachings.

The person of Jesus

For the Christian, the ultimate expression of truth is found in the person of Jesus who said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life and no one comes to the father but through me..." ([John 14:6](#)). Jesus, who [claimed to be divine](#), [performed many miracles](#), and [rose from the dead](#) said that he alone was the Truth. He was either right or wrong. There is no in-between. If Jesus is wrong, then Christianity is a wrong. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, then we should abandon our faith because he would be no different than anyone else. If Jesus is not God in flesh, then we should denounce him as a madman because you can't claim to be God and be sane -- unless the claim is true. Therefore, if what Jesus said about himself is true, then Christianity is true.

Did Jesus fail to rise from the dead? If so, why could no one produce the body? Were the eyewitnesses of his resurrection really conspirators and liars? Then how did they concoct such a lie based on eyewitness accounts that could have been verified at that time? We have no historical refutations of the gospel claims. Why would people invent such a story that they knew would probably cost them their lives? Why would Paul, of Pharisees sent to destroy Christianity, suddenly convert and state that his conversion was based upon the appearance of the resurrected Christ? The answer to these questions are best found by believing that Jesus was who he said he was, performed miracles, and rose from the dead.

You see, Christianity is only as true as Jesus is true. If it can be shown that Jesus lied, failed to perform miracles, was not God in flesh, and did not rise from the dead, then Christianity is false and we are deceived.

Reason, Facts of history, and Inspiration

There is nothing within the scope of Christian teaching that denies reason. The doctrine of the [Trinity](#) may be a mystery, but it is not illogical. The incarnation may be paradoxical in that the person of [Jesus is both divine and human](#), but it is not impossible. The resurrection of Christ may be enigmatic, but it does not defy logic -- unless you deny the miraculous to begin with. Christianity is reasonable; that is, it does not violate logic. It may contain mysteries and paradoxes, but there is nothing within its body of teaching that contradicts reason.

There is nothing within Christian teaching that denies the facts of history. History and archaeology confirm the Bible. We have many [non-biblical accounts of New Testament events and/or people](#). Josephus, a Jewish historian (AD 37-101), mentioned John the Baptist and Herod (Antiquities, Book 18, ch. 5, par. 2), as well as Jesus (Antiquities, Book 18, ch. 3, par. 3) and James (Antiquities, Book 20, ch. 19). Tacitus, a Roman historian (AD 55-117), mentions Jesus (Annals XV); Thallus (Circa AD 52), mentions the eclipse of the sun.[1](#)

The facts of archaeology and history support the Bible and do not contradict it. Various cities mentioned in it have been discovered: Arad, Bethel, Capernaum, Chorazin, Dan, Ephesus, Gaza, Gezer, Hazor, Hesbon, Jericho, Joppa, Nineveh, Schechem, Susa, etc. The Hittites have been verified, as have the stables of Solomon, etc. The point is, there is nothing in archaeology that contradicts biblical truth. It agrees with and is consistent with archaeology and history.

Evidence of biblical inspiration can be clearly seen in the prophecies found in the Old Testament and their fulfillment in the New.

- The following cities were prophesied to be destroyed and never rebuilt which has come true since they have not yet been rebuilt. Nineveh ([Nah. 1:10](#); [3:7,15](#); [Zeph. 2:13-14](#)), Babylon ([Isaiah 13:1-22](#)), and Tyre (Ezek. 26).
- Prophecies about Jesus: Jesus would be born of a virgin [Isaiah 7:14](#) fulfilled in [Matt. 1:18,25](#); His birthplace in Bethlehem [Micah 5:2](#), fulfilled in [Matt. 2:1](#); Preceded by a messenger [Isaiah 40:3](#), fulfilled in [Matt. 3:1-2](#); side pierced [Zech. 12:10](#), fulfilled in [John 19:34](#); that he would be crucified [Psalm 22:1, 11-18](#), fulfilled in [John 19:23-24](#).

Prophecies of the future and their fulfillment are evidence of God's involvement in Christianity. Though much more can be written on this topic, the evidence of God's work in the Bible can be demonstrated reasonably to be true. It is [scientifically accurate](#), archaeologically accurate, and historically accurate. When this is combined with the extremely [well-preserved documents](#) written by the [eyewitnesses](#), it leads us to conclude reasonably that the Bible is preserved excellently, and is not merely the product of human effort. It is divinely inspired.

Of course, there are critics who say that the Bible was altered to make it look as though Jesus fulfilled prophecies. But this would mean the Bible was purposely written to be a deception. What evidence exists for that claim? How do the critics account for the Bible's declaration of teaching truth while it is based on a lie? Why would the disciples knowingly deceive and suffer ostracization from their culture and be willing to die for what they knew was false? Such basic questions would need to be answered because those who would propose a new theory, need to answer the tough questions that their theories would raise. Can they give a more reasonable explanation than the one contained in the Bible -- that Jesus was who he said he was and did what the Scriptures say he did? If no more feasible theories can be proposed that would account for all the facts, then the critics have nothing on which to stand and the claims of Scripture are true.

Other belief systems are unverifiable or irrational

There are other belief systems that claim to be valid, but they are either non-verifiable historically, or irrational internally. For example [Mormonism](#) clearly contradicts the Bible (teaches God was a man on another planet, is married to a goddess wife, etc.), has no historical evidence to validate the book of Mormon, and teaches the logical impossibility of an eternal regression of causes. It teaches that there is an infinite regression of gods being formed, i.e., an infinite list of causes in the past. But this is impossible since this would require crossing an infinite amount of time (causal events) to get to the present. But an infinite amount of time cannot be crossed -- otherwise it isn't infinite. Therefore, there cannot be an infinite regression of new gods being formed and Mormonism can't be true.

[Islam](#) teaches that the Quran is the absolute truth revealed from their god Allah. It further states, and this is critical, that if one fact in the Quran is incorrect, then Islam is not true. But the Quran teaches a man's seed comes from his chest, not testes, (Quran 86:5-7). It describes crucifixion before its invention (Quran 7:123-124) and says that birds and ants can talk (27:16; 27:18). Since these are not true, Islam can't be either.

[Atheism](#), as a negative worldview, cannot be validated to be true, nor can it account for rationality since its materialistic perspective cannot bridge the gap between absolute, conceptual realities (i.e., logical absolutes on which reason is based) and the principle of materialism -- that all things in the universe can be understood in terms of motion, matter, chemical reactions, etc. Again, atheism can't be verified as being true since it is a position of negativity. A denial of the existence of something is almost always impossible to validate.

Reincarnation religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.) have the problem of karma, the residual cause-and-effect from previous lives that governs future incarnation levels. These incarnations serve the goal of teaching the soul, through life's journey's, so that they can return to the divine source (how can this be verified?). But each soul had at its initial incarnation perfect karma, yet each soul failed to return to the source even while having had perfect karma. Instead, each soul is locked in the ongoing cycle of reincarnation. If the soul had not learned its lessons after experiencing perfect karma, how can it do so with imperfect karma? Furthermore, eastern-based religions deny the absolutes of logic and infer counter-logical systems that contradict logic and cannot be validated through history or reason. In essence, they are nonfalsifiable.²

The [New Age Movement](#) offers subjective, unverifiable experience as the underlying framework for its theological perspectives such as human divinity, divinity of nature, etc. It is an eclectic movement with numerous contradictory belief systems that rest under its broad umbrella. How can anyone can take it seriously?

These simplified and brief analyses of various systems demonstrate that their claims must be verifiable in some way (ancient documents concurrent with verifiable history, archaeology, etc.) and must be rational. But, when a theological system cannot be verified using either normal historical examination or internal logical consistency, how can it be assumed to be true? It can't.

Where else would we go?

Jesus had a discussion with his disciples in John 6 where he spoke about communion and that no one could come to him unless it was granted him from the father ([John 6:67-68](#)). "At this point many of his disciples abandoned him. Jesus then said to the twelve, 'You do not want to go away also, do you?'⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.'" Peter's answer is relevant. If we must abandon Christianity, then what better offer can anyone make that would be of greater truth than the words of Jesus? Where else would we go? To Islam and learn to kill? To Mormonism to answer the call of pride in order to become gods? To atheism which offers us nothing except moral relativity and inconsistency? To reincarnation with its seemingly endless cycle of incarnations and suffering? What is better than Jesus? To whom should we go if we abandoned Christianity?

Conclusion

If anyone has anything better to offer than the claims, the deeds, and the sacrifice of Christ then perhaps we would go that way. But since no one else has anything better to offer than Jesus and since no one else has fulfilled prophecies, performed miracles, raised people from the dead, risen from the dead, and promised to return for his people, than we are forced by reason and the evidence to continue to believe in Jesus, his teachings, and the truth that Christianity represents as is found in him.

Christianity is true and we are not deceived because it is based on the person of Jesus who fulfilled prophecy, claimed to be God in flesh, performed many miracles, died, and physically rose from the dead. Christianity is consistent with reason, facts, and shows evidence of God's inspiration. Finally, all other religious systems are either unverifiable or irrational, thereby disqualifying them as being true. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that Christianity is true and that we are not being deceived.

