

Don't All Religions Basically Teach The Same Thing?

Many people wonder why Christians make such a fuss about Jesus Christ, and Christianity being the only way to the presence of the Creator God.

People look at many different religions and **assume** that they are all talking about the same God but explaining Him and His teaching in different ways.

People say *“Are not all different religious groups, Christians, Mormons, Buddhists, etc. experiencing the same God, yet explaining this experience in different ways?”*

Thus can't they all be true, but with each giving a different emphasis?

When we assume that all religions are experiencing the same God, this in fact cannot be true.

Christianity and Islam cannot both be true at the same time, neither can Mormonism and Buddhism both be correct simultaneously, nor can Christian Science and Hinduism.

Why?

Because they teach many things completely opposite from one another.

They all may be wrong, but certainly they all cannot be right, for the claims of one will exclude the other.

As to the matter of salvation, life after physical death, only historical Christianity accepts Jesus Christ as the Eternal God becoming a human being, who died for the sins of all humanity and rose again on the third day.

Salvation according to Christianity is only by putting our trust and faith in this Jesus.

Hebrews 5:7-9 [NIV] *“During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.”*

Jesus is the source of eternal salvation, **no** other being.

The Jesus of Islam is **not** the Son of God who died for the sins of the world.

The Jesus of Mormonism or Christian Science is **not** the same Jesus as revealed in the Christian Bible.

Ephesians 2:8-9 [NIV] *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no-one can boast.”*

All religions, other than Christianity, teach we are saved by works of some sort, differing in each one according to the teaching of their leaders or founders.

We can easily observe that we are dealing with religions that are **not** compatible with one another even though many religions seem to be the same on the surface, a closer look at their central teachings reveal great differences.

It is totally incorrect to say that all religions are worshipping the same God.

The God of the Christians is **not** the same God as that of the Mormons, Muslims or Christian Scientists.

If the God of the Christian Bible is the only true God, then the other gods are non-existent and should **not** be worshipped.

Let us examine the teaching of some of the world's religions, and contrast them with Christianity.

What are some of the differences between Christianity and the eastern religions?

The God of eastern thought is impersonal, while the God of the Christian Bible is personal.

John 14:8-11 [NIV] *“Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? **Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.** How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.”*

Jesus the Son of Man who is a person and the very image of God the Father.

In some eastern religions, God is everything and everything is God.

Isaiah 55:8-9 [NIV] *“**For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,**” declares the LORD. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”*

The God of the Christian Bible is independent of His creation, even humans who are the pinnacle of that creation.

One of the basic concepts of eastern thought is that of material illusion [Maya in Hindu], the material world is an illusion, and sin is nothing but ignorance about the fact of this illusion.

The Christian Bible teaches that the world has objective reality, and sin, far from being mere ignorance about the very real, infinite God.

Psalms 51:1 [NIV] *“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my **transgressions.**”*

“Transgressions” – Hebrew “*pasha*” meaning rebellion.

Psalms 51:2-3 [NIV] *“Wash away all my **iniquity** and cleanse me from my **sin.** For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.”*

“Iniquity” – Hebrew “*āvon*” meaning perverseness from the root word meaning crooked or bent out of shape.

“Sin” – Hebrew “*chātā*” meaning to miss the mark aimed at.

Psalms 51:4 [NIV] *“**Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.**”*

“Evil” – Hebrew “*rā’a*” – meaning to be wickedly injurious to others.

All sin is against the character and holiness of God.

The law of karma is an intricate belief in many of the eastern religions. Good karma or good works is the way a person will be delivered from the cycle of rebirth, while bad karma will result in a person being reborn in a lower form than the previous life.

Salvation, of a sort, based on works.

The Christian Bible teaches that deeds are not even considered in the matters of eternal salvation.

Titus 3:4-7 [NIV] *“But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.”*

We are saved as a result of God’s love and mercy, not by any righteous works we may have done.

Ephesians 2:8-10 [NIV] *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no-one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

Good works do have a place in the life of a Christian, they are part of the life of one who has **already** been saved by grace.

The idea of continuous rebirths is **not** found in the Christian Bible, there is **no** second or third chance of perfection.

The scriptures in the Christian Bible teach us that each person is unique, **not** part of everything, and after death they will be accountable for their life in a time of judgement.

Hebrews 9:27 [NIV] *“Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,”*

Human history has **no** purpose or meaning to the eastern mind, life is a never-ending struggle.

The Christian Bible portrays a supernatural God, who is working towards the ultimate goal of setting up His Eternal Kingdom.

In some eastern religions drugs are part of worship, opening up the human mind to the influence of evil spirits.

1 Peter 5:8-9 [NIV] *“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.”*

The Christian Bible insists that we resist the influence of Satan and his demons.

There are many other differences between the eastern religious thought and Christianity.

There are a few similarities of a superficial nature but a lack of any meaningful correspondence between the two.

Is Islam compatible with Christianity?

As with all world religions, there are tremendous differences between Biblical Christianity and Islam.

A closer examination of the two faiths will find their beliefs are incompatible.

The Jews believe and put their faith in the Old Covenant.

Christians put their faith in Jesus Christ who is the God of both Old and the New Covenant that He introduced and ratified by His own personal blood sacrifice on the cross.

What are the beliefs of Islam?

Muslims believe and put their faith in the Quran, [also known as Koran], a book containing the supposed revelations given to Muhammad.

Muhammad's followers wrote this book shortly after his death.

To Muslims, the Quran is God's last word to the world.

The Quran states that both Old and New Testaments are likewise divinely inspired, but have been altered by Christians and Jews.

Where there is conflict between the Christian Bible, Old or New Testament, the Bible is wrong and the Quran is correct. The Quran is the final authority [Sura 33:40].

Islam's basic teaching, called the Islamic creed, consists of five basic beliefs, found throughout the Quran.

- 1 There is no god, but Allah.
- 2 Angels are messengers of Allah [this concept does differ slightly to the view of the Christian Bible.]
- 3 Muslims believe that Allah has revealed himself through the Old Testament and the gospels [though **not** believing them to be accurate, only when they agree with the Quran.] Only the Quran is totally trusted by Muslims.
- 4 **Islam also holds a strong belief in the prophets, Muhammad being the greatest since he was sent to the entire world. Jesus is viewed as a prophet sent only to the Jews.**
- 5 There is great emphasis in Islam concerning the Day of Judgement.

All humans will be judged according to their works.

Muslims will enter paradise [though some must first be purged of their sins.]

All non-Muslims will be condemned for ever to a pit of fire.

Muslims view God as an absolute deity whose will is law.

God is unknowable in a personal sense, thus the goal of Islam is to obey Allah, not to know him.

A complete contrast to Christianity which has the goal of an intimate relationship with our Creator God.

John 17:3 [NIV] *“Now **this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.**”*

The Greek word translated “*know*” is the same that is used for the intimate relationship between a husband and wife in marriage.

The major contrast between Islam and Christianity is the status of Jesus Christ and His character.

Quran – Sura 19:92 *“Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, was no more than an apostle of God.”*

In contrast read:-

John 1:1-4, 14 [NIV] *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men.” ... “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

Jesus Christ is the very Son of God.

John 14:9 [NIV] *“Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”*

We only have to look at Jesus Christ to be able to know God.

Hebrews 1:3 [NIV] *“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”*

Far more than an “apostle of God.”

The Quran speaking of the death of Jesus Christ states “they neither killed or crucified Him, it had only the appearance of it.”

This is in total denial of all the historical witness to Christ’s death and resurrection.

Luke 23:33 [NIV] *“When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals, one on his right, the other on his left.”*

Christ was crucified before many witnesses.

Luke 23:46-48 [NIV] *“Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last. The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, “Surely this was a righteous man.” When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away.”*

A death that was witnessed by many.

Islam teaches that Jesus was born miraculously from Mary, but do **not** believe the Biblical virgin birth.

Islam believes that Jesus was created by God in the womb of Mary, just as Adam was created out of the dust of the earth.

In contrast read:-

Luke 1:26-33 [NIV] *“In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.” Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be*

called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; his kingdom will never end.”

The Son of God became a human being through being born to a virgin. How?

Luke 1:35 [NIV] *“The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and **the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”***

Through the impregnation of the very Holy Spirit to give life to an ovum in the body of Mary, creating in her a human who was also God.

Islam teaches a salvation by works.

Quran – Sura 13:102-140 *“... they whose balances shall be heavy shall be blessed. But they whose balances shall be light, they shall lose their soul, abiding in hell for ever...”*

If life’s scale tips in favour of good works, the Muslim will reach paradise but if this is not the case he will be banished to hell.

In contrast read:-

Ephesians 2:8-10 [NIV] *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no-one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

We are saved by faith in God’s grace, depicted in the cleansing sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ.

It is only out of gratitude for this salvation through Jesus Christ that we seek to do good works.

Romans 12:1-2 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

As an act of gratitude to God for what He has done for us, we yield our whole body, mind and spirit for Him to mould into a being that will bring Him pleasure.

Titus 3:3-7 [NIV] *“At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. **But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.”***

It is only the love and kindness of God that brings salvation to us, freely given through faith in what He has done for us in Jesus Christ.

A major problem with accepting Muhammad’s account of how we receive salvation is that his testimony is 600 years after the events that bring us salvation occurred.

The New Testament contains eyewitness or firsthand testimony of the life, death and resurrection of the only One who can save us and offer us eternal life, Jesus Christ the Son of God and Son of Man.

John 6:28-29 [NIV] *“Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” Jesus answered, **“The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”***

Jesus gave a very clear and simple answer to the question, *“What works does God require of us?”*

Simply faith in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

The saving faith in the words of Jesus Christ, who is alive and the only Son of God and faith in the Muhammad's words, a human being who is now dead, will never be compatible.