

# Where does religious faith come from?

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The idea of religious faith is a dominant theme of western religion — Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In this context, faith refers to a source of knowledge about the respective religion.

If you ask a believer how they know that their religion is true, the answer will eventually come down to faith. They know that their religion is true because they have faith that it is true; their faith provides them knowledge that their religion is true.

Augustine (354-430) made a famous statement that expresses this theme:

***Seek not to understand that you may believe, but believe that you may understand.***

[http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Augustine\\_of\\_Hippo#Quotes](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Augustine_of_Hippo#Quotes)

In this scheme, a person believes in the religion through faith — through direct insight — and then uses reason to help them understand why the religion is true. In this scheme, reason is subordinate to faith, so reason can't invalidate the results of faith. Reason is useful only to the extent that it validates the results of faith.

In this context, the following question emerges:

***Where does religious faith come from?***

## **Meeting format**

At the meeting, we'll consider what everyone has to say about this question. During the discussion, I'll contribute by presenting my theory of mind to explain where religious faith comes from and what its proper role is in our thinking and in our decision-making.

For the interested reader, I present the main facets of my theory of mind in the following meeting agenda:

***How does our mind work?***

<http://www.meetup.com/Why-human-life-makes-sense/events/138613022>