

Is it possible to ‘prove’ faith or the Bible?



Highland Views

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Guest columnist

I won't keep the reader guessing. In my opinion the answer to this question is: No. The only "evidence" for the "truth" of one faith is how a believer lives their life. And that only "proves" a person's character, not personal beliefs. We can see believers of many religions living faithful lives, so what makes one faith any better than another? As for the Bible, we often hear Bible-defenders claiming the Bible is "true" because "the Bible says so." This ignores the fact that the Qur'an, the Bhagavad Gita and other scriptures of the world make similar truth-claims. Each of these ancient books are unique in their own way, containing stories and wisdom. Some argue: "But the Bible is God's Word!" Again, other believers of other faiths make the same claim.

Is there any proof for the existence of God? Some say there is. "Look around! Someone had to make all this." They

quote the Psalm: "The heavens declare the glory of God." How can anyone deny a Creator when the Creation makes his existence so obvious? Yet, it's always "their" God, isn't it? The argument is presented based on "intelligent design," a non-scientific agenda to convince and convert to the biblical God. Even if we agree there must have been a "First Cause," where is the evidence that Cause was a Being, and that Being was the God of the Bible? Why not Krishna, Allah or Zeus? When I say the origin was Nature, I'm challenged: "Where did Nature come from?" I shrug and respond: "No one knows, but Science keeps searching."

In my early years as an evangelical Christian "apologist" (defender of the faith), I was told "the evidence (for faith, God and the Bible) demands a verdict." I eventually reasoned the verdict had to be: No, there is no substantial evidence proving their truth. Honesty and humility were demanded. God's proclaimers of proofs insist the apostle Paul was right: God's wisdom is foolishness to unbelievers. They say there is a higher, more godly wisdom that only insiders like them can understand. Though their "proofs" fall short of actual evidence,

they can always fall back on the old preaching: "Just believe."

"But Jesus rose from the dead!" they exclaim. Ancient writings tell of others who were reported to rise from the grave. Why choose one and not another? Are there any credible accounts of any human being in history coming back from the dead? To argue from Paul's writings simply doesn't hold water. Hearsay isn't even acceptable in a court of law. "But all those early Christians who died for their faith; why would they die for a lie?" I used to think this was a perfect argument of defense. Yet, consider all the people in history who have sacrificed themselves for their faith (or their commitment to a cause of any kind). Christians aren't the only martyrs.

Much of this depends on what a person is trying to prove, and why. Do they have a need to "win," to "be the best," to be in God's inner circle of saints? My sense is that many of these defenders (of a defenseless God?) get so defensive because they earnestly desire to convince themselves with "proof" and "evidence" that really don't prove anything to anyone. This pretty much explains what we were doing back in those evan-

gelical years. We were so confident we were right, that we were on God's side. We were out front defending him, while he had our back, pleased we stood up to those bullying unbelievers. After much thought and experience outside my tiny bubble of belief, I came to realize I couldn't actually prove my faith, but maybe I could simply learn to live a better life, and contribute to a better world – a world where the main evidence that beliefs are good and true is in the living. Again, this only suggests a person is a good person; it is not evidence of the truth of their beliefs.

The most honest evidence for one's faith, in God, the Bible, or anything really, is where they were born, how they were raised, who taught them, and why. Endlessly attempting to hammer home your arguments for why you are right not only gets old, it is essentially pointless. Do you really think you can argue someone "into the kingdom"?

There may be no proof, no rational evidence, for many religious claims, but that doesn't mean there can't be meaning, or comfort, in some beliefs. Maybe you can't "prove" your faith or your God, but you can be as curious as anyone, because "believe it or not" – WE exist.