

Major World Religion Cross-Comparison Summary

Here is a summary of the major points of belief for each of the following major world religions. I acknowledge that it is difficult to every show every point that might cover every potential cross-comparison question that might arise in a spiritual discussion. This menu is simply focusing on a macro-summary of the differences and similarities between the religions so healthy conversations can be fostered on clear information in an easy compared, visual way. Sourcing in part has been provided by www.gotquestions.org, as well as pastoral input and my personal research/learning.

Christians	Jewish (Judaism)	Muslims (Islam)	Buddhists	Hindus
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Founded 1st Century AD. 2. The Holy Bible is scripture that is God breathed and recorded by a multitude of appointed men. 3. God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son to the world to teach and save it (Jesus Christ). 4. There is only one true God who created the heavens and the earth. 5. Jesus Christ was present at creation. 6. The Holy Spirit was left behind in the absence of Jesus after he was crucified and ascended to heaven. The Holy Spirit is seen as our active & on-going connection with God. 7. Belief in the trinity (God the Father, Jesus Christ his son, & the Holy Spirit) as the same God represented in 3 forms. 8. It is by God's grace and love alone (not any good works that person can do during their life) that we are given life today. 9. The opportunity to receive his gift of salvation as well as a hope of a life in heaven with God for eternity is found by accepting Jesus as a person's Lord and savior of their life. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Jew is described as "a member of the tribe of Judah," "an Israelite," -a nation existing in Palestine from the 6th century B.C. to the 1st century A.D.," 2. Are 5 main forms/sects of Judaism today - differ dramatically. 3. Traditional Beliefs include: God is the creator of all that exists; He is one, incorporeal (without a body), He alone is to be worshipped as ruler of the universe. 4. The first five books of the Hebrew Bible (the Torah) were revealed to Moses by God. They will not be changed in the future. 5. They believe God rewards individuals for good deeds and punishes evil. 6. Jews generally consider that spiritual beliefs come from actions (works) vs. actions being a result of one's faith or spiritual belief like Christians believe. 7. Jewish belief does not accept the Christian concept of original sin. 8. They can sanctify their lives and draw closer to God by fulfilling mitzvot (divine commandments). 9. They do not believe Jesus was the Messiah, beliefs about him vary, and the Messiah is yet to come. Jerusalem Temple of A.D. 70 will be rebuilt. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Founded 7th Century AD 2. Allah is the only true God 3. Muhammad was Allah's prophet. 4. Simply stating these beliefs you convert to Islam 5. Islam rejects the concept of the trinity 6. Islam does believe in one God and accepts certain portions of the bible such as the law and the gospels. 7. Islam asserts that Jesus, though born of a virgin, was created as Adam, from the dust of the earth. 8. Muslims do not believe Jesus was resurrected from the dead. 9. Islam teaches paradise is gained through good works and obedience to the Qur'an (their holy book). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Buddhists believe that the ultimate goal of life is to achieve "enlightenment" as they perceive it. 2. Buddhism was founded by Siddhartha Guatama (Buddha), who was born into royalty in India around 600 B.C. 3. Classical Buddhism, tends to be silent on the reality of an ultimate being and is there considered atheistic. 4. There are many schools of Buddhism that differ in ways from classical Buddhism. 5. The Buddha never considered himself to be a God, rather the "way-shower" for others. 6. It holds that sin is an impersonable and fixable error, not the depravity of mankind. 7. Buddha was silent about the creation of the universe because they believe there is an endless cycle of life and death and no beginning or end. 8. Nirvana is the highest state of being that is sought to be achieved. 9. The Buddha taught that people do not have individual souls, the individual self or ego is an illusion. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diverse forms of this religion that can have millions of Gods. 2. Brahma is the one supreme God however. 3. It is difficult to summarize the Hindu religion because there are so many various schools of thought that make it tough to define in a singular and consistent way. 4. Any belief system is rejected by Hinduism if it doesn't embrace Indian culture at some extent. 5. The spiritual goal of a Hindu is to become one with Brahma, thus ceasing to exist in its illusory form of "individual self". 6. Belief is that you will be repeatedly reincarnated in order that he/she may work towards self-realization. 7. Recognition of Vedas (most sacred book) qualifies any version of a Hindu belief system as truly Hindu.



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"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed." Proverbs 15:22 (NIV)