

How do humans come to have  
faith in things?



# Faith

Faith in a religion is no different. Most people come to believe in some religion because of their experiences. Perhaps it started because they felt the love of a parent and the parent told them that God loves them in the same way. Perhaps a person's faith is strengthened when he feels as though a prayer has been answered. These types of experiences can lead a person to have faith in a particular religion and trust that if the religion was right about one thing it is right about other things.

Religions are  
Experiential

# The Judeo-Christian Faith

- Essentially began thousands of years ago when human beings first started asking questions about their lives and world and they began to understand that there was some ultimate reality beyond themselves.
- Over time this developed into many of the ancient polytheistic and nature religions which attempted to give people a framework of answers for their big questions.



# The Judeo-Christian Faith

- About 4,000 years ago a man who we call the “father of many” (aka Abraham) came to understand that there was in fact only one ultimate reality ... a being we have come to call God.
- Over time his descendants developed this idea of one God and came to believe that humans and God are in a sacred relationship called a covenant.



# The Judeo-Christian Faith

- Eventually, a man named Moses began to formalize Abraham and his descendents' beliefs into a full fledged religion (think 7 dimension: experiences, rituals, doctrines, myths, ethics, materials, and social bonds)
- This organized system of belief (religion) spread and grew because it provided answers to the questions of countless generations of Jews like David, Isaiah, and Mary.



# The Judeo-Christian Faith

- Part of the promise of the covenant, as developed by the Jews, was the concept of an “anointed one” (messiah) who would bring to the world “God’s reign” – many people were expecting a kingly messiah who would usher in a political reign.
- About 2,000 years ago a Jewish woman was asked to be faithful to the covenant and participate in God’s plan.



# The Judeo-Christian Faith

- Despite the fact that God's plan seemed to make no sense and was dangerous in many ways, the woman chose "to love God with her whole heart, mind, and strength" by saying "let it be done unto me according to your word."
- The faith of that young woman and her selfless act of love allowed an amazing event to occur in human history, God took on flesh (incarnation,



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- HOWEVER – Jesus’ message about what it means to be a whole or complete human being is incredibly challenging.
- Jesus says that for each individual to be whole or complete, he or she must be willing to allow their “self” to die for others.
- Not only did he preach this radical message, but he lived it (or should we say he died it?)



# The Judeo-Christian Faith

- His greatest commandment was “Love the Lord your God” BUT ALSO “Love your neighbor as you love yourself”
- AND “Love your enemies and pray for those who hurt you”



# The Judeo-Christian Faith

- Jesus also promised that these acts of selflessness are not merely empty gestures.
- Jesus made two promises to his disciples.
- (1) The “kingdom of God is at hand”
- (2) “I came that they might have LIFE and have it more abundantly” / “I am the resurrection and the life, all who believe in me **SHALL NEVER DIE**”

