The Role of Faith in Epistemology

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ABSTRACT

Abstract: *There is a startling lack of consensus among Christian philosophers as to whether faith relates to epistemology, and if so, how they relate. The problem is even less settled among Christians in general. Epistemologist Peter Boghossian seems attuned to this vulnerability, and uses it to undermine epistemic justification for religious faith. The disunity of response among Christian philosophers, unfortunately, only lends credibility to Boghossian's thesis. I offer here a biblical model of faith that seeks unity among both my predecessors and my contemporaries. And I offer this model to two camps: non-Christians that argue for faith as a failed epistemology, and Christians that argue for faith as non-epistemological. I show that a properly-conceived, biblically-accurate model of faith is incredibly robust, and illumines misconceptions among non-Christians and Christians alike. I argue that 1) Faith is epistemic in nature, 2) Faith is active, 3) Faith is trust, 4) Faith can be virtuous, and finally, 5) Faith, as experienced in Divine encounter, is an adjunct avenue in acquiring knowledge.*

Keywords: Epistemology, Religious Epistemology, The Nature of Faith, Faith and Epistemology, Spiritual Experience, Philosophy of Religion, Philosophical Theology, Peter Boghossian

INTRODUCTION

Is Faith epistemological? There is a startling lack of consensus among Christian philosophers as regards this question. And the problem is even less settled among Christians in general. It may be that, as William James suggested, talk of faith has been intentionally sequestered from the discipline of philosophy[1].

Whatever the cause, epistemologist Peter Boghossian seems attuned to this vulnerability, and uses it to undermine epistemic justification for religious faith in general. The disunity of response among Christian philosophers, unfortunately, only lends credibility to Boghossian's thesis. I suggest with some urgency that Christian philosophers take up Boghossian's gauntlet and work toward a unified concept of faith.

To that end, I offer here a biblical model of faith that seeks unity among both my predecessors and my contemporaries. And I offer this model to two camps: *non-Christians* that argue for faith as a *failed* epistemology,[2] and *Christians* that argue for faith as *non*-epistemological.[3] What we will see is that a *biblically-accurate* model of faith is incredibly robust, and illumines misconceptions among non-Christians and Christians alike. I will argue 1) Faith *is* epistemic in nature, 2) Faith is active, 3) Faith is trust, 4) Faith can be virtuous, and finally, 5) Faith is an adjunct avenue in acquiring knowledge. I will deal with Boghossian's claim first, and then examine the structure of faith.

BOGHOSSIAN And Scripture

Boghossian offers two definitions of faith: (1) Belief without evidence,4 and (2) Pretending to know things we don't know.5 It seems trivial to state that few Christians, if any will subscribe to (2) as their working definition of faith. The biblical Hebrew for "faith" – הנומא ('emuna)6 – has been translated variously into English as truth,7 stability,8 and honesty.9

Clearly, "pretending to know things you don't know" is a bizarre translation for הנומא – truth (or stability, or honesty). For reasons such as this, William James dismissed precisely (2) as the "schoolboy" definition of faith over a century ago.10

But the aim here is not whether faith has been poorly defined (it certainly has – even by Christians). The aim here is to discern a biblically-accurate definition of faith, and whether that model is epistemically justified. So let us begin by admitting that those who subscribe to (2) lack both scriptural support and, in agreement with Boghossian, epistemic justification. Let us then leave (2) behind in search of something more biblically accurate.

And Evidentialism

In epistemology proper, (1) "Belief without evidence" looks less like faith and more like an a priori belief,11 or, more likely, some non-evidentialist epistemology. Supporting this latter notion is Boghossian's consistent appeal to "evidence" as an ideal justifier of beliefs, and faith's purported failure to meet this ideal.12 It is important to note at this point that Boghossian is simply presuming evidentialism in much of his critique of faith. There are several problems here.

First, what Boghossian likely has in mind is a contrast between (a) taking a proposition on "faith", and (b) taking a proposition on "evidence", where (b) is obviously preferable. And while (b) may be preferable,13 the only substantive difference between (a) and (b) is that in (b), evidence has been obtained, whereas in (a) evidence is being sought. Why assume (a) is something static rather than dynamic? And why assume that many well- established propositions in category (b) did not pass through a stage of (a)?14 In fact, this seems to be exactly what St. Augustine and St. Anselm had in mind in their "faith seeking understanding."15

The second problem is defining what exactly counts as "evidence".16 Is it demonstrative "proof"?17 Or some distinction between objectivity and subjectivity?18 Is evidence that which is delivered by the senses? Or by memory? Or testimony? Axioms? Etc.19 We are owed some sort of criteria for which faith is ostensibly failing to meet. Also, if Thomas Reid is correct, that evidence is simply that which grounds a belief,20 then it is truly impossible for beliefs to form in the absence of some sort of evidence. And in this case, (1), "Belief without evidence," makes no sense.21

The third problem is well-known issue of epistemic justification.22 If my Belief A is evidentially based on my Belief B, and my Belief B is evidentially based on my Belief C, at what point does my evidential chain end? Do I come to some final Belief, Z, which is not evidentially-based upon another belief? If so, then we have come to some belief which has no evidential support, and we are forced to conclude that at least some beliefs are justified without evidence. Or, if I never come to a final, non-evidential belief, then I have no underlying support for my evidential beliefs. Or if my beliefs form a circular chain, such that Belief Z is evidentially based on Belief A, then my beliefs run the risk of forming a tautology. In any case, this is all to say that even if Boghossian is correct, that faith is belief without evidence (which, as we have seen, may be impossible; and as we will

see, is an unbiblical model of faith), it's still unclear what the problem is. Or, at the very least, the evidentialism implicit in much of Boghossian's critique of faith seems no less problematic than Boghossian's definition of faith.

And Objection Types

But leaving these problems aside, let us zoom in from epistemology proper to religious epistemology. Likely, then, Boghossian intends that: (1') [religious] faith is [religious] belief without evidence. Again, leaving aside that belief without evidence may be impossible, this would at most only leave one with fideism. But this is by no means the default position of all religious faiths. And all those whose faith is belief with evidence (whether compelling or not) are silently swept under the rug. But let us suppose, again for the sake of argument, that all religious adherents are fideistic.23 Does it follow then that religious faith, as Boghossian suggests, is a "failed epistemology"?24

Alvin Plantinga's distinction between de jure and de facto objections is helpful at this point.25 For Plantinga, de jure objections are those related to whether a particular belief is warranted. De facto objections are those related to whether a particular belief is true. Plantinga shows that a de jure objection to a religious belief is dependent on a de facto objection. Therefore, barring some propositional fallacy, one's religious faith can only be shown as unwarranted if it is also shown to be false. Or in other words, if a particular faith is in fact ultimately true, then belief in it is quite obviously warranted. When Boghossian objects to religious faith as a "failed epistemology" then, he seems to be making a de jure objection to its warrant; presupposing its falsehood. But he cannot do so without knowing a de facto defeater – a defeater to its truth. And Boghossian has not shown this: indeed he cannot, without engaging a discipline outside of epistemology. Regarding his overall thesis of faith as a failed epistemology then, even gracious attempts to rescue it fail. Nevertheless, Boghossian is to be commended for arousing contemplation as to what exactly faith is. Let us now examine this question.

THE NATURE OF FAITH

Faith as Epistemological

Boghossian suggests that faith claims are knowledge claims, are statements of fact about the world.26 But this is assuming only one of many models of faith. And models of faith run the epistemic gamut from non-applicable, to a belief-producing process, to belief itself, to an action based on belief, and finally, to the entire package of knowledge itself. So epistemologically speaking, where exactly is faith located? This appears to be the most contested feature in the topography of faith.

One might place faith outside the waters of epistemology altogether, with faith posterior to, or based upon, knowledge previously acquired, as William Lane Craig defends.27 Or one might approach the banks of epistemology with Thomas Aquinas, placing faith at home in the intellect.28 One might dip a toe in epistemology with Hugh of St. Vincent and place faith somewhere between opinion and knowledge.29 One might wade in epistemology and place faith as a species of belief with St. Augustine30 or William James, whose faith is a belief in something for which doubt is still possible.31 One might swim in epistemology and accept William Alston or Robert Audi's suggestion that faith is a doxastic (belief-forming) process.32 Or one might dive head-first into epistemology and equate the entire package of knowledge with faith as does Calvin33, or Plantinga's sensus divinitatis, in which faith is a special case of knowledge itself.34 Boghossian obtusely assumes all (or the majority) of religious adherents adopt some form of the Calvin/Plantinga model of faith-as- knowledge. Yet this may be the single

redeeming element in Boghossian's thesis: there do seem to be good reasons suggesting faith is epistemological. And, as we shall see, perhaps more properly epistemological than either camp realizes.

Faith as Justified True Belief

Accepting the traditional tripartite theory of knowledge (JTB),35 a venture which consistently incorporates elements of JTB, such as belief, truth, or justification, is epistemological. And it seems that faith not only incorporates each of these elements, but in some cases, is isomorphic (identical in nature)36 to them.

Regarding belief, for example, "I [have faith] that p" is isomorphic to "I [believe] that p". Robert Audi terms this propositional faith: the doxastic (and therefore, epistemological) component of faith.37 This is not to say that faith is reducible to belief. But we observe faith paralleling belief when we at least consider that 1) both involve assent of something taken to be true, 2) both seem to come in degrees of certainty, and 3) both are voluntary (or, depending on one's school, both are involuntary). In other words, what is true of faith in (1)- (3), is true of belief in (1)-(3).

Next, if epistemic justification is that which indicates or points toward truth,38 we are, as we have seen, inching closer to one of the several expressions of biblical faith (הנומא). As we saw, part of what the Christian is thus professing is a belief (propositional faith). But another part of what the Christian is professing is sufficient reason that their belief is true. This is seen when St. Peter urges the Christian to always be prepared to offer an ἀπολογίαν (apologian) – a justification, or reason – for his faith.39

Recall that while all Christians may not necessarily be able to enumerate such reasons, nor even that all Christians think they ought to be able to do so, scripture exhorts the Christian to cultivate such an ability. So the aim here is not the current state of Christian faith, but what a biblically accurate faith looks like. Thus St. Paul felt he was imprisoned for the sole purpose of giving good reasons (epistemic justification) for his faith.40 This component of faith (let us term this apologetic faith) is virtually identical with Boghossian's understanding of justification – sufficient reason to believe.41 The proposition "I have [faith] in Jesus's Resurrection" is therefore isomorphic to "I have [sufficient reason to believe] in Jesus's resurrection."42 Thus when the Christian enumerates his faith in the Resurrection, he is providing reasons for which he feels justified in such a belief.43 And epistemic justification, properly defined, is not necessarily showing that one is justified. One may potentially be justified but not be able to show how, as in epistemic internalism. When such a set of reasons comprise a person's justification for believing a particular faith claim, such reasons are, again, properly epistemological.

What is interesting in all this is not just that faith is an epistemic venture, but that faith, when biblically conceived, models each of the sufficient conditions for knowledge: belief, justification (ἀπολογίαν), and truth (הנומא). Thus when Boghossian suggests faith claims are knowledge claims, we ought, in a sense, to agree with him.44 Faith is a unique cognitive venture which captures the three necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge (JTB).

Faith as Active

A quick word on another expression of faith. Thus far we have examined faith as belief (propositional faith), and faith as epistemic justification (apologetic faith). But these are propositional attitudes45 or states of affairs46 (respectively). This feature of faith might be described as "Belief in [X]" or "Good reason for believing in [X]," where X is some fact or state of affairs. But this doesn't exhaustively describe the phenomenon of

faith. For William James, religious faith is wholly dependent upon action.47 In other words, faith has an active component. Timothy McGrew (as well as Craig) rightly suggests faith is, among other things, acting on what one believes to be true.48 While faith as a psychological state may be described as "Belief in [X]," faith as active may be described as "Belief that [x]," where X is some active venture beyond mere attitude. But what sort of active venture?

Faith as Trust

Essentially unanimous among the aforementioned thinkers is faith as trust. This seems to be the least contested feature in the topography of faith. Yet Boghossian contends that "this is not how the faithful use the word 'faith' in religious contexts."49 Boghossian does not seem to provide any support for this claim (or perhaps his support is anecdotal). As a test case then, let us see whether his contention holds against scripture.

First notice that the root meaning of the Biblical (Koine) Greek πίστις (pistis), 'faith', is 'trust'. 50 Second, recall that the Biblical Hebrew for faith (א הנומ) also denotes trust.51 But third, faith-as-trust is clearly inherent in scripture. As St. James explains, "You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder."52 But if faith is only belief, as Boghossian suggests, then the Christian is willingly equating his faith with demonic faith, which is absurd. Clearly faith is more than belief, as St. James further clarifies.53 "[Abraham's] faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did."54 According to St. James then, faith is made complete (suggesting faith as a composite) with action. "Faith by itself," he concludes, "if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."55 Note that when St. James differentiates between dead faith and active faith, he is implicitly differentiating between the epistemic component of faith (faith-as-belief), and the active (or dead) component of faith.

Of course, even the demons act in scripture. What kind of action then differentiates Christian faith from demonic faith? St. James quotes Genesis, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."56 Note that for St. James, Abraham did not believe "in" God (a belief state): he believed God (an action). Faith here equates with trust. And for St. James, this is part of the proper model of faith: trust. This feature, termed the fiducial component of faith,57 is supported by the most famous of Christians ranging from St. Augustine58 in antiquity to the Reformers59 in the middle ages to William James60 and Alvin Plantinga61 in modernity. Now Boghossian may be right: some Christians may not equate faith with trust. But again, this only illumines a conceptual defect in such a Christian's conception of faith. And this serves to highlight precisely why, on a biblical model, faith – as trust – is a virtue.

Faith as Virtue

In Aristotelian ethics, virtue is the median point between deficiency and excess of some trait.62 Courage, for example, is the middle point between cowardice and recklessness. Courage, then, is a virtue, while cowardice and recklessness are vices. And for Aristotle, virtues come in two kinds: moral and intellectual.63 Now, Boghossian believes that our understanding of faith as a virtue is entirely mistaken: faith ought to be understood rather as an unreliable way of reasoning.64 "Having a firm belief is not a virtue,"65 he suggests. And he is right. But "firmness" of belief has not been marketed as virtuous among the thinkers (or scripture) in our discussion. How, then, is faith virtuous?

I suggest faith can be virtuous on at least three levels: morally, intellectually, and epistemically. It is crucial to note first that in this section that we are speaking of the active, trust component of faith. In agreement with Craig and McGrew, this component is

based on previously established knowledge (or beliefs). First then, if one has good reason66 to trust in some person or proposition, one is virtuous in trusting in, or having faith in such a person or proposition's offer.

Second, following the Aquinian model, faith is only virtuous when it expresses truth, never when it expresses falsehood.67 Further, for Aquinas, faith ought to perfect the intellect.68 In other words, an epistemology which profits its holder in new, bona fide knowledge, is virtuous. It is a spurious claim to dismiss all religious faiths (both in the form of beliefs and actions) as failing to produce knowledge.

And finally, employing epistemic tests in evaluating beliefs prior to acting upon them is virtuous. We shall touch on this in the final section. Now if, as I have argued, faith is a composite of at least (1) action and (2) belief, it becomes easy to see how faith carries virtue inherently. (1) Acting upon (2) a belief for which one does not have good reasons, is not virtuous (it is reckless – a vice). However, acting on a belief for which one does have good reasons, is virtuous. And failing to act on such a belief is a vice (cowardice). This model is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1

	Faith-trust	No Faith-trust
Warranted Faith-Belief	Virtue	Vice
Not warranted Faith-Belief	Vice	Virtue

Boghossian complains that faith is commonly conceived as virtuous when one has "resolute belief in something – anything," or in the purportedly common sentiments that "faith makes us better people," or that "a man of faith is a good man."69 Again, no support is given that these are biblical, or even traditional concepts of faith-as-virtue. But for those who conceive faith-as-virtue thus, we ought to side with Boghossian and agree, resolute belief alone is obviously not virtuous. As we have seen however, this is not the model of faith-as- virtue advocated in scripture or in the sample of highly influential religious thinkers (ancient and contemporary) under discussion. Rather, faith properly construed is virtuous. Two questions therefore remain from the current section: 1) can faith-trust in a faith-belief render new knowledge in a consistent manner, and 2) are there epistemic tests for such a process?

Faith as a Knowledge-Producing Process

Granting that we have several belief-producing processes ("cognitive faculties" – hereafter "CF") such as sense perception, reason, testimony, memory, intuition, imagination, sympathy, and so on, we see that knowledge comes from a variety of cognitive processes.70

Now if some sort of religious experience, causally related to faith, is shown to bring veridical knowledge, its faculty must be up for consideration as a valid knowledge-producing faculty, and therefore, properly epistemological.

Let us examine a single case from the prophet Isaiah, who professed both propositional 71 and fiducial faith72 in God. His faith brought new knowledge that, for example, Babylon would come to utter destruction, its land not to be inhabited again throughout all generations.73 This seems to be bona fide knowledge74 which remains testable today. And presumably, if Isaiah lacked any of the necessary conditions for Biblical faith – propositional, active, or fiducial – he would have lacked such knowledge. Again, this is not to say that faith is reducible to knowledge, but rather, that knowledge

does factor into Biblical faith. And such cases of new knowledge abound through the corpus of the prophets, wisdom literature, the disciples of Jesus, etc.75

Now Boghossian suggests that faith is abandonment of reason.76 But reason is only one of many knowledge-producing processes.77 For example, when I use the CF of memory to recall what I ate for dinner a week ago; or I use the CF of introspective perception to know that I have a headache, I am using processes other than, or in addition to, reason. Reason is one faculty among many, and CF such as memory or perception may be used in conjunction with, or exclusively apart from, reason. But this is not abandonment of the CF of reason, any more than one abandons perception when one relies on memory.78

William Alston places the faculty of faith among the perception-based faculties: participants are passive, and experiences are simply presented to the participant, such as an object entering the field of one's vision.79 William James defines the faculty as, in part, perceiving new truths,80 which consistently render the most real experiences of life: experiences which unify and explain all our past experiences.81 This is no trivial phenomenon. Nor is it a marginal phenomenon: it factors into the lives of all walks of humanity, across all cultures, across all eras of recorded human history. This of course does not confirm them, but rather, commends them to our attention.
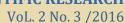
One objection may be that not everyone has shared such an experience. But as James points out, it makes little sense to exclude phenomena from our consideration merely because some of us have not participated in it.82 A more serious objection is that subjects of religious experience come to hold conflicting religious beliefs.83 But our CF regularly present us with conflicting beliefs. And yet we do not discard such CF as unreliable. Memories, for example, are notorious for coming into conflict with each other,84 yet we don't discount memory as a valid knowledge-producing faculty. Why? We generally filter our memory-produced beliefs through internal epistemic tests. In fact, it seems that we generally filter each of our CF- beliefs through epistemic tests. This is why we see the Biblical mandate to test faith-beliefs in 1 John 4:1, 2 Corinthians 13:5, etc.

Now, Boghossian rightly complains that faith, as a cognitive tool, cannot adjudicate between competing faith claims.85 And it doesn't take an epistemologist to see that using faith to establish faith is careless.86 Boghossian proposes that only reason and evidence can aid in discerning the truth of a faith claim.87 Boghossian is on the right track: I only propose we use our full set of CF in discerning the truth of a faith claim. This will include far more than just reason and evidence.

I suggest that if religious experiences are the result of CF, they be subjected to internal epistemic tests, just as with our other CF. For example, a memory of my three year old son teaching physics is presented to me. I would do well to employ other cognitive tools, such as reason or testimony, in evaluating whether such a memorial presentation is veridical. In doing so, I would discover this belief as the result of a dream I had a few nights ago. William Alston terms this the epistemic test of "internal consistency."88 If two perceptual beliefs contradict each other, at least one is false.89 Likewise, if I have some sort of religious experience-produced belief which has no testimonial support (or contradicts it), or fails a test of reason, or of memory (say, of another set of beliefs), I would be virtuous in treating it with skepticism, and favoring my other CF. But if I am presented with a belief which unifies and explains all my past experiences, brings with it a wealth of new knowledge, and passes internal epistemic tests, I am clearly virtuous in accepting it.

Further, as William James explained, if we are unable to truly experience the noumenal (objective), but rather have only the phenomenal (subjective), then the most important kind of knowledge is that which is most phenomenally profound.90 One could make the case that the CF of faith is therefore the most important of our CF, and needs the most attention and careful cultivation.

The arguments in this section are exceedingly brief. But there ought to be sufficient support at least showing, again, if some sort of religious experience, with causal dependence on faith, is shown to bring veridical knowledge, its faculty is properly epistemological. In this way, faith, considered as a cognitive, belief-producing faculty, is properly epistemological, in divergence from Craig and McGrew, and in agreement with Boghossian.

CONCLUSION

Talk of faith is strangely absent in epistemology: we have Boghossian to thank for re- introducing it as a proper subject of epistemic investigation. But my intention here is not merely to correct the remaining misconceptions in Boghossian's critique of faith. We can go much further. To give an explicit voice to what has historically been implicit: faith, properly formed and exercised virtuously, merits a place alongside the established epistemic tools of perception, reason, testimony, memory, intuition, and so forth.

Faith straddles belief, justification, truth, action, trust, virtue, and knowledge. It stands unique among all human characteristics. Faith, a belief-producing process, carries virtue in morality and intellect, and when run through epistemic filters, is made complete when paired with an active trust. But perhaps most importantly, whether considered non-epistemological by one school of thought or a failed epistemology by another, both camps eliminate a perfectly valid cognitive tool from the art of knowledge-acquisition. And for many, this would exclude a tool for acquiring the most valuable kind of knowledge.91 A biblical model of faith is not a failed epistemology: it is not pretending to know what we don't know, nor is it belief without evidence. "Faith is not a spiritual blindness," Thomas Oden rightly explains, "but a spiritual seeing."92 To prohibit it from epistemology is to willingly prohibit one of our most unique and important of human gifts.

Bibliography:

1 William James, The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956), 90.
2 Supported by Boghossian, et al.
3 Supported by Timothy McGrew, William Lane Craig, et al.
4 Peter Boghossian, A Manual for Creating Atheists (Durham, NC: Pitchstone Publishing, 2013), 23.
5 Boghossian, Ibid., 24.
6 The root of which is אמן, "amen".
7 Proverbs 12:17, "Whoever speaks truth (א הנומ) gives honest evidence, but a false witness utters deceit." ESV. See also Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 33:4; Psalm 40:10; 89:49; 96:13; 98:3; 100:5; 119:30; Proverbs 12:17; Isaiah 25:1; Isaiah 59:4; Jeremiah 5:1, 3; 7:28; 9:3; passim.
8 Isaiah 33:6, "[The Lord] will be the stability (א תנומ) of your times", ESV.
9 Kings 12:15, "they did not ask for an accounting from the men into whose hand they delivered the money to pay out to the workmen, for they dealt honestly (ב.א מ הנ)." ESV.
10 "The faith you think of is the faith defined by the schoolboy when he said, 'Faith is when you believe something that you know ain't true.'" William James, The Will to Believe, 29.
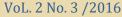11 "'a priori' typically connotes a kind of knowledge or justification that does not depend on evidence." Paul

Moser, ed. Edward Craig, Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy (London: Routledge, 2000), 1.

12 "All faith is belief on the basis of insufficient evidence. That's what makes it faith. If one had evidence, one wouldn't need faith, one would merely present the evidence." Boghossian, Ibid., 165 and passim.

13 Even belief with evidence does not guarantee knowledge. But for the sake of argument, let us grant that belief with evidence (which, as we shall see, is an elusive term) is more reliable than belief without evidence.

14 Underdetermined propositions, for example, almost always pass through (1). One thinks of historical scientific propositions such as heliocentricism, in which "evidence" cannot establish one proposition over another. Rather, one gives assent to some proposition, then seeks for it the state of (2). But a proposition which falls into category (1) is by no means necessarily a "failed" or "faulty" epistemology.

15 So Augustine, "Crede, ut intelligas" – faith seeking understanding, Sermon 43.7, 9; St. Anselm – "fides quaerens intellectum" – I believe so that I may understand, in Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 87.

16 Thus Oxford philosopher and historian RG Collingwood, "when we try to define 'evidence' … we find it very difficult." The Idea of History (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 279.

17 For which, technically speaking, few philosophers will grant is attainable.

18 Subjective knowledge, such as "I am thinking of the number seven", seems to be knowledge, but lacks objective demonstration.

19 See Thomas Reid, On The Intellectual Powers of Man, Essay II, Ch. XX, for a fuller discussion.

20 Thomas Reid, Ibid.

21 See also, Joung Park, "The Anatomy of Faith," Revisions: A Journal of Christian Perspective 3, no.1 (Fall 2006): 18.

22 Related to Agrippa's Trilemma. See for example Duncan Pritchard, What is This Thing Called Knowledge? (New York: Routledge, 2010), 33.

23 Such as the philosophical minority of Pascal, Kierkegaard, or perhaps Wittgenstein.

24 Boghossian, Ibid, 30.

25 Alvin Plantinga, Warranted Christian Belief (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), xii.

26 Boghossian, Ibid, 29.

27 "Faith is not an epistemological category. It is not a way of knowing something. Faith is a way of trusting something," Craig continues in response to Boghossian. "Faith is trusting in that which you have reason to believe is true." http://www.reasonablefaith.org/a-manual-for-creating-atheists#ixzz3HjpT4lGT, accessed 10/31/2014.

28 "Faith, which is the proper principle of [belief], must needs reside in the intellect." Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Pt. II-II, Q. 4, Art. 2.

29 "Faith is a kind of certainty of the mind in things absent, established beyond opinion and short of knowledge." Hugh of Saint Victor, De Sacramentis Christianæ Fidei, Book I, Part X. See Roy J. Deferrari, Hugh of Saint Victor on the Sacraments of the Christian Faith (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 167.

30 "Faith believes … [in] things not seen." St. Augustine, Enchiridion, Ch. 2, 7.

31 William James, The Will to Believe, 90. Emphasis mine.

32 William Alston, Perceiving God: The Epistemology of Religious Experience (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 146-250. See also Alvin Plantinga's "faith is a belief-producing process" in Warranted Christian Belief (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 256. See also "Belief, Faith, Acceptance, and Hope" (Ch. 3) in Robert Audi, Rationality and Religious Commitment (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

33 "Faith is a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence towards us."John Calvin, Institutes III, ii, 7.

34 "Faith is a really special case of knowledge... Faith is not to be contrasted with knowledge: faith … is knowledge." Plantinga, Warranted Christian Belief, ibid. Emphasis Plantinga's. See also Alvin Plantinga, Where the Conflict Really Lies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 178.

35 Which Boghossian seems to endorse. See Boghossian, Ibid., 247.

36 In the Carnapian sense, where two sentences are isomorphic when they exhibit logical equivalence. Rudolph Carnap, Meaning and Necessity (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1947), 56-59.

37 Robert Audi, Rationality and Religious Commitment, 58-60.

38 Manuel Vasquez, Philosophy: A Text with Readings, Eleventh Edition (Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2011), 371.

39 1 Peter 3:15. See also Acts 22:1; Philippians 1:7, 16; 1 Corinthians 9:3; 2 Corinthians 7:11, 2 Timothy 4:16; passim.

40 Philippians 1:16.

41 Boghossian, Ibid., 247.

42 William Alston in Epistemic Justification: Essays in the Theory of Knowledge (New York: Cornell University Press, 1989), 83.

43 Ie extra-biblical attestation, the empty tomb, the post-resurrection appearances, etc.

44 Boghossian cites the miracle of Jesus walking on water in Matthew 14:22-27. This citation is a bit confused, as not much hinges on the historicity of this event, save for perhaps biblical inerrancy. But to make his point, we may consider in his stead the Resurrection, which is of utter importance to Christianity.

45 David Braddon-Mitchell and Frank Jackson in Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 82.

46 Steven L. Porter, Restoring the Foundations of Epistemic Justification: a Direct Realist and Conceptualist Theory of Foundationalism (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006), 20.

47 "The whole defence of religious faith hinges upon action." James, The Will to Believe, 29.

48 "Faith is acting on what one has good reason to believe is true." http://www.premierchristianradio.com/Shows/Saturday/Unbelievable/Episodes/Peter-Boghossian-vs-Tim- McGrew-A-manual-for-creating-atheists, accessed 10/31/2014. Emphasis mine.

49 Boghossian, Ibid, 210. Emphasis his.

50 See for example Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 662-663.

51 Psalm 37:3; Proverbs 28:20; Deuteronomy 32:4, passim. Also Security or Stability (Isaiah 33:6); Steadiness (Exodus 17:12); Faithfulness in fulfilling promises (Psalm 37:3; Habakkuk 2:4).

52 James 2:19, NIV. Emphasis mine. All scripture hereafter is quoted in the NIV.

53 See also Joshua 22:16, in which "faith" equates to obeying God, and breaking faith equates to disobeying God. Both presume prior belief in God's existence.

54 James 2:22. Emphasis mine.

55 James 2:17.

56 James 2:23; see also Genesis 15:6. Emphasis mine.

57 See Robert Audi, Rationality and Religious Commitment, 71.

58 See his Enchridion, Ch. 2, 7.

59 See John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book II, Ch. 8, 16; Phillip Melancthon, Loci Communesn8 (CR 21:743); Martin Luther, "A Brief Explanation of the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer", Werke, vol. 7, 25, etc.

60 See his The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956).

61 See his Warranted Christian Belief (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

62 Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, Book II, Ch. 2.

63 More precisely, the "virtues of thought" and the "virtues of character". Aristotle, Ibid., Book II, Ch. 1.

64 Boghossian, Ibid, 80.

65 Boghossian, Ibid, 209.

66 Let us assume for sake of simplicity that "good reason" inherently carries the avoidance of morally wrong behavior. Trusting in a person or proposition whose offer is morally wrong is clearly not virtuous (nor presumably "good reason").

67 Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Pt. II-I, Q. 57, Art. 2.

68 Thomas Aquinas, Ibid., Pt. II-II, Q. 1, Art. 4.

69 Boghossian, Ibid, 209.

70 The so-called "faculty approach" seen in Aristotle's De Anima, Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, John Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Thomas Reid's Inquiry into the Human Mind, Rene Descartes' Rules for the Direction of the Mind, etc.

71 Isaiah 43:10.

72 Isaiah 40:31.

73 Isaiah 13:20.

74 Ie, Isaiah believed the proposition, the proposition not only came to pass but continues to come to pass today, and, for the Judeo-Christian, Isaiah had good reasons for his faith-belief.

75 One may counter that not every one of us is expected to receive knowledge in the manner of the prophets. But again, a Biblical (Christian) model will suggest something otherwise. The Christian, practicing virtuous faith, is guaranteed guidance "into all truth" (John 14:26, 16:13). This accepted, it is difficult to see how one could be guided into truth yet lack new knowledge. In one manner or another, new knowledge (among many other traits) ought to characterize the transformed Christian life. See also Isaiah 11:2-3.

76 Boghossian, Ibid., 15, 17, 18, 23, 31, 32, passim.

77 Plantinga, Where the Conflict Really Lies, 46.

78 Plantinga, Where the Conflict Really Lies, 46. Thomas Reid goes so far as to ask, "Why, sir, should I believe the faculty of reason more than that of perception – they came both out of the same shop." An Inquiry into the Human Mind, ed. T. Duggan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 207.

79 "No effort of will is needed; no powers of attention or reasoning, no activities of formulating propositions are involved." Alston, The Epistemology of Religious Experience, 16.

80 James, Varieties, 248.

81 Ibid, 397.

82 James, Varieties, 109.

83 Boghossian, Ibid., 31.

84 Alston, The Epistemology of Religious Experience., 170.

85 Boghossian, Ibid., 31.

86 The coherentist, of course (such as the presuppositionalist), may find this circularity perfectly acceptable. But let us ignore this in virtue of showing that justification exists for virtually all epistemologies.

87 Boghossian, Ibid.

88 Alston, Ibid, 170.

89 Alston, Ibid.

90 James, Varieties, 498-499, 502.

91 Ie, the phenomenologist. But also the innumerable score of humanity that has shared in this common experience, knowledge of which unites a person's life experiences into a cohesive whole, somehow seems mo re "real" than other knowledge, heals broken lives, gives deep insight into matters otherwise unexamined, etc.

92 Thomas Oden, Classic Christianity (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 598.