“Why Would It Not Be Better to be Measured by One’s Works Instead of Free Grace?”

Why would it not be better to be measured by one’s works instead of free grace?

Thanks for asking. Interesting question.

I think a clear understanding of our works and of grace would bring clarity to the difference.

What do we bring to the table in terms of our works? Consider what Paul wrote in Romans 7:18–”I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.”

Consider Isaiah 64:6–”all our righteous acts are like filthy rags.”

And it’s not just that our works fall short of a high standard . . . it’s that sin has so thoroughly corrupted our nature that even our most sincere, well-intentioned acts are tainted at the root. The problem isn’t just what we do but what we are. A glass that contains poison doesn’t become safe because you pour something good into it, because the contents are compromised from the start. This is why even the most moral, sincere, generous, religiously devoted person cannot earn a right standing before God on the basis of their character or effort. We generally underestimate the impact of sin. It’s not just a blemish on what might be an acceptable record; it’s a disqualifying condition. Whatever good we attempt to do still flows through a fallen nature, mixed with impure motives, self-interest, and pride we often can’t even detect in ourselves. God, who sees not just actions but the heart behind them, cannot receive that as righteousness.

Consider what Jesus Himself said in John 15:5—”Apart from Me, you can do nothing.”

The very best we have to offer in our own strength and from our own efforts to a holy and perfect God counts as nothing. He is not impressed.

Compare our works to God’s grace: perfect, holy, favor and blessing and empowering we don’t deserve. He pours His supernatural life and divine energy into us! He gives us the privilege of loving Him and serving Him and others with His own power. I like to think of the difference between the power of a tiny hearing aid battery . . . and the power of the sun. That’s the beginning of the distinction between our own puny human efforts and God’s unimaginable power.

Sometimes children are provided with a pile of Cheerios or Froot Loops cereal and a string so they can make a Mother’s Day necklace for their mamas. Compare that to a string of priceless pearls and diamonds given by the world’s wealthiest man. I think the difference between our works and God’s grace is infinitely bigger than that.

I hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin

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The Epstein Files: 3

Important Ways For Christians to Respond Biblically

The release of the Epstein documents has sparked outrage, confusion, and intense public debate. While the world often responds with anger, speculation, or political blame, Christians must respond to the Epstein files differently—Biblically. Scripture provides a framework for understanding both human depravity and God's justice. Here are three biblical responses believers should consider.

1. Jesus promised that shameful and evil things like the Epstein files would be brought to the light.

> The Bible states, "For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open." (Luke 8:17)
>
> Also, "Accordingly, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in the inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops." (Luke 12:3)



Epstein, his grandiose lifestyle, potential co-conspirators, and the revelatory atrocities committed and recorded in the shadows against God's image bearers, away from public view for years, eventually found their way to the light, where all could see and witness. The Epstein files highlight the true condition of the human heart apart from faith in Jesus Christ.

2. The Epstein Files affirms Biblical truth regarding the depths of human depravity.

“Pagans gonna pagan.”

Jeremiah 17:9 exposes the truth about the fallen and corrupted condition of humanity:

> “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. . .”

Ecclesiastes 9:3 states, “This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that the same event happens to all. Also, the hearts of the children of man are full of evil, and madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead.”

The temptation to look down our noses at people exists, as the world self-righteously exposes the Epstein files by exclaiming, “Well, *I* would never do such a thing!” But humility can allow this revelation to serve as a painful reminder that every single one of us has a heart so equally deceitful and desperately wicked that it required the torture and death of God’s Son, Jesus Christ.

Apart from the breathtaking grace of God, each of us has the capacity to do what is being revealed in the Epstein documents. Romans 8:17 reminds us that “nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh.” The Fall broke every human being so much that the only good things in us come from the *imago Dei*, the image of God imprinted on us. And only the regenerated heart can transform us into people who wouldn’t think to engage in the kind of behaviors the Epstein Files are revealing.

3. The Epstein Files highlight the dark side of the love of money, power and idolatry.

Like the partridge that gathers a brood that she did not hatch, so is he who gets riches but not by justice; in the midst of his days they will leave him, and at his end he will be a fool. (Jer. 17:11)

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. (1 Tim. 6:10)

The files tell the story of the rich and famous seeking to rub shoulders with other rich and famous people. The thing that drives the attraction to celebrities might be the hope that fame and fortune will rub off on an insecure heart and fill it with vanity and emptiness. What a reminder that we are all born with a God-shaped hole in our hearts that nothing but God Himself will fill and satisfy.

Hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

For more articles examining culture through a Christian worldview, visit Probe Ministries.

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"How Can You Say I Can't Lose

My Salvation?”

I mess up all the time, and God is holy all the time. How can you say I can’t lose my salvation?

I’m so glad you asked!

First– and please hear me say this firmly but gently– it’s not your salvation to lose. It is a free gift from God. Ephesians 2:8-9 teaches, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.” You did nothing to earn God’s gift of salvation, and you can do nothing to “ungift” it. As some have said, salvation is 100% God and 0% human effort. All we do is receive it, by faith. And God even gives us the grace to receive it in the first place! As I said, it’s 100% God.

Let me suggest three points that support the position that you can’t lose God’s gift of salvation.

1. God makes some breathtaking, unconditional promises in the Bible that express His heart toward us.

I love most what Jesus said in John 10:27-30–

> “My sheep listen to My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish; ***no one will snatch them from My hand***. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and ***no one can snatch them from My Father’s hand***. The Father and I are one.”

We are doubly safe; we are held securely in the Father’s hand and the Son’s hand. No one, not even ourselves, can snatch us from that place of eternal security.

Then, in both the Old Testament (Joshua 1:5) and the New Testament (Hebrews 13:5), God promises, “I will never leave

you or forsake you."

In 2 Timothy 2:13, we read that "If we are unfaithful (or "unbelieving"), God is faithful."

We are safe in the Lord's love, protection, care . . . and salvation.

2. We have been promised *everlasting* (or eternal) life, not *temporary* life.

Jesus promised in John 5:24, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has *everlasting* life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life."

And in 1 John 5:13, Jesus' best friend writes, "I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may **know** that you have *eternal* life."

It's not everlasting or eternal if you could stop it by doing something to lose your salvation!

3. You have been forgiven completely and totally.

When Jesus breathed His last on the cross with the statement, "It is finished/paid in full," that was about paying the penalty for your sins, my sins, all the sins of all the humans on the planet. And He paid for ALL of them 2000+ years ago—when all your sins were still future. Praise God, you are not powerful enough to undo what Jesus did for you on the cross.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit worked together to give you the magnificent gift of salvation. It's a forever gift and you can relax in the Lord's security.

I hope you find this helpful.

Warmly,

Sue Bohlin

(I am indebted to the online discussion between Dr. Sean McDowell and Dr. Andrew Farley for perspective on this issue.)

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"What Color Were Adam and Eve?"



Hey Sue, what color were Adam and Eve?

It's so helpful to have a Ph.D. in molecular and cell biology in the house! Here's Ray's answer:

> "We can't know for sure, but here's my educated guess: They contained all the different skin pigment genes that would end up being distributed to all the various peoples of the world. God would have created them with some level of melanin for skin protection from the sun. They probably would have been not white, not black, probably brownish–like Mediterranean coloring."

Hope you find this helpful!

Sue Bohlin
Posted March 2025

“Where Did Cain Get His Wife?”

Where DID Cain get his wife????????

That’s a long-standing question that unfortunately, most commentaries don’t offer much help answering. I assume a literal Adam and Eve as the first humans. Therefore for several generations the family tree has only one trunk. Seth and Cain could only have married daughters of Adam and Eve, their sisters.

That always causes some severe consternation. Francis Collins, an evangelical Christian and the former head of NIH, has written that that solution goes against numerous Old Testament laws. How could the God of the Bible allow for such things? Collins opts for an evolved human race and a figurative Adam and Eve. He also seems to think, though he doesn’t explain, that Cain marrying his sister goes against the plain reading of the text.

The main societal taboo against incest is a practical one since offspring from these unions, even among distant cousins, carry an increased risk of birth defects. This is a well-known result of what geneticists call inbreeding. BUT Adam and Eve were completely without genetic mutation, the source of inbreeding birth defects. Therefore there was no biological risk from sister/brother marriages.

In the time of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, it was still the

practice of marrying within one's family, at least twenty generations after Adam and Eve if you assume no extra generations in the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11.

In Genesis 20:12 Abraham tells Abimelech that he was not completely lying when he told Abimelech that Sarah was his sister; "Besides, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father though not of my mother." Sarah was Abraham's half-sister.

When Isaac needed a wife, Abraham tells his servant to go to his country and even his own family to find a suitable wife for Isaac (Genesis 24:4). Genesis 24:15 tells us that Rebekah was the daughter of Bethuel, who is the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother.

Isaac then tells Jacob to seek a wife from the daughters of Laban, Rebekah's brother. (Genesis 28:2). So Jacob married two of his first cousins, Leah and Rachel.

Before the Law of Moses, these kinds of unions were the norm. But over 400 years later, mutations have accumulated in all populations and such marriages are quite risky. Therefore, I think, that is why you read in Leviticus 20:17 that if you marry your sister who is either the daughter of your father or the daughter of your mother (thus including half-siblings) they shall be cut off. So a marriage like Abraham and Sarah's was specifically outlawed in the Law of Moses. I think times have changed and the offspring of these once-normal arrangements are at significant risk.

Also, there still may have been a reticence to marry a brother or sister with whom one grows up. But when you realize that Seth was born when Adam was 130 years old, certainly there were many more children between Cain and Abel, and Seth. Therefore Cain very conceivably could have married a sister who was twenty or thirty years younger than he was, and therefore they did not grow up together, so there wasn't the

same degree of familiarity as with a same-age sibling.

Bottom-line, I find no difficulty either theologically or biologically with Cain and Seth marrying their sisters. Marrying within the family remained the normal practice for over twenty generations.

Respectfully,

Dr. Ray Bohlin

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"Why Can't We Talk to Our Loved Ones Who Have Passed?"

Why can't we talk to our loved one who has passed? I am having a very hard time with death and the feeling that it is cruel that we can't know our loved one is ok. My years of church taught me to know of God's love for us which gives us eternal life, but the cruelty of not knowing how our loved one is or their terrible suffering seems so unlike the personality I have had of God.

Dear _____,

I am so sorry for your heartache at missing your loved one. I truly understand; it's only been a few months since we lost our son and we miss him very much.

I think God uses the heartache of losing communication with our loved ones to remind us that death and separation was not part of His original good creation, so we gain a fuller

understanding of the impact of sin on our world—and why it required something as huge as the death of God's Son to rectify. I also believe God redeems the pain of grief so we can learn how to turn to Him as "the God of all comfort" (2 Corinthians 1:3). If we were able to communicate with our loved ones, it would be so easy to bypass God altogether and just seek to connect with our friends and family—just as we so often do with those with us on earth.

We are so limited by our earthly existence, we can't begin to imagine the intense joy and glory of our believing loved ones' life in heaven. And if you could see your unbelieving loved one in the torment of hell, would that bring you any peace, or would it rip you apart inside? I think that "not knowing" is the grace of God for us still here on earth.

It's interesting and poignant that you used the world "cruelty." And it's easy to think that it's God who is being cruel. But the true source of cruelty in our enemy, Satan, whose agenda is to "steal, kill and destroy" (John 10:10). It was his idea to inflict immeasurable pain on us as God's image-bearers by bringing sin into the Garden of Eden.

We do know in Deuteronomy 18 that God forbids us try to contact the dead. He even calls it an abomination. All of God's prohibitions are given to us for our protection and blessing, so like with so many other things, there must be something about God's "no" in this issue that is meant for our good.

The Got Questions website has a couple of articles you may find helpful as well:
If we talk to loved ones who have died, do they hear us?
Can I ask God to deliver a message to a loved one who has died?

_____, I send this with a prayer for the God of all comfort to give you His comfort as you trust Him in His goodness. And

in Paul’s words in 2 Thessalonians 3:16, “Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times and in every way.”

Warmly,
Sue Bohlin

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“When Did People Start Worshiping Yahweh?”

What is the history/origin of belief in Yahweh? I am being told that Yahweh was one of many gods initially believed in by the Canaanites, and eventually the followers were better at presenting Yahweh as the God of Israel?

First, let’s define worship. Worship is the act of expressing reverence, devotion and adoration towards God. Rituals, singing songs, prayers and ceremonies represent the act of worship.

Next, before answering your question, I’m convinced a critical explanation of scripture will suffice to help add credibility. The book of Nehemiah states that God made the heavens and the host of heavens (9:6). The heavens, in this passage, refers to the sky or the expanse that is above the surface of the earth. The term “heaven of heavens” refers to everything outside of the earth’s atmosphere. These are the planets, galaxies, etc. This passage also mentions the singular word host which means “the stars” or “celestial bodies.” Now, I do not want to confuse you, because the plural word “hosts” apply to God’s angel armies. With that, the passage of scripture concludes,

"and the heavenly host bows down before You"{1}. Some translations state, "…the heavenly host worship You." If we take this into account, we could say that according to Genesis 1:1, worship regarding nature started after Yahweh created it. According to Deuteronomy 33:27, the eternal attribution of the God of Israel indicates the worship of Him pre-exists the creation of the earth through the worship of the angels in heaven (Isaiah 40:28, Romans 1:20, Revelation 4:8).

The name YHWH (*Yahweh*) first appears in Exodus 3:14 when God made Himself known to Moses: "I AM WHO I AM. . . . Say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you."{3} This links to "The Real Formal Full Personal Name of God"{3} in Exodus 6:2-3. The name reflects His redeeming acts regarding His chosen people. It parallels the need of the Hebrews during their captivity in Egypt thus largely translated as "I am/will be present."

Researchers have yet to conclude whether Canaanites worship paralleled the worship YHWH of the Israelites. The suggestions indicate the Canaanites may have used the name Yahweh in worship along with other deities, yet with no evidence of true relationship with the God of Moses—like using the word "god" today in a broad sense rather than using "The LORD God." We do know that the Yahweh of the Israelites responded to Moses and to the cry of the Israelites. We cannot say the same for the Canaanites. Because no evidence of Yahweh responding to Canaanite worship exists, this could indicate that Canaanite worship lacked value.

Notes

1. New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995), Nehemiah 9:6.
2. New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995), Exodus 3:14.
3. Martin A. Shields and Ralph K. Hawkins, "YHWH," ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA:

Lexham Press, 2016).

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“What Does It Mean to Be Made in the Image of God?”

How would you explain what it means to be made in the image of God to a brand new Christian or someone who hasn’t made that decision?

Great question! I think the bottom line is that God made us like Himself so that other parts of creation can see what He is like by looking at us and how we act. Since God is not physical, it’s not a resemblance in our bodies, but is the immaterial, inside parts of us. Kind of like how family values and habits can be seen among family members. We are all made in the image of God, but sometimes people lie about what God is like when they act in ways that are NOT the image of God, such as cruelty or not being kind and loving.

Let me give you three different aspects of what I found.

Got Questions has a couple of good answers:

What does it mean that humanity is made in the image of God?
www.gotquestions.org/image-of-God.html

What does it mean when God said, “Let Us make man in Our image” (Genesis 1:26)?
www.gotquestions.org/let-Us-make-man-in-Our-image.html

And to my surprise, I really liked the answer I got from Meta

AI with the prompt, *“Explain to a child what it means to be made in the image of God”:*

> What a wonderful topic!
>
> So, you know how sometimes you might draw a picture of your family or friends? You try to make the drawing look like them, with their same smile, eyes, and hair. It’s like a special copy of them.
>
> Well, when the Bible says we’re made in the image of God, it means that God created us to be like Him. Not exactly like Him, because He’s God and we’re humans, but we have some special qualities that are similar to His.
>
> Here are a few things that make us like God:
>
> **We can love:** Just like God loves us, we can love our family, friends, and even people we don’t know. We can show kindness, care, and compassion to others.
>
> **We can think and create:** God is super creative and wise. He made the whole universe! We can also think, imagine, and create things like art, music, and stories.
>
> **We have a conscience:** God knows right from wrong, and He wants us to know the difference too. We have a special voice inside that helps us choose good over bad.
>
> **We can talk and communicate:** God speaks to us through the Bible and in our hearts. We can talk to Him through prayer, and we can communicate with each other using words.
>
> **We are special and valuable:** God thinks we’re so valuable that He sent His own Son, Jesus, to save us. We’re like precious jewels to Him!
>
> Being made in God’s image doesn’t mean we’re perfect, though. We still make mistakes and do things we shouldn’t. But it means we have the potential to be like God in many

amazing ways.

So, remember: you're a special creation, made to love, think, create, and shine like God!

Hope you find this helpful.

Sue

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"Is Race a Social Construct?"

How do you respond to the assertion that race is a social construct?

Thank you for your question. It may surprise you, but this is one area where I think Christians can agree with some of the statements being made by woke progressives. Although they might want to say that many other issues (class, gender, etc.). are examples of social constructs, we could agree that race is an example.

In my booklet on "A Biblical Point of View on Racism," I give many examples of why the term "race" is imprecise. First, the Bible only talks of one race: the human race. Superficial differences in skin color, hair color, hair texture, or eye shape may provide physiological differences between people groups, but the Bible does not provide any justification for treating people differently simply because of these physical differences.

The Bible teaches that God has made "from one blood every nation of men" (Acts 17:26). Here, Paul taught the Athenians

that they came from the same source in the creation as everyone else. If you have ever watched people at an international airport, you can conclude that human beings come in so many shapes, sizes, and colors. Yet all these differences go back to the parents of the human race (Genesis 1-3, 1 Corinthians 15).

Science has also shown us that “race” is not a precise term. Research on the human genome project shows us that such racial characteristics (such as skin color) are insignificant genetically. People of every race can interbreed and produce fertile offspring.

One study of human genetic material of different races concluded that the DNA of any two people in the world would differ by just 2/10ths of one percent. And of this variation, only six percent can be linked to racial categories. These “racial differences” are trivial when you consider there are 3 billion base pairs of human DNA.

Another reason the term “race” also lacks precision is because of interracial marriage, which is blurring distinctions even more. Consider one well-known athlete: Tiger Woods. His heritage is Thai, black, white, Chinese, and Native American.

As you can see, the term “race” is not very precise and thus I think qualifies as a social construct.

Kerby Anderson

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“How Do You Respond to These Claims of Islam Apologists?”

How would you respond to these common claims that Muslims make with the intention of trying to show that Islam is true, i.e., the one true religion:

1) “Islam is not a religion in the common and distorted sense, for it does not confine its scope to one’s private life. It is a complete way of life and is present in every field of human existence. Islam provides guidance for all aspects of life – individual and social, material and moral, economic and political, legal and cultural, and national and international.”

2) “Islam is named after the action of submitting to God’s command and will and not a person. Other religions are often named after a person or people. For instance, Christianity is named after Christ, Judaism is named after the tribe of Juda, and Buddhism is named after Buddha. Islam is not named after Muhammad because Islam existed before him.”

3)”Islam in its clear and direct way of expressing truth has a tremendous amount of appeal for any seeker of knowledge. It is the solution for all the problems of life. It is a guide toward a better and complete life glorifying in all its phases God, the Almighty Creator and the Merciful Nourisher.”

4) “Islam is the most rational religion. It gives clear code of life.”

5) “Islam is the first and the final religion of mankind.”

6) “Islam is the shortest and broadest road that leads to God.”

Thanks for writing. You ask a great question. This is a subject we as an organization want every Christian to be able to answer. It's also one that's so important every person needs to wrestle with this question.

What is the one true religion?

Is it Islam? Is it Christianity? Judaism? Buddhism? Atheism? Hinduism?

For the record I believe Christianity is the one true religion. But that's not your question. So I will focus on responding to your claims.

Whatever you do, "Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind." (Romans 14:5)

First I will respond to each issue one at a time. At the end I will respond in general and share some helpful tips.

1) "Islam is not a religion in the common and distorted sense, for it does not confine its scope to one's private life. It is a complete way of life and is present in every field of human existence. Islam provides guidance for all aspects of life – individual and social, material and moral, economic and political, legal and cultural, and national and international."

When people compare worldviews, they need to do a little philosophy first. Before they get going, they need to determine the parameters for the analysis. For example, how will the one true religion be determined? There are any number of ways this question can be answered. And the way in which that question is answered correspondingly affects the conclusion.

To exemplify my point here I will take an absurd set of parameters. One could begin by setting the parameters that the one true religion will be determined by the worldview that

allows for a world with maximal quantities of ice cream.

Then whichever worldview allows for maximal quantities of delicious frozen dessert is determined to be the one true religion, or worldview.

As much as I assume you enjoy eating copious amounts of ice cream as I do, these parameters are intentionally absurd. Still my point is illustrated. Before a conclusion can be drawn comparing two worldviews, there needs to be an independent set of parameters that will determine which one is in fact true.

The statement that Islam has answers for every aspect of life and human experience, not just the individual's inner experience, is a good starting point.

I agree with this assessment. Islam does have answers for every aspect of life; Islam is a worldview. However, it is not unique because it is a worldview. There are other perspectives/religions that make the same claim as well.

So in that sense I would respond by saying, Islam is not the obvious choice for the one true religion based sheerly on the fact that it is a worldview because of the presence of other competing and contradictory worldviews making the same claim, Christianity among them.

2) "Islam is named after the action of submitting to God's commands and will and not a person. Other religions are often named after a person or people. For instance, Christianity is named after Christ, Judaism is named after the tribe of Juda, and Buddhism is named after Buddha. Islam is not named after Muhammad because Islam existed before him."

As mentioned above, before one draws a conclusion, set the parameters for comparison. Is the one true religion going to be determined by the one whose name is NOT taken after its founder? If so, then Islam is in contention for the title,

though not the only contender. The claim is also true of Hinduism, Atheism, Nones, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

Perhaps the claim is made that Islam's not being named for its founder evidences its eternal nature. Okay, that's a better argument for Islam being the one true religion. However, the biggest problem with this statement is the massive non-sequitur. It does not follow that Islam has always existed because it is not named for its founder. Those two claims are certainly consistent with each other. They do not contradict each other. However, the evidence fails to justify the conclusion.

3) "Islam in its clear and direct way of expressing truth has a tremendous amount of appeal for any seeker of knowledge. It is the solution for all the problems of life. It is a guide toward a better and complete life glorifying in all its phases God, the Almighty Creator and the Merciful Nourisher."

This is the first claim that comes close to the point I've made twice already. It begins setting forth criteria by which any worldview could be compared. Here the claim under examination is that Islam is the one true religion because it provides knowledge to those who seek. It provides solutions to life problems. It is a guide to a better and complete life.

This is a great start. The next step would be to define the terms concretely. What is knowledge? Solutions to which of life's problems? What is the good life?

4) "Islam is the most rational religion. It gives clear code of life."

Again, this is another step closer to defining parameters to compare competing worldviews. The claim here is that Islam is the most logical. This one would be difficult to argue just because of the sheer nature of things about life and this world to which we just don't have rational answers. The one arguing this point would have a monumental task ahead of him

of cataloguing what's logical, what is not, and then comparing one system against the other. Again, logic would need to be defined as well.

5) "Islam is the first and the final religion of mankind."

This one is difficult to take seriously. First, scholars of religion do not date Islam as the oldest religion. Second, neither is it the final religion historically. Many other religions have formed since the 8th century. Consider Secular atheism, Baha'i, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, or even Falun Gong. Their very existence calls into question the veracity of this claim.

Perhaps then the claim is a spiritual one, not historical. That is to say, it is not the final as in the last religion ever formed-rather it is the last one created that man will ever need. It is sufficient to connect the global brotherhood of humanity with God.

That could perhaps be the case logically. But here again the claim is asserted without justification.

6) "Islam is the shortest and broadest road that leads to God."

Again, are those the parameters for determining the one true religion? If so, then a discussion could ensue to both evaluate each worldview according to its length to get to God, and its broadness. I would not choose these parameters myself, but one could do so if he wished.

In conclusion, these six statements may perhaps encourage someone who is already Muslim, that their belief is the one true religion-providing further evidence of its internal consistency.

However, the above six claims seem to miss a fundamental distinction important when discussing and determining which

worldview among many is the one true worldview, or religion. This is the distinction between knowing and showing.

It is one thing to know a claim to be true. It is yet a different task to show that it is true.

When I teach worldviews as a lecture I conclude with four tests that can be administered to any given worldview and used as a measure to compare how each competing worldview holds up. These test for **correspondence, coherency, consistency,** and **comprehensiveness**.

The **correspondence** test asks how well does this worldview correspond with what I perceive of the world? How directly does it correspond with reality?

Islam's teaching God created the world makes sense to me. This explains beautifully why there is something rather than nothing. However, Islam does not provide a satisfying answer to man's greatest need.

Islam and Christianity agree that man is divided from God, separated. Both religions desire reunion with God. Islam teaches this is possible through submission. The Arabic word for Islam can also be translated "submission."

Christianity teaches that submission to God is impossible to do perfectly. Both Muslims and Christians would agree. Mankind is in a broken, fallen, sinful, imperfect state. Islam's answer to man's problem is essentially, try hard and hope God is merciful because sometimes He isn't. In that way Allah appears to me capricious.

Islam doesn't correspond to reality in a really important way. It provides no satisfying answer for what to do with Man's sin. It provides no means to reconcile imperfect men to a perfect, holy, and sovereign God.

Only the gospel provides that. This is why the gospel is such

good news. This is why the gospel is so important.

The second worldview analysis test is **coherency**. This test evaluates a worldview's logic. This test asks whether it is rational or reasonable. Does it pass the sniff test? Or does it seem patently off?

Islam doesn't fare well with this test when we examine its treatment of women. The Qur'an states that Allah is merciful. But if wives are disrespectful to their husband, according to Surah 4 husbands are allowed to withhold sex from them. The Qur'an even commands husbands to beat them.

In Saudi Arabia women could not drive for nearly two decades. They allowed it legally just a few years ago in 2019. Islam's track record with women is not coherent. How can one gender have so much more value than another if both are human creations under Allah? How can a husband be allowed to beat his wife-the one he's devoted his life to loving and protecting?

A third test for **consistency**, asks how consistent the tenets of this worldview are with themselves. Does this worldview contain contradictory teachings or beliefs?

Surah 109:6 regarding how to relate to disbelievers, "Unto you your religion, and unto me my religion." The Qur'an states many times that Allah is peaceful, merciful, and forgiving. How then can He justify the systematic killing of disbelievers as ordained in Jihad (surah 2:216)? Islam has a massive consistency problem. Is it a religion of peace or of the sword? The fact that an objective outside observer cannot tell is a serious consistency problem.

Lastly the **comprehensive** test asks the question, How well does this worldview explain everything altogether? It takes into consideration how well it answered the above three questions, and other important considerations.

For my final analysis I would bring in outside evidence. The evidence for the reliability of the Bible is absolutely unrivaled by any other book from antiquity, Qur'an included. The miracles recorded in the New Testament authenticate the authority of Jesus's teaching. The fulfillments of prophecy recorded in Scripture are incredible.

Muhammad's record of bringing peace to the Saudi peninsula in the 7th century is a sad tale of power, bloodshed, politics, and let's face it, hatred. When all the evidence is considered, Islam has problems with the worldview tests. Christianity raises difficult questions, but has really good, historically grounded, spiritually satisfying answers to all of them.

You might check out this excellent article on our website about worldviews. [probe.org/worldviews/]

You might also check out an excellent historical study, on our website, comparing the lives of Jesus and Muhammad. [probe.org/the-lives-of-muhammad-and-jesus/]

I hope this helps.

Paul Rutherford

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