

Interfaith Week Debate

Theism vs Atheism

18th November 2021

Theism: Rational Proofs

The phenomenon of religion, its history, and practices past, present, and future is open to examination and rational discussion. I am a theist because of the historical facts surrounding the life and works of Bahá'u'lláh (1817 – 1892) Who claimed to be the return of the Christ Spirit and whose Teachings give humanity a new paradigm of understanding God and the phenomenon of religion – the concept of progressive revelation. Today the Bahá'í faith is established in more than 100,000 localities around the world. It is incumbent on anyone investigating the truth of religion to try and put aside their acquired learning and with an open and unbiased mind examine the facts of this newest and latest religion.

Explore the website <https://www.bahai.org/> to see the material outworking of this newest and latest Revelation from God. On the site is the Bahá'í Reference Library of Authoritative Writings. Under the Writings of Shoghi Effendi you will see the work 'God Passes By'. The book provides a historical summary of the first century of the Bahá'í Faith, from 1844 to 1944. The same author also translated into English the first half of the Persian text of Nabil's narrative 'The Dawnbreakers'. [H.M. Balyuzi](#), who used the second part of the manuscript as one of his sources for *Bahá'u'lláh, King of Glory*, states that it mostly concerns events which Nabil witnessed with his own eyes.

It was Bahá'u'lláh's son, `Abdu'l-Bahá, who brought the Faith to the West in 2 journeys spanning 1911 – 1913. A visual account of his travels can be seen [here](#) and the talks he gave were gathered into works such as [Paris Talks](#) and [The Promulgation of Universal Peace](#).

The historical facts provide a sure foundation on which to investigate the actual works of Bahá'u'lláh and `Abdu'l-Bahá. A notable work of the former is the [Book of Certitude](#) which deals with the symbology of the Holy Scriptures. [Some Answered Questions](#) by the latter is again a good starting reference to gain an understanding of many subjects which have taxed many learned people for centuries.

Malcolm Craig.

The Case for Atheism

Despite hundreds of years of scientific research theists still adhere to a two thousand year old model of creation. The admittedly ingenious and well needed model was developed to encourage honesty in the young and law and order in the adult population as well as an ethical structure for life; and comfort when faced with the death of others and your own eventual demise. The all-knowing and all-seeing supernatural being monitors and eventually judges all of our activities throughout our lives, and thereby implements this powerful method of social control. But do theists genuinely believe the ancient model and take literally the existence of a being who is the creator of all things, despite the total lack of evidence for the idea and all of the scientific evidence to the contrary; and how would such a being fit into the world as we now know it to be?

We will also discuss whether Christianity may actually be harmful from the perspectives of historical evidence, theology, biblical teachings, the behaviour of the churches and their followers, charitable works, religious experience and the psychological motivations of believers.