

WHAT MAKES CHRISTIANITY AND JESUS UNIQUE COMPARED TO OTHER RELIGIONS?

Whether you are atheist, agnostic, or a believer in some form of religion, you must first answer the age-old question, "Where did man come from?" Essentially, there are two choices.

All life came into being by pure chance. Through the chain of evolution, man evolved from some sort of organism.

To hold to this position requires more faith than those who hold to the belief of Christianity (creationism). Throughout all known history, no one has ever witnessed evolution taking place. A tadpole may turn into a frog, but for a frog turning into a prince is a fairy tale, not science.

In the book *What is Creation Science?* By Henry Morris and Gary Parker, we find some interesting quotes and comments concerning this (pages 2, 86 and 88):

"However, as the eminent Harvard biologist Ernst Mayr, one of the nation's top evolutionists, has observed: 'Darwin never really did discuss the origin of species in his *On the Origin of Species*' (Niles Eldredge, 1985a). Not only could Darwin not cite a single example of a new species originating, but neither has anyone else, in all the subsequent century of evolutionary study."

"Darwin himself was acutely aware of this evidence of creation and the problem it posed for his theory. In a chapter of *Origin of Species* called 'Difficulties with the Theory', he included traits that depend on separate meaningless parts. Consider the human eye with the different features required to focus at different distances, to accommodate different amounts of light, and to correct for the 'rainbow effect'. Regarding the origin of the eye, **Darwin wrote these words:** 'To suppose that the eye (with so many parts all working together)...could have been formed by natural selection, seems, **I freely confess, absurd to the highest degree.**'"

'Absurd to the highest degree.' That's Darwin's own opinion of using natural selection to explain the origin of traits that depend on many parts working together."

One could go into much more detail on evolution, but that is not our purpose here. It is sufficient to say that the theory of evolution is based upon faith, not science.

We were created by some sort of God.

Believing in creationism leads to the question, “Does this God communicate with mankind?” Most people will logically answer “yes” to this — otherwise they are left with the dilemma of wondering why a supreme being would bother to create at all, if He was only to then ignore His creation. Most people who believe in a God also believe that He communicates with mankind, thus forming what we call “religion”. If we are created by God and this God communicates with mankind, we should be able to look back into history and find record of this communication. Certainly, mankind would record something of such great importance and magnitude. Logic should then tell us that if there is a "true religion", this religion should be ancient, as God and mankind have been around a very long time. Records of communication between them should date back to days of antiquity.

There are numerous religions today that cannot be traced back to ancient times. These would include such groups as Scientology, Christian Science, Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons (L.D.S.), to name just a few. Scientology stems from L. Ron Hubbard, who was born in 1911. Christian Science is traced back to Mary Baker Eddy in the 1800s. Jehovah Witnesses and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society are traced back to Charles Taze Russell in the 1800s. Mormonism, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, is traced back to Joseph Smith in the 1800s.

What these religions all have in common is that they are relatively new. Groups such as these may try to claim a connection to the New Testament itself. However, their doctrines of Who and what God is, as well as other important major doctrines, such as what salvation is and how it is obtained, can only be traced back to the founders of their religion. Certainly, truth concerning God should be just as true today as it was 200 years ago, or even a thousand years ago. If this same truth was known as far back as ancient days, shouldn't we be able to find some record of it? I believe that it is reasonable to expect to find some such record. If a religion's doctrines concerning God and salvation cannot be found in writings from even a thousand years ago, why should we believe it?

Some people base their beliefs on what “sounds good” to them. Is something true simply because it sounds good or is a profound statement? To accept something as true based only on feeling is not rational. Christianity is not a blind faith. There is plenty of evidence to show that Jesus is much more than just a great man. There is also ample evidence to show the Bible is not just a collection of books. Rather the evidence of 100 percent accuracy in Bible prophecy points to divine inspiration.

The doctrines concerning God, in Christianity, do not just “sound good”. The Bible is confirmed to be the Word of God by fulfilled prophecy. There is also confirmation in its accuracy found in archaeology. The doctrines concerning God in Christianity can also be traced to the reformation period and on through the Catholic Church. From there, they can be further traced through the writings of the early church fathers and finally, connected to the disciples and the New Testament itself. The New Testament connects to the Old Testament, or Judaism. Before the New Testament, Judaism was looking forward to the coming of the Messiah. There are numerous prophecies in the Old Testament pertaining to this Messiah. Jesus actually fulfilled these prophecies. This is our evidence that He is the Messiah, or the Christ that was to come. In short, in Christianity, we can trace the doctrines concerning God and His nature, as well as salvation, from the present times all the way back to the book of Genesis, and then all the way back to where we are told of creation itself.

We are looking for a religion of antiquity because God and man have both been around a long time. Therefore, the records of communication between God and man should go back a long time. There are of course, other religions of antiquity, such as the Islamic religion (Muslims), or the followers of Buddha. Some people would ask, "Why not accept these records as well?", or **"Isn't there truth in all religions?"** Different religions make such drastically different claims about God; it is impossible for all religions to be correct. For example, Christianity says God is knowable (John 17:3). On the other hand, Islam teaches that God is unknowable. To the Muslim it would be blasphemous to say that God is Spirit. Jesus, however, informs us that the Father is Spirit (John 4:24). There are numerous such contradictions between Christianity and other religions, whether ancient or new.

The next logical question is, "What makes Jesus any more credible than other religious leaders of ancient times, such as Buddha or Muhammad?" The answer to this lies in the credentials of Jesus himself. Unlike other religious leaders, Jesus was foretold in great detail before He was even born. There are numerous prophecies that Jesus fulfilled, such as the bloodline He would be born through (Genesis 22:18, Matthew 1:1), where He would be born (Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:1), and how He would be betrayed (Psalm 41:9, Zechariah 11:12-13, John 13:21-26, Matthew 27:5-7).

The Dead Sea Scrolls confirm the fact that the prophecies were written long before Jesus was born. Jesus also performed many miracles, offering them as evidence as to who He was (John 10:36-39). The fact that Jesus performed what the people considered miracles is confirmed outside of the Bible. No other religious leader has performed miracles that are confirmed by other credible historic sources. Jesus predicted His own death and resurrection, and then actually rose from the dead. No other religious leader in history has ever done this. Truly no other religious leader in history even comes close to these types of credentials.

Buddha, Muhammad, Confucius, and other ancient leaders did not perform any miracles that were verified by credible historical sources. They were not foretold in detailed prophecies before they were born. Last of all, they did not rise from the dead. When Buddha, Muhammad, Confucius, and other ancient leaders died, they remained dead!

This makes what Jesus has to say more credible than what Buddha, Muhammad, or Confucius may have said. Let us also not forget that Jesus claimed to be the only way in which mankind could come to God the Father (John 14:6). All evidence shows that we can either choose Jesus or cling to some other hope that does not have any real substance or credibility in known facts. Which will you choose?

Keep in mind that the "one true church" is not a denomination, but rather a body of believers in which major doctrines are consistent with what has been taught since the 1st century.

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