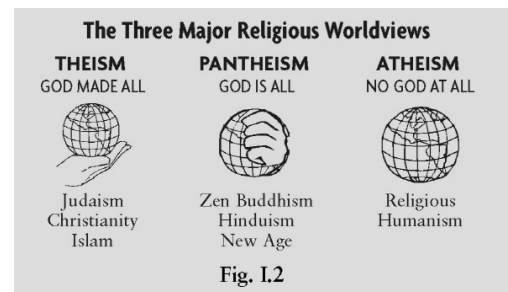
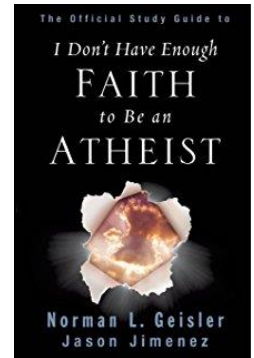


# *I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist*

Introduction

## OUTLINE

1. Universities have become *pluriversities*
2. What a person believes about God affects everything else he/she believes
  - a. Origin: Where did we come from?
  - b. Identity: Who are we?
  - c. Meaning: Why are we here?
  - d. Morality: How should we live?
  - e. Destiny: Where are we going?
3. If there is no God, these questions cannot be adequately answered
4. Common belief: no one religion can be true
  - a. First: There is no one religious truth, but it is like ice cream flavors
  - b. Illustration: blind man and the elephant
  - c. Second: some things defy religious explanation, e.g. evil
  - d. Third: only science yields truth so religious belief is nothing but a subjective preference
5. Terms
  - a. *Theist* – belief in personal God who created universe (God made all)
  - b. *Pantheist* – belief in a God who is one with the universe (God is all)
  - c. *Atheist* – belief in no God (no God at all)
  - d. *Agnostic* – unsure about God's existence
6. Facts matter to religion because religion makes truth claims
  - a. Theists – claim world had a beginning
  - b. Atheists, pantheists – claim world did not have a beginning (some of them)
  - c. Christians – claim Jesus rose from the dead
  - d. Not all religious truth claims can be checked out but many can
7. Types of objections to Christianity
  - a. **Intellectual objections** – (self-explanatory)
  - b. **Emotional objections** – exclusivity (one way the only way), hell, hypocrisy
  - c. **Volitional objections** – religion restricts our choices in life
  - d. May take more faith to not be a Christian, based on the evidence, than to be one
8. Faith
  - a. Can't know everything about every or any religion so at some point a choice must be made
  - b. Carl Sagan claimed cosmos all that is, was, ever will be but didn't know this, lacked evidence
  - c. A gap in evidence requires faith to overcome (we might debate this view, but it is helpful)
  - d. Examples of evidence (quotes from the book)
    - i. The scientific evidence overwhelmingly confirms that the universe exploded into being out of nothing. Either someone created something out of nothing (the Christian view), or no one created something out of nothing (the atheistic view). Which view is more reasonable? The Christian view. Which view requires more faith? The atheistic view.



- ii. The simplest life form contains the information-equivalent of 1,000 encyclopedias. Christians believe only an intelligent being can create a life form containing the equivalent of 1,000 encyclopedias. Atheists believe non-intelligent natural forces can do it. Christians have evidence to support their conclusion. Since atheists don't have any such evidence, their belief requires a lot more faith.

## OUTLINE

- iii. Hundreds of years beforehand, ancient writings foretold the coming of a man who would actually be God. This man-God, it was foretold, would be born in a particular city from a particular bloodline, suffer in a particular way, die at a particular time, and rise from the dead to atone for the sins of the world. Immediately after the predicted time, multiple eyewitnesses proclaimed and later recorded that those predicted events had actually occurred. Those eyewitnesses endured persecution and death when they could have saved themselves by denying the events. Thousands of people in Jerusalem were then converted after seeing or hearing of these events, and this belief swept quickly across the ancient world. Ancient historians and writers allude to or confirm these events, and archaeology corroborates them. Having seen evidence from creation that God exists (point 1 above), Christians believe these multiple lines of evidence show beyond a reasonable doubt that God had a hand in these events. Atheists must have a lot more faith to explain away the predictions, the eyewitness testimony, the willingness of the eyewitnesses to suffer and die, the origin of the Christian church, and the corroborating testimony of the other writers, archeological finds, and other evidence that we'll investigate later.

1. Truth about reality is knowable.
2. The opposite of true is false.
3. It is true that the theistic God exists. This is evidenced by the:
  - a. Beginning of the universe (Cosmological Argument)
  - b. Design of the universe (Teleological Argument/ Anthropic Principle)
  - c. Design of life (Teleological Argument)
  - d. Moral Law (Moral Argument)
4. If God exists, then miracles are possible.
5. Miracles can be used to confirm a message from God (i.e., as acts of God to confirm a word from God).
6. The New Testament is historically reliable. This is evidenced by:
  - a. Early testimony
  - b. Eyewitness testimony
  - c. Uninvented (authentic) testimony
  - d. Eyewitnesses who were not deceived
7. The New Testament says Jesus claimed to be God.
8. Jesus' claim to be God was miraculously confirmed by:
  - a. His fulfillment of many prophecies about himself;
  - b. His sinless life and miraculous deeds;
  - c. His prediction and accomplishment of his resurrection.
9. Therefore, Jesus is God.
10. Whatever Jesus (who is God) teaches is true.
11. Jesus taught that the Bible is the Word of God.
12. Therefore, it is true that the Bible is the Word of God (and anything opposed to it is false).

### 9. Methodology

- a. Frist: These outline points are not true simply by definition, they need evidence
- b. Second: we will start from skepticism and proceed from there
- c. Third: if these main points are true, then other religions necessarily false
- d. Fourth: giving evidence for truth is how we ought to live our lives, 1 Peter 3:15
- e. Fifth: the reason many people don't believe in Christianity despite all the evidence is because many people don't want to believe

### 10. Objections

- a. The Christian has to make the bigger leap of faith → let's examine the evidence
- b. No one would want Christianity to be false (as Christian claim) → faith seems to require restrictions on life
- c. Proving vs accepting → the first doesn't guarantee the second
- d. We are given free will. There is evidence for God but not enough to force us to believe.

**“The Irresistible and the Indisputable are the two weapons which the very nature of [God’s] scheme forbids Him to use. Merely to over-ride a human will (as His felt presence in any but the faintest and most mitigated degree would certainly do) would be for Him useless. He cannot ravish. He can only woo.” (C. S. Lewis)**