

THE BIGGER THE COMMITMENT THE BIGGER THE EVIDENCE

A miracle claim is a very serious claim. Some say that a miracle is so extraordinary you need extraordinary evidence to verify it. That is fine but they need to be careful with the expression extraordinary evidence. It is best stated that it needs to be as good as the evidence to put somebody away for life in jail. You want to avoid the notion that unbelievers want too much evidence.

The Bigger the Doctrine you must Commit to the More Support it needs from Evidence

Those who tell you to be religious because that will make you a good person even if the religion is wrong are forgetting that religion to justify you believing in its doctrines about dying and rising gods or whatever marries them or bonds them to the morality. Religion correctly reasons that if non-religious people have a morality with the same requirements the similarity does mean the two moralities are identical or one and the same. Twins being like one another does not make them the one person. So commitment to the God of religion incurs commitment to the doctrines. So to argue that you will be good even if a religion is false is nonsense for you have the wrong kind of good. And if you have the real good then you should not be in the religion for it marries it to rubbish.

This combination of doctrine/morality requires you to be committed to the core forever. That is a big ask.

Religion has some strange and outlandish doctrines. It is very strange to say Jesus is fully God and fully man (two distinct and separate natures -for it really sounds like you have two people who are pretending to be one. There are many more doctrines.

It is no wonder the Church says we need miracles in order to make these doctrines intellectually tolerable. We need supernatural signs from God to say they are true despite how bizarre or contradictory they seem to be.

If a miracle intrinsically needs exceptionally good evidence in its favour, imagine what it needs if God does them to bolster the credibility of seemingly nonsensical doctrines! It needs near-perfect evidence.

This is not about principles only but also about being fair to believers. Encouraging a person to believe something bizarre or serious on inadequate evidence is exploitation.

The Bigger the Commitment asked for the More Support a Faith needs from Evidence

Christianity asks you to love God with all your being. It evilly forbids you to love even your devoted parents as much.

It says you must have faith in God's love even if every reason why he might let so much evil occur that we have is wrong. Never mind that this risks condoning the cruelty of nature or of a demon pretending to be God. Never mind that this violates the moral principle that some evil should be seen as totally impermissible and letting it happen deserves as much disapproval as the evil itself.

It asks you to die for the faith if you are asked to renounce it or die.

It says that even if pregnancy kills 999 women out of a 1000 abortion is still a sin.

It says you must approve of how Jesus walked into crucifixion to save sinners.

That asks for a hell a lot of faith and commitment . There is more.

The evidence the Church offers that contraception is a grave sin, that babies are born in need of forgiveness in baptism, that if you die unrepentant of masturbation you are bad enough to go to Hell forever, that God was right to decree that adulterers and heretics must be stoned to death and that Jesus exempting us from this law does not imply he has taken pity for he said he would visit vengeance himself is terrible. The evidence does not justify these claims for they are so serious and huge.

This is essentially non-violent extremism though it is internalised violence nurtured and cherished in the heart. It is tacit approval of violence as long as it is others doing the dirty work which allows you to enjoy your self-righteous glow. The Church is dishing out such doctrines out of passive aggression!

Never tell religious people, "The more unbelievable the claim you make is, the bigger the evidence you need to support it"

and leave it at that. Talk to them in a caring context like this, "Any religion claiming to have been set up by God and taught by him in matters of faith and morals and that claims to have the books he inspired needs to be sure it is not merely man-made but is from God. You don't want to be serving the word of God when it is really the word of men. You would be making a god of their ideas and of them by proxy. If a faith is man-made you can expect errors, lies, mistakes not to mention subtle and/or plain inducements to violence or activities that lead to discord. If God has spoken and man sets up a religion that is a mixture of God's teaching and mans errors and mans mistakes about what God has said that is still a wholly man-made religion for it is man who has chosen the teachings of God that will be followed. Man is in effect plagiarising God. Errors about God will block or limit a relationship with God and result in your attraction to sin growing for you cannot hear his guidance clearly or correctly. God's truth that men takes the authority to teach becomes practically speaking man's truth."

If you make huge religious claims and call violent books the word of God then before you can try to justify them you must show extraordinary evidence that God is working in you. Actions speak louder than words. If you teach violent books are the word of God and still claim to a good child of God then you must go to the extreme in sacrificing for others.

Extraordinary religious claims should only come from those of extraordinary virtue. They rarely do! This shows that religion is, nearly always, about protecting people or the truth at all but about power.

Christendom has been told all this for years and has made no effort to align with reason and truth. Yet it pretends to be a hospital for sinners! It in fact is not helping and therefore to blame for the evils carried out in its name! The moral is that to avoid risking people making a huge commitment to error you need to give them good evidence and help them think for themselves. You will not be making them members of the Church as babies to be getting an unfair religious advantage over them!

Miracles undermine meaning

Extraordinary evidence is needed to back up extraordinary claims. You would need to see all the laws in the universe and how they work together before you could dare to say that a stone spoke to you. That is a huge claim though it might look small. If one stone in the universe could speak any one could so you are challenging the fact that stones don't talk. For anything we say to have meaning and to be intended to have meaning we must believe in the method of investigating evidence. Even the smallest miracle claim denies this so all miracle claims are false or unacceptable. No God would do miracles if they are meaningless and if they are meaningless to us though we may imagine they mean something. Miracle beliefs are founded on arrogance on pretending you know more than you do.

If miracles happened all the time our language would be meaningless. An apple would be really a pear and water would be turning into wine and all-sorts all the time. Communication would be wrong and nonsense all the time. Any miracle is an outbreak of chaos and an evidence against the trustworthiness of natural law. They reduce - sometimes slightly - the meaningfulness of language. The more miracles that are accepted as possible or as facts the more the meaningfulness of your statements is compromised. We must be reluctant to believe.

If a miracle happens then it shows you should wonder if secret miracles are taking place a lot. How do you know that the headache tablet you took really cured the headache and maybe it was magic did it?

Do you sometimes need extraordinary good evidence for big claims but not always?

Some say that you don't always need mega-good evidence for mega-big claims for it depends on the claim.

Christians may argue that extraordinary claims do not require extraordinary evidence any more that funny claims need funny evidence. They mean extraordinary evidence is needed for every extraordinary claim except when they make the extraordinary claims required by their religion. They say good evidence for example that Jesus rose from the dead is enough. But there are many extraordinary claims which we will not accept without extraordinary evidence. The Christians will not accept an extraordinary claim that Jesus was raised by aliens and God had nothing to do with it. Christians and atheists and sceptics all look for extraordinary evidence for believing in certain things. So even if extraordinary evidence is not always needed for extraordinary claims it often is. And needing big evidence for big claims is not the same as saying you need funny evidence for funny claims. We are not talking about whether the evidence is hilarious or not but whether it is enough to justify taking the claim seriously.

Religion is cruel for asking for too big of a commitment. Such commitment needs evidence and good evidence at that. Commitment to nonsense will falter and its no wonder "holy" people fall so much!