



Hell

Theological Presuppositions

Presupposition: Knowledge of God or what He has revealed does not constitute a special category of knowledge that transcends the bounds of rational thought and empirical inquiry.

Presupposition: The noumenal-phenomenal divide as it has been used by the heirs of Immanuel Kant has been shattered. God has broken in.

Why should I believe one religious claim over another when it comes to the afterlife?

The “religious marketplace” is full of competing ideas, theologies and metaphysical claims regarding the origins, nature and fate humanity.

Mohamed Atta

Believed that after his “martyrdom” he would be rewarded in the afterlife with 72 virgins.

Is it true that he currently is in paradise enjoying the company of his 72 virgins?



Heaven's Gate followers believed that they were traveling to the mothership that was hiding on the other side of the Hale Bopp Comet?

Were they right? Is that where they are right now?

Wheel of Reincarnation

The Great Wheel of Rebirth summarizes the Buddhist doctrine of karma: an endless cycle of reincarnation into higher or lower forms of life according to one's past deeds. In this sculpture the demon Mara, personifying existence, holds the wheel in his jaws and arms. The wheel is supported from below by personifications (l. to r.) of greed (an official), evil (a soldier), foolishness (a monkey), and lust (a woman). Six Buddha-rays emanate from the wheel, signifying that enlightenment, the goal of all Buddhist practice, enables the seeker to escape from the eternal cycle of birth and death.



Wheel of Reincarnation

Is this the real and true fate of humanity?



Mormonism

Will Glen Beck fulfill all of the requirements of Heavenly Father (Elohim) regarding the law of eternal progression, take up residence on a planet of his own along with his spirit wives and be part of the next generation of men who've met the requirements to become gods?



Historic Christianity

Jesus will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead. Some will be resurrected to eternal punishment in hell while others will be resurrected to eternal life in God's presence on a new Earth.

Is this true? Is this what will really happen?



Other Religious / Metaphysical Claims

- **Purgatory**
- **Universalism**
- **Annihilationism**
- **Materialistic Atheism - there is no afterlife when you die you're worm food(ism)**
- **Honorable mentions**
 - **Religion of Ancient Egypt**
 - **Hellenistic believes in Hades and Tartarus**

These competing claims cannot all be true.

“A world in which both Catholicism and Christian Science are true would be a cosmic madhouse.”

Edgar Sheffield Brightman, Boston University

How are we going to decide?



Presupposition: Without objective evidence to support a religious claim the language statements made by any religion, including Christianity may be nothing more than gibberish and poppycock.

Without out evidence, the statement “Hell exists and humans who are not saved will spend eternity there” may in fact be nothing more than pure nonsense.

Authoritative, expert, evidence is the key. Without out it we’re just whistling in the dark and there is no way to determine whether any competing religious claim is true or false.

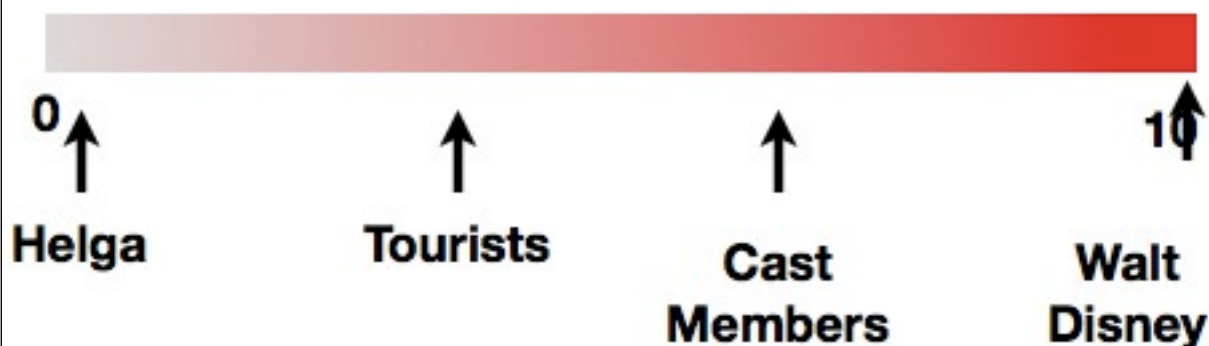
Pre-Apology



Disneyland Research

- Helga Lenin, theopoet, anti-colonial activist and community organizer who's op-ed column "The goddess mystery" appears in the Huffington Post
 - Helga has never been to Disneyland in her life yet she wrote, "There is nothing magical about the magic kingdom. In fact, the Obama administration should step in and shut it down because it is a cesspool of American Colonial oppression that glorifies 1950's homophobic Judeo-Christian sexual stereotypes and is a haven for Tea Party Conservatism."
- Tourists who've vacationed at Disneyland and written about their experiences
- Cast Members, past and present
- Walt Disney himself

Spectrum of Authority RE: Disneyland



The truth of Christianity rests on certain historical events; If true then Christianity is true and if false Christianity is false.

"And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied." (1 Corinthians 15:14–19)

"we simply have to come to terms with the fact that Christianity is indeed testable – a religion for which evidence and reason count in a dramatic way. But, God does not appear to be the least bit insecure amid the controversy, not hesitating to inspire His apostle (Paul) to throw down the gauntlet and not only unlock the door but throw it open and invite investigation of this remarkable event. - Dr. Craig Hazen

The New Testament is a Library of First Century Documents

- We won't naively assume 'inspiration' or 'infallibility' of the New Testament records and then by circular reason attempt to prove what we previously assumed.
- Four Gospels contain Historical Biographical information regarding the life, teaching and deeds of Jesus of Nazareth.
 - Two of the Gospels (Matthew and John) were written by eye witnesses.
 - The Gospel of Luke was compiled by interviewing and recording the testimony of eye witnesses.
 - Gospel of Mark - scholars debate whether John Mark was an eyewitness. There is good reason to believe that Mark's Gospel account were the preaching notes of the Apostle Peter.
- The same standard tests for determining the reliability of every other ancient text apply to the New Testament documents. (science of Historiography)

Historiographical tests

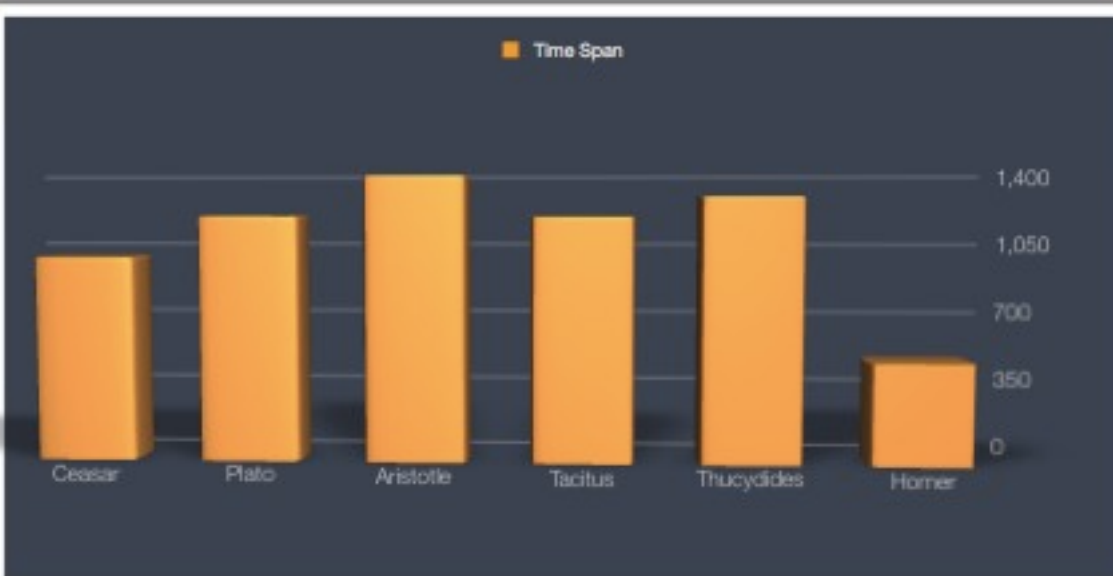
- Bibliographical Test
- Internal Evidence Test
- External Evidence Test



Bibliographical Test

- ✦ Length of Time Between When the 'Autograph' was written and the earliest copy of the document

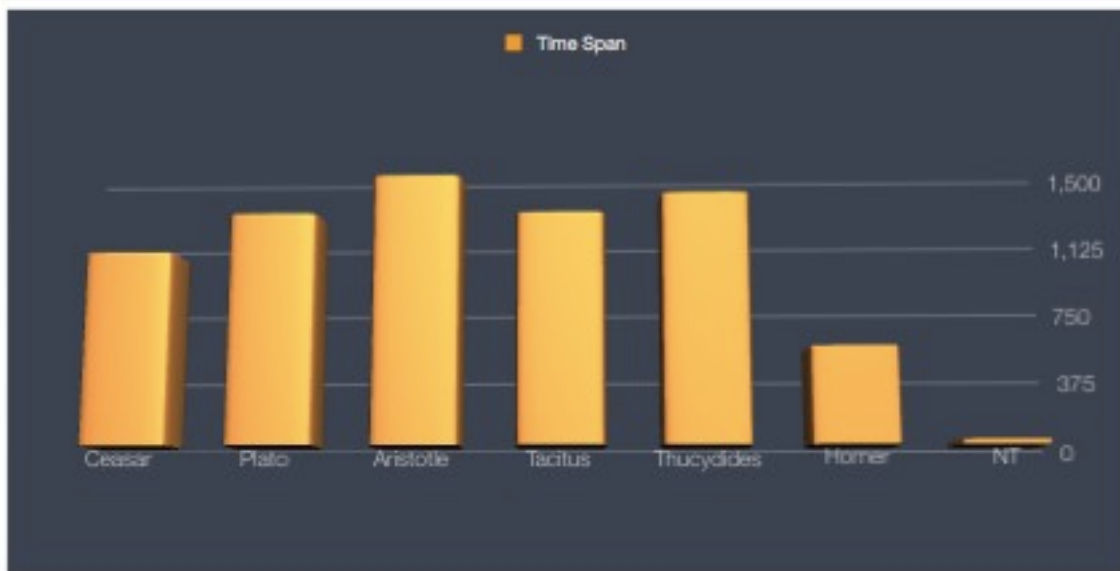
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Time Span?

- ✦ What is the time span from the date of the originals to the date of the first copy that is 'extant'?

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There ain't no time for changes?

✦ Our earliest copies of New Testament documents date to the early 2nd Century.

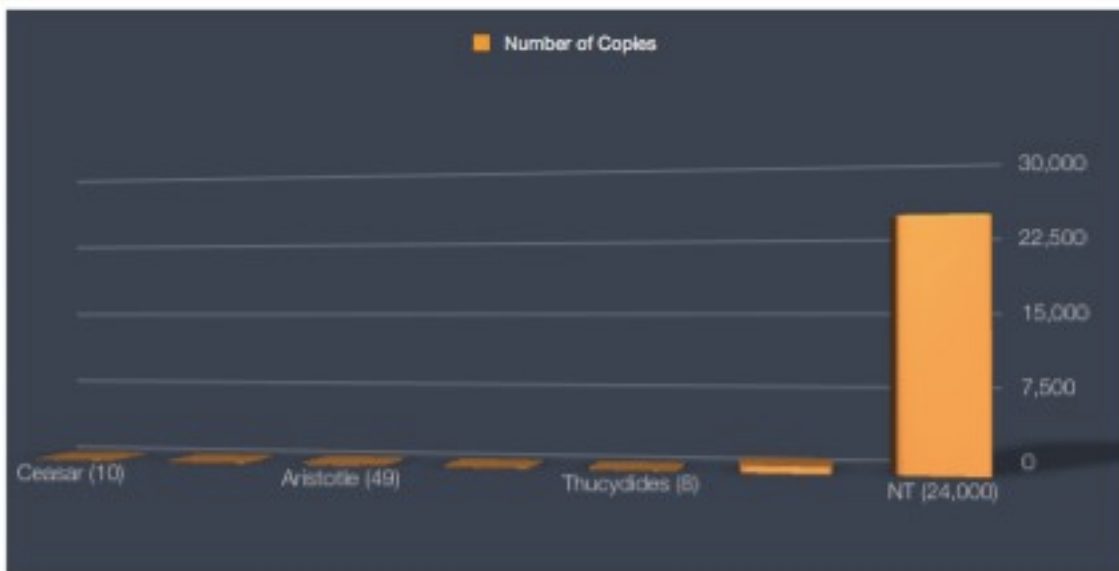
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Our Earliest Manuscripts

- ✦ John Rylands MS - 130 A.D. - portions of the Gospel of John
- ✦ Bodmer Papyrus II - 150 A.D. - most of the Gospel of John
- ✦ Chester Beatty Papyri - 200 A.D. - major portions of the N.T.
- ✦ Codex Vaticanus - 325 AD - entire Bible
- ✦ Codex Sinaiticus - 350 A.D. - Entire NT, Half of OT

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How many copies?

✦ No other ancient documents even come close!

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What does it all mean?

✦ **“to be skeptical of the resultant text of the New Testament books is to allow all of classical antiquity to slip into obscurity, for no documents of the ancient period are as well attested bibliographically as the New Testament.**

✦ John Warwick Montgomery

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External Sources

✦ Josephus, The Antiquities AD 90-95

- ✦ At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct was good and he was know to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. **They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive**; accordingly, he was perhaps the messiah concerning whom the prophets recounted wonders.

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Other External Sources

✦ Pliny the Younger, AD 112

- ✦ They (the Christians) were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn **to Christ, as to a god**, and bound themselves by solemn oath, not to any wicked deeds, but to never commit any fraud, theft, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble to partake of food - but food of an ordinary and innocent kind.

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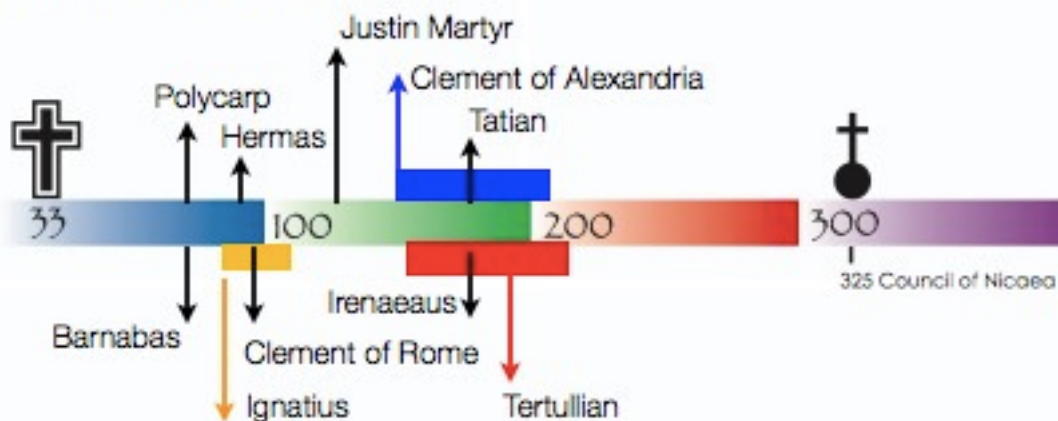


But Wait, There's MORE!

- ✦ Ancient Church Fathers Quoted from the NT exhaustively!
 - ✦ The quotations of the Scriptures in the works of the early Christian writers 'are so extensive that the New Testament could virtually be reconstructed from them without the use of the New Testament manuscripts!'
 - ✦ J. Harold Greenlee
 - ✦ Sir David Dalrymple - all but 11 verses.

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Church Fathers



- ✦ Before 212 AD the Entire New Testament is quoted and reproduced (minus 11 verses) by the Early Christian Church Fathers.
- ✦ NT Documents are already recognized and quoted as the authoritative Word of God by the Church NO LATER THAN 113 years before Nicaea

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How Early are the N.T. Gospels?

✦ Internal Evidence - 1 Corinthians 15:3-7

✦ For *what I received I passed* on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins *according to the Scriptures*, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day *according to the Scriptures*, 5 and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

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How Early are the N.T. Gospels?

✦ 1 Corinthians written by Paul between 52 - 55 A.D.

✦ no more than 23 years after Jesus' death

✦ Chapter 15:3-8 contains an early Christian Creed

✦ Notice the phrase 'according to the scriptures'

✦ When did Paul learn this 'Creed'? - 3 years after his conversion! (Gal 1:18)

✦ 5 - 6 Years after Jesus' Death

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What the Evidence Really Shows



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↓
Paul
Converted

↓
Paul Travels to Jerusalem and receives a 'Creed' which already references written gospel accounts as scripture (1 Cor 15:3-8)

✦ Galatians 1:18-19

✦ *historeo* - indicates an investigative inquiry

✦ The Creed itself is a FIRST HAND account precisely because Paul received it directly from the witnesses, Peter and James.

✦ ONLY 6 to 8 Years after the crucifixion and resurrection.

✦ Hostile witness are still alive providing the equivalent of a 'cross examination'

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In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made... "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, ***and we have seen his glory***, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1-3, 14)

"That which was from the beginning, ***which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands***, concerning the word of life — the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us" (1 John 1:1-2)

“You simply do not find this kind of empirical, verificationist language in the Bhagavad-Gita, the Granth, the Tripitaka or the Qur’an. The writers of the New Testament were obsessed with this kind of language because something astounding had happened right in their midst, in broad daylight for all to see. From this standpoint this kind of language sets the New Testament apart as a unique type of religious literature — spiritually edifying and empirically testable.” - Dr. Craig Hazen

Spectrum of Authority RE: Hell





New Testament Gospels Tell Us..

- ✦ Jesus Claimed to Be the ONE TRUE God in Human Flesh!
- ✦ That Jesus proved His Claims to Deity by Raising Himself from the Dead Three Days After Being Crucified by the Romans.
- ✦ That His Resurrection was Witnessed by Over 500 People!