

Is Belief in the Bible Circular Reasoning?



The Bible is true! Why do you believe that? Because the Bible tells me so!

Isn't this just a big loop? Couldn't anyone from any religion make the same claim about their sacred writings? Yes and yes. Does this mean religious people are crazy? No.

Here's why:

Every way of seeing the world (worldview), whether atheistic (no god) or theistic (a god) or something else altogether, begins with a set of ultimate beliefs that can't be proven.

"That's crazy," a skeptic might say, "atheism is built on science, on things we can prove." Fair enough.

"Why do you believe that your senses are reliable and can lead you to truth?" we might ask them. Watch their next move. They will reach into their assumptions about atheism being true and give you a more foundational reason for trusting their sense perception and the ability for humans to use science to get at some grand theory about reality. Pay close attention.

This is a move away from a scientific claim they can prove (like that water freezes at 32° Celsius) to the bigger worldview commitments they accept on faith and cannot prove. They are essentially reaching into their atheist Bible to give you a chapter and verse to prove their point.



Any ultimate claim about reality begins with a faith commitment. Some skeptics are willing to admit this point (not many, mind you). Take Crispin Sartwell for example, who explains in his [Atlantic article](#) how he has taken an “atheist leap of faith.” He concedes that religious folk and non-religious folk all have a faith commitment to how they understand the world (which means all folk are religious, by the way!).

Whether we admit it or not, we all build our view of the world on an assumption, a big picture about what’s really real, that we cannot prove. That’s okay. It’s unavoidable. The main question is which starting point, which assumption, what presupposition, is the right one? Which one is true?

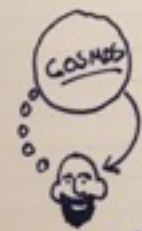
The Christian begins with a belief that God exists and that he has revealed himself. That is no more or less religious than Carl Sagan’s famous quote, “The cosmos is all that is, or ever was, or ever will be.” The question for thinking people is which one is true: either a world that began in chance, is governed by nothing, and is heading nowhere, or one that filled with purpose and meaning because there is a Creator, an intelligence, behind it all.

So, Christian, take heart the next time you reference the Bible for reasons of why you believe it to be true. Though you may end up saying much more about why you believe the Bible, you certainly need not say anything less. Because God is there and he is not silent we can know who he is, who we are, and get insights into the purpose of the cosmos. That’s not a starting point from which we need to retreat.

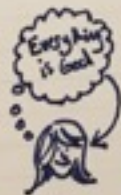
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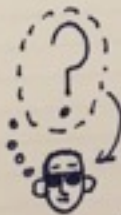
WHY?



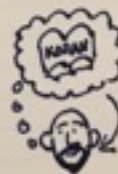
The cosmos
is all that
is, or was, or
ever will be!



I meditate
on the
oneness!



You can't
really know
anything for
certain!



I believe
the Koran
is true!



ABOUT ME



Hello, my name is **Dan DeWitt**. I'm a sketching, writing, thinking, coffee drinking, Christian, husband, father, and professor. I lead the Center for Biblical Apologetics & Public Christianity at **Cedarville University**.