

2nd Rebuttal

Samuel Bradshaw

2.5 min. (pro)

The opposing team has inferred that Christianity was based upon the pagan religion of Mithraism. **First**, I must point out that there are several differences between the two accounts. Similarity by itself does not imply plagiarism.

Second, I will refute this claim *entirely* by quoting from philosopher Ron Nash. He said:

“Mithraism had no concept of the death and resurrection of its god [...] during its early stages. [...] The notion of rebirth would have been foreign to its basic outlook.”

He also stated:

“While there are several sources that suggest that Mithraism included a notion of rebirth, they are all post-Christian. The earliest... dates from the end of the second century AD.”

Therefore, it is far more plausible that the opposite is true: Christianity was *not* based upon Mithraism, but rather *Mithraism* borrowed from *Christianity*.

Finally, it is significant to note that even if new research found those Mithraist teachings to be pre-Christian, it could easily be explained. In the Christian mind, the New Testament is simply a fulfillment of prophecies in the Old Testament, which was written between 2000 and 400 BC and far predates Mithraism. However, as it is, Mithraist similarities to Christianity can in no wise be dated before the second century AD.

Another point that the opposing team brought up was, “Why doesn’t Christ just *appear* to everyone to *prove* that he died and was resurrected for us?” To answer this question requires an understanding of the fundamental Christian belief that faith in Jesus Christ is a necessary step to salvation. Paul said, “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” God wants to develop a relationship with each of us, not from *without*, but from *within*. It is the *heart* that motivates us to go forward and act upon what we believe. Without faith, even seeing is not enough. If Christ were to show each of us the prints of

the nails in His hands and feet, it would, in a way, defeat the purpose of the path of our life on earth. We must come to know God and Jesus Christ spiritually, not physically.

And is the Bible not proof enough? My team has already established the fact that the Bible is a valid historical source. The Bible contains the testimony of witnesses. Almost everything we know is based upon our believing witnesses. Do we *know* that Australia exists? Have we actually, personally seen it? No. Most of us have never been there. The only reason that we *say* it exists is because we believe the accounts of all those who *have* been there. Therefore, the Bible itself should be proof enough that these things are true.

Debate format:

Introduction (Mr. Killian)

Opening – Pro 7 min.

Opening – Con 7 min.

1st Rebuttal – Pro 2.5 min.

1st Rebuttal – Con 2.5 min.

2nd Rebuttal – Pro 2.5 min.

2nd Rebuttal – Con 2.5 min.

Closing – Pro 7 min.

Closing – Con 7 min.

Conclusion and Vote