

CAN CHRISTIANITY BE RATIONALLY EVALUATED?

Introduction – The Bible does not call for a blind leap of faith by would-be followers of God. Christian faith is reasonable trust whose truth claims can be rationally tested.

A. Christianity calls for believers to be prepared to answer questions with reason.

1 Peter 3:15

B. There are four laws of logic that one universally assumes by faith before rational thinking can occur.

1. The principle of non-contradiction was first written down by Aristotle, “Nothing can both be and not be at the same time in the same way.”
2. The principle of excluded middle states that any factual statement and its denial cannot both be true.
3. The principle of bivalence states that any unambiguous declarative statement is either true or false – not neither true nor false and not both true and false.
4. The principle of identity simply states that something is what it is and is not something else. The reality factor is asserted here.
5. To deny the validity of these laws of logic would reduce all thought life and attempts to reason into absurdity.
6. These laws cannot be proved true; they must be assumed to be true. Therefore, all human reason is based on faith assumptions.

C. The Bible calls for us to rationally examine our faith and test its truth claims.

2 Corinthians 13:5

1 Thessalonians 5:20-22

Deuteronomy 18:21-22

D. How can one prove that Christianity is true?

1. First we must recognize that no one is reasoning from a neutral position. If one denies a core aspect of Christianity, then they are affirming an alternative position.

2. The truthfulness of Christianity or any alternative is not based on one issue, but the cumulative evidence on a variety of issues.
3. Once one considers all the available evidence on all related issues, then the question becomes: "Which alternative is the most probable?" No position is capable of absolute proof beyond some reasonable doubt.

Conclusion – One must be willing to suspend belief in one's own position and ask difficult questions. The search for truth requires one to be open-minded, honest, and self-critical. The rational validity of Christianity will become clear in comparison to the alternatives.

John 16:12-14