Which Religion is True?
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September 4, 2013

There are numerous religions in the world today and more may be in the process of being invented as we speak. Which one is true, if any? Could more than one be true? There are four steps one can take to answer these questions. For the purpose of this article, I am using the word 'religion' to refer to a particular set of core spiritual beliefs. Other rules and traditions that may surround the religion I will take as secondary and of less importance.

Step One: Implications of the law of non-contradiction

When we examine the core beliefs of each of the major religions, we discover that every major religion contains core beliefs that contradict one or more core beliefs of each of the others. For example, a core Hindu belief is that there are many gods whereas Islam holds that there are not many gods, only one. The two beliefs contradict each other, therefore they cannot both be true; one or both must be false. Christianity believes that God became a man, Jesus Christ, and gave His life and rose again, for the purpose of satisfying the demands of perfect justice so that He could then satisfy the demands of perfect love. The key belief in Christianity is that the only way a person can come into a relationship with God is by putting ones faith in Jesus Christ for forgiveness from the demands of perfect justice for ones sins, and for the gift of eternal life. Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and all other major religions say that Jesus Christ is not the *only* way, and many say that He is not a way to God at all. Since the core beliefs of all major religions are mutually contradictory, we can conclude that, at most, only one major religion can be true. We are then faced with the question of which one, if any, might be true.

Step Two: Is the founder credible?

The next step is to examine the founder of each major religion with the following question in mind … 'Why should I believe the founder of this religion actually spoke for God?' The underlying motivation in asking this question is the need to make a rational decision. To clarify, we must see if there is some rational justification for believing that a particular founder of a given religion actually represented or spoke for God. If no justification can be found, it does not follow that the religion is false, but it does follow that we have no reason to believe that particular religion. On the other hand, if there is one founder for whom there is unusual and significant justification for believing his claims, then given that at most only one religion can be true, we may be on to the true religion.

Step Three: Is the holy book(s) credible?

We should also ask ourselves the question, 'Why should I believe this holy book contains information that came from a supernatural source?' Again, we are looking

for rational justification. If no justification can be found for believing that the holy book has information that has come from a supernatural source, it does not follow that it is false, only that we have no reason to believe that religion is true. On the other hand, if unusual evidence can be found which supports the belief that the holy book comes from a supernatural source, then since only one religion at most can be true, we may be on the track of the one true religion, especially if there is also rational justification for believing the founder represented God.

Step Four: The step of faith

If there is actually a religion that is true, then in the interest of truth, the next step is to take a step of faith and become a follower of that religion, specifically, of the founder and the holy book. This step of faith would not be a blind leap in the dark, but a step of faith that is rationally justified. To clarify, we have reason to put our faith in this particular religion rather than any of the others. Up to this point, all one has is rational justification for thinking the particular religion is true, but once one takes the step of faith, one can *know* the religion is true by personal experience.

Application to the major World Religions

When we examine all the different world religions, small and great, there is virtually nothing by way of rational justification to support any of them, with one highly unusual exception, and that is Christianity. The founder of what is today known as Christianity was Jesus of Nazareth, now known as Jesus Christ. Something highly unusual about Christianity is that it is the only religion in the world that began thousands of years before the founder arrived. The Old Testament, written before the arrival of Christ, contained many prophecies about the Christ, or Messiah. Therefore, it set itself up for possible falsification or verification. Jesus of Nazareth claimed to be God, the One whose name is I AM, who had appeared to Moses some 1,400 years earlier. Of course, anyone can claim to be God, but in the case of Christ, there are two reasons for believing He was telling the truth. First, He fulfilled against impossible odds, the first set of Messianic prophecies that had been recorded in the Old Testament, which was completed long before the time of Christ. Second, there is historical evidence that He rose from the dead.[1] This does not prove that Christ is God, but it does provide highly unusual, unique in history, rational justification for believing that He might be telling the truth. The only way to obtain information about the future, which is what a true prophecy is, is to obtain that information from a source that transcends time. Thus, since these ancient prophecies of the Christ came true, we also have rational justification for believing that the Bible contains information that comes from a source that transcends time itself. Again, this does not prove that the Bible contains information that comes from God, but it does provide *rational justification* for the belief that it contains information that comes from I AM, the One who transcends time itself.

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[1] Licona M (2010) The resurrection of Jesus : a new historiographical approach. IVP Academic ; Apollos, Downers Grove, Ill. Nottingham, England