

Christianity, Cults and Religions

One of the greatest ways to start off in this profound study is to make sure you are solid and completely founded on the principles of Christianity. The following are awesome and excellent material pertaining to Jesus Christianity and the Christian Faith.

1. Jesus was born of a virgin.
2. Jesus was God in human flesh.
3. Jesus is a second person of the Holy Trinity.
4. God is one God manifested in three persons.
5. Jesus lived a sinless life on Earth.
6. Jesus died as a sacrifice for the sins of the world.
7. Three days after his death, Jesus rose bodily from the grave.
8. Jesus ascended into heaven 50 days after his resurrection.
9. Jesus now sits at the right hand of the father, interceding for believers.
10. Jesus will one day return bodily to planet Earth and judge the living and the dead.
11. Jesus will establish his eternal kingdom here on Earth.
12. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead.

Definition of the word Cult

A cult is a perversion or a distortion of biblical Christianity and or a rejection of the historic teachings of the Christian Faith. It is a group of people polarized around someone's interpretation of the Bible and is characterized by major deviations from Orthodox Christianity relative to the cardinal (main, chief, important) doctrines of the Christian faith, especially the fact that God became man in Jesus Christ.

What God says about people who do not accept the chief doctrines of Christ.

Read the following:

- a. 1st John 4:1-3
- b. 2nd John 7-11

Characteristics of a Cult

1. They always have new truth, many Cults promote the idea that God has revealed something only special to them. Usually a truth that has never been revealed and supersedes and contradicts all previous Revelations- Isaiah 8:20. For example, Louis Farrakhan teaches that the historical Jesus is not the Messiah. He also said historically Jesus is only a type or shallow of the real Jesus. These are new concepts from Farrakhan that are used to seduce and deceive black Christians. If a person's teaching is inconsistent with scripture, it is not of God.
2. Cults have a non-biblical source of Authority or extra biblical revelation- they usually have some so-called sacred writings or source of authority that supersedes the Bible, including so called Lost Books of the Bible. Revelations 22:18,19, Gal1:8,9, Heb 1:2.
3. Most Cults teach scripture that is radically different from what the Bible teaches. They would take the Bible and read the words of the Bible to make them say what they want them to say. Cults take the Bible and the words of the Bible and teach everything but the literal and the contextual meanings of scripture.
4. Most Cults hate Christianity. The cult leader will say they believe one thing publicly, but internally believe something completely different. Initially they will say just what you want them to say, so they can get you into the groups. Then the brainwashing begins. They will many times change your name, your children's names, and have you to wear certain specific clothes and make men grow beards etc. Many of them would eventually draw you away from your relatives and your immediate family.

5. Read Rev 1:14. They will try to make Jesus out to be a black man, when according to the flesh, scripture clearly shows Jesus was a Jew, of the tribe of Judah. **We all know, Jesus came from heaven, born of a virgin and his father was the Father God**. They completely misinterpret scripture when it says his hair was write like wool. Well, that was Jesus's gloried body and they fail to cover the rest of this identification according to revelation.

6. Many cults out-right deny the Holy Trinity. That's one God manifested himself in 3 three persons.

7. Many cult members will learn one doctrine that they teach and then all of a sudden find that the doctrine has been changed or contradicted by some further revelation that needs to be added. This has been the case with many Jehovah Witnesses.

8. Many cults preach that salvation is gained through works only. That's a contradiction of the Bible; the scripture says clearly that we are saved by the amazing Grace of God through Faith; not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8,9.

9. Many of the Cults declare and decree abominable heresies; they deny the Lord that brought them, they speak evil of the way of Truth, they despise government and authorities, they are not afraid to speak evil against dignitaries and they have eyes full of adultery. **Example**, Malcolm X left the Nation of Islam because he found that his mentor, founder, and prophet was an adulterer who had fathered several children with at least 13 young women. His leader was guilty of the very thing he taught them not to do.

10. Many cult leaders claim of special visitations and discoveries; they will talk of some inside Revelation or Discovery. Joseph Smith is credited to finding and discovering some books in the ground from an angel, for Mormons. Muhammad was quoted as having a visitation in a cave, by an Angel to write the Quran between 500 -600 AD, Etc.

11. Most cults take one verse out of context and begin to build a teaching on that verse that is completely erroneous. It is the practice of paying attention to (1) verse of scripture of the Bible to the exclusion of others. It's building a doctrine on (1) one verse without considering the immediate context an whole book of the Bible as the counsel of God.

Jesus and Christianity

What you might not know

The greatness of being a Christians and it's benefits. It will bring a strong sense of confidence and satisfaction with whatever level growth you are at.

Jesus Christ is undeniably the greatest man who ever lived. He changed every aspect of human life and history.

Rev 21:5 He says himself "Behold, I make all things New"

Is 11:1-5 Describes Jesus (Awesome)

Matt 13:31,32 Read It, Speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven (God's Reigns)
Jesus became the tree that the world has come and made it's nest in and finds shelter . The parable also refers to Christianity.

Everything he touched he transformed. He touched time when he was born into this world. His birthday altered the way we measure time.

Isn't it ironic the whole world counts time as (BC) Before Christ and (AD) Anno Domini meaning in the year of our Lord.

Even the Atheist Soviet Union was forced to acknowledge in it's own constitution that it came into existence **In the year of our Lord 1917.**

Jesus preached 3 ½ years around the countryside of Israel and now we have approximately 2 billion Christians around the world.

Nations crumble, thrones pass away but Jesus and the church remains and stands.

Matt 16:18 Jesus says upon the revelation that He is the Christ. He says emphatically upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Despite the humble origins of Christianity, the church has made more changes on earth for God than any other movement or force in History. Here are some of the positive **Contributions Christianity has made through the Centuries**, here are a few highlights :

- 1) Hospitals, which essentially began during the Middle Ages (500-1500) and so on.
- 2) Universities, which also began during the Middle ages (Most of the worlds greatest universities were started by Christians for Christian purposes)
- 3) Literacy and education for the masses. *Underdeveloped Countries and Communist , those that are run by evil leadership (many would not agree to educate) Bush People;* (Christianity is the Cause for :
- 4) Capitalism and free Enterprises. Promoted by Christianity
- 5) Representative Government, particularly as it has been seen in the American experiment.
- 6) Separation of political powers.
- 7) Civil Liberties introduced by those of the Christian faith - freedoms of speech, freedoms from governmental interference, Bill of Rights
- 8) The abolishment of Slavery

- 9) Modern Science (but we have always wanted it to stay in the context of God being the creator.
- 10) The discovery of the New World. (Christopher Columbus)
- 11) The very elevation of the common man and the common woman exist because of the values of Christianity. (Everybody is and can be somebody)
- 12) Benevolence and charity, the Good Samaritan ethics.
- 13) Higher standards of Justice. (Christianity is the Cause for)
- 14) The condemnation of adultery, homosexuality, and other sexual perversions. This has helped preserve the human race and has spared many from heartache. (Christianity is the Cause for this)
- 15) The civilization of many barbaric and primitive cultures.
- 16) The codifying and setting to writing of many of the worlds languages.
- 17) Greater development of Arts, Music, and Christianity has been the primary goal of some of the greatest works of Art. (Last Supper)
- 18) The countless changed lives transformed from liabilities, into assets to societies because of the gospel.
- 19) The eternal Salvation of countless Souls. This is also the primary goal of Christianity. All other benefits listed are a by-product when Christianity is applied in daily living.

Human Life

1) Prior to the coming of Christ human life was cheap and expendable. In many parts of the worlds before Christianity was penetrated, life was cheap. Rev 21:5 I will make all things new. Jesus place value on human life. As we abandon our Christian heritage, life as you well know is becoming cheap once again. Gen 1:27 we are made in God's Image. Before the Jews came into the promise land of Canaan it was commonplace to sacrifice children to idol Gods. Baal and Ashtoreth prophets did the same. Gladiators were slaves of Rome who fought to the death. Evolution values a human being on the level of an animal. In Christianity life is sacred. Half of the ancient Roman Empire were slaves and two thirds of Athens were slaves.

2) The leading practitioners of the Underground Railroad was the Quakers.

When Jesus took upon himself the form of a man, He imbued (penetrated) mankind with a dignity and inherent value that had never been dreamed of before. When one would read about the innumerable (small) incidents in the life of Christ, We would have never dreamed that they were the little things that would transform the history of mankind.

Whether you know it or not everyone has a direct impact on other people's lives.

Leading Anti –Christians – Nietzsche (18th Century Atheist Philosopher)
Freud, Hitler, Robert Ingersoll, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Madalyn Murray
O’Hare, Phil Donahue, ACLU, Anti Christians pas and present .

We have had many great contributions to the World but we have had some that were not good. The Sins of the church include Crusaders, The Inquisition and the Anti – Semitism by the Church.

Jesus turned the world right side up. :

Worked as a carpenter until the age of thirty

Three years as an itinerant preacher.

Never literally wrote a book

Never held an office

Never had his own family

Never own a home

Never went to college

Never visited big city

Never travelled 200 miles away from where he was born

He never did the thing that we contribute to greatness

Never had any credentials of Himself

Yet, Jesus is the Central figure of the Human Race

All the armies that ever marched , All the Navy’s that ever sailed, Out of all the parliaments, All the Kings that ever reigned put together have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that one solitary(without companions) life. The Bible says :

He is the Second Adam I Cor 15:45, who reconnected us with God.

Almighty Rev 1:18

Alpha and Omega Rev 1:8 ; 22:13

Advocate I John 2:1 Acts as my defense, support, justifies me and vindicates me

Angel of God's Presence Is 63:9

Arm of the Lord Is 51:9

Author and Finisher of my Faith Heb 12:2

Bread of Life John 6:35

Captain of the Lord of Host Josh 5:14 Jehovah Nissi – Standard , Victory , Fights on our behalf.

Desire of all Nations Hag 2:7

Emmanuel Is 7:14 Matt 1:23 God with us , Titus 2:13, I John 5:20

Eternal Life I John 1:2 , 2:20

Everlasting Father Is 9:6

Glory of the Lord Is 40:5

Great High Priest Heb 4:14

I Am Ex 3:14 , John 8:58

Jehovah Is 26:4 (Self- Existing One, My Confidence)

King of Kings I Tim 6:15, Rev 17:14

Lord of All ---Acts 10:26

The Way, Truth, and The Life John 14:6

Prince of Peace Is 9:6 Son of God Luke 1:35, John 1:49 (Jehovah Shalom)

Word of God Rev 19:3

Wisdom Proverbs 8:12 Righteousness, , Sanctification and Redemption

Wonderful Is 9:6

This is why we honor, adore, magnify, exalt, and worship Him Only.

Christianity brings ethics and morality into the world

After Christianity, a person's life has become valuable and not cheap and expendable (Royalty- I Pet 2:9, Rev 1:6 5:10)

Thank God He chose us and ordained us. God has called you to be part of this wonderful life that he offers. You have been chosen for this generation; that's why you are here.

John 15:16; Jer 1:5 ; Is 43: 7

Christian, It is very good to be one.

Amp Is 45:19 I have not spoken in secret , in a corner of the land of darkness; I did not call the descendants of Jacob(to a fruitless service) saying Seek me for nothing , but I promised them a just reward, I the Lord speak righteousness, (the truth) – trust worthiness, straight forward correspondence between deeds and words, I declare things that are right.

Subject: Cults and Religions

Mormonism (Latter-day Saints)

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Joseph Smith, Jr. (1805-1844), founded the church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints in 1830 in New York, Headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Key Writings

The Book of Mormon; Doctrine and Covenants; Pearl of a Great Price; the Bible (King James Version only or Smith's "Inspired Version"); authoritative teachings of Mormon prophets and other LDS "general authorities."

Who is God?

God the Father was once a man, but became God. He has a physical body, as does his wife (Heavenly Mother). No Trinity. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three separate gods. Worthy men may one day become gods themselves.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is a separate god from the Father (Elohim). He was created as a spirit child by the Father and Mother in Heaven, and is the "elder brother" of all men and spirit beings.

His body was created through sexual union between Elohim and Mary. Jesus was married. His death on the cross does not provide full atonement for all sin, but does provide everyone with resurrection.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The “Holy Spirit” is not God, but is an influence or electricity-like emanation from God (also called the “light of Christ”).

How to Be Saved

Resurrected by grace, but saved (exalted to godhood) by works, including faithfulness to church leaders, Mormon baptism, tithing, ordination, marriage, and secret temple rituals. No eternal life without Mormon membership.

What Happens After Death

Eventually nearly everyone goes to one of the three separate heavenly “kingdoms,” with some achieving godhood. Apostates and murderers go to “outer darkness.”

Other Beliefs and Practices

No alcohol, tobacco, coffee, or tea. Baptism on behalf of the dead. Two-year missionary commitment encouraged. Door-to-door proselytizing. Secret temple rituals available only to members in good standing. Extensive social network. People of African ancestry not granted full access to Mormon priesthood and privileges until 1978.

Jehovah's Witnesses (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society)

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916), later Joseph F. Rutherford. Began 1879 in Pennsylvania. Headquarters in Brooklyn, New York.

Key Writings

All current Watchtower publications, including the Bible (New World Translation only), Reasoning from the Scriptures, You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth, Watchtower and Awake! Magazines

Who is God?

One-person God, called Jehovah. No Trinity. Jesus is the first thing Jehovah created.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is not God. Before he lived on earth, he was Michael, the archangel. Jehovah made the universe through him. On earth he was a man who lived a perfect life. After dying on a stake (not a cross), he was resurrected as a spirit; his body was destroyed. Jesus is not coming again; he "returned" invisibly in 1914 in spirit. Very soon, he and the angels will destroy all non-Jehovah's Witnesses.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Impersonal "holy spirit" is not God, but rather an invisible, active force from Jehovah

How to Be Saved

Be baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses. Most followers must earn everlasting life on earth by "door-to-door work." Salvation in heaven is limited to 144,000 "anointed ones." This number is already reached.

What Happens After Death

The 144,000 live as spirits in heaven. The rest of the righteous, “the great crowd,” live on earth, and must obey God perfectly for 1000 years or be annihilated.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Known as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. Meet on Sundays in “Kingdom Halls.” Active members encouraged to distribute literature door-to-door. Once a year, Lord’s Evening Meal; only “anointed” ones may partake. Do not observe holidays or birthdays. Do not vote, salute the flag, work in the military, or accept blood transfusions. Believe Armageddon will occur soon.

Armstrongism

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Herbert W. Armstrong (1892-1986). Founded Worldwide Church Of God (WCG) in 1934. WCG left his beliefs, but splinter groups will follow them.

Key Writings

New groups, often former WCG members, who still follow Armstrong’s traditional teaching produce: The Philadelphia Trumpet magazine, Malachi’s Message, Key of David TV program and others.

Who is God?

One infinite, eternal God. Traditional -Armstrongism denies a Trinity, defining God as a “family of individuals.” However, in 1995, WCG leaders officially accepted a Trinitarian concept of God and now accept biblical beliefs.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is God incarnate (in human form). Armstrong suggested that Jesus would return to earth in 1975. Groups following Armstrong's original teachings (Global, Philadelphia, and United Churches of God) say Jesus was not resurrected physically and that he is the only one who has been born again. WCG believes that Jesus was raised spiritually and physically.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Armstrongism: Holy Spirit is an impersonal force. WCG: Holy Spirit is God, the third person of the Trinity.

How to Be Saved

Salvation is by grace (the unmerited favor of God). Whereas Armstrong followers must recognize Old Testament Sabbath days, feast days, and dietary prohibitions, such as no pork or shellfish, WCG has abandoned these beliefs.

What Happens After Death

Armstrongism: Resurrected believers will live on the new earth. Unsaved will face judgment.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Groups like the Philadelphia Church of God and Church of God International still hold Armstrong's views such as deity for mankind, no immortality of the soul, no literal hell, no medical treatment, and Anglo-Israelism. Since Armstrong's death, WCG, which was formerly very cultic, has undergone many changes toward more biblical views.

Unification Church

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Sun Myung Moon (born 1920). Founded 1954 in South Korea. Current headquarters in New York City.

Key Writings

Divine Principle by Sun Myung Moon, considered the “Completed Testament.” Outline of the Principle, Level 4, and the Bible. (The Bible is “not the truth itself, but a textbook teaching the truth.”)

Who is God?

God is both positive and negative. God created the universe out of himself; the universe is God’s “body.” God does not know the future, is suffering, and needs man (Sun Myung Moon) to make Him happy. No Trinity.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus was the perfect man, not God. He is the son Zechariah, not born of a virgin. His mission was to unite the Jews behind him, find a perfect bride, and begin a perfect family. The mission failed. Jesus did not resurrect physically. The second coming of Christ is fulfilled in Sun Myung Moon, who is superior to Jesus and will finish Jesus’ mission.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is a feminine spirit who works with Jesus in the spirit world to lead people to Sun Myung Moon.

How to Be Saved

Obedience to and acceptance of the True Parents (Moon and his wife) eliminate sin and result in perfection. Those married by Moon and his wife drink a special holy wine containing 21 ingredients (including the True Parents' blood).

What Happens After Death

After death one goes to the spirit world. There is no resurrection. Members advance by convincing others to follow Sun Myung Moon. Everyone will be saved, even Satan.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Mass marriages (recently 30,000 couples), based on different racial backgrounds, arranged and performed by Moon. Members believe that Jesus bows down to Sun Myung Moon and that Moon is the King of Kings, Lord of Lords, and the Lamb of God. Contact with spirits of the dead accepted.

Christian Science

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910). Founded 1839 in Massachusetts. Current headquarters in Boston, Massachusetts.

Key Writings

Science and Health, With Key to the Scriptures; Miscellaneous Writings; Manual of the Mother Church; and other books by Mrs. Eddy. The bible (not as reliable). Christian Science Journal, Christian Science Sentinel, and other writings.

Who is God?

God is an impersonal Principle of life, truth, love, intelligence, and spirit. God is all that truly exists (matter is an illusion)

Who is Jesus?

Jesus was not the Christ, but a man who displayed the Christ idea. ("Christ" means perfection, not a person.) Jesus was not God, and God can never become man or flesh. He did not suffer and could not suffer for sins. He did not die on the cross. He was not resurrected physically. He will not literally come back.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Holy Spirit is defined as the teaching of Christian Science. Impersonal power.

How to Be Saved

Humanity is already eternally saved. Sin, evil, sickness, and death are not real.

What Happens After Death

Death is not real. Heaven and hell are states of mind. The way to reach heaven is by attaining harmony (oneness with God).

Other Beliefs and Practices

Members use Christian Science practitioners instead of doctors. Healing comes from realizing one cannot be sick or hurt and that the body cannot be ill, suffer pain, or die (matter is an illusion). Attracts followers by claims of miraculous healing.

Unity School of Christianity

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Charles (1854-1948) and Myrtle (1845-1931) Fillmore. Founded 1889 in Kansas City, Missouri. Headquarters in Unity Village, Missouri.

Key Writings

Unity magazine, Lessons in Truth, Metaphysical Bible Dictionary, the Bible (not as reliable, interpreted with “hidden” meanings).

Who is God?

Invisible impersonal power. “God” is interchangeable with “Principle,” “Law,” “Being,” “Mind,” “Spirit.” God is in everything, much as the soul is in the body. No Trinity. The spirit is reality; matter is not.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus was a man and not the Christ. Instead, he was a man who had “Christ consciousness.” “Christ” is a state of perfection in every person. Jesus had lived many times before and was in search of his own salvation. Jesus did not die as a sacrifice for anyone’s sins. Jesus did not rise physically and will never return to earth in physical form.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is the law of God in action, “the executive power of both Father and Son.” A “definite” thought in the mind of man.

How to Be Saved

By recognizing that each person is as much a Son of God as Jesus is. There is no evil, no devil, no sin, no poverty, and no old age. A person is reincarnated until he learns these truths and becomes “perfect.”

What Happens After Death

Death is a result of wrong thinking. One moves to a different body (reincarnation) until enlightenment. No literal heaven or hell.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Worship services in unity churches. Counseling and prayer ministry (“Silent Unity”) by phone and mail. It is reported that Unity receives millions of prayer requests annually. Unity devotionals, such as Daily Word, are used by members of other religious groups and churches. Millions of pieces of literature are printed each year.

Spiritualism (Spiritism)

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Ancient belief popularized by sisters Kate and Margaret Fox, 1848, Hydesville, New York. Many small groups, no official headquarters.

Key Writings

Spiritualist Manual, Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ, Oahspe, the Bible (selected portions), and others.

Who is God?

God is infinite intelligence. Impersonal power controlling the universe.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus was a man, not God. While on earth, he was a prophet or an advanced medium (one believed to communicate with the spirit world). Jesus is now a spirit that one can communicate with the spirit world.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief. However, some use the term to refer to the spirit of a holy person who once lived.

How to Be Saved

Knowledge and good works enhance one's status in the afterlife.

What Happens After Death

After life on this earthly plane, life continues in the spirit world, where one's spirit may progress from one level to another. Heaven and hell are states of mind. Some believe in reincarnation.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Séances to contact the dead. Psychic demonstrations. Church services with singing, music, sermon, spirit messages from the dead, and prophecies. May use Ouija™ boards. Often attracts grieving people who hope for contact with a deceased loved one.

Scientology

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

L. Ron Hubbard (1911-1986). Founded 1954 in California. Current headquarters in Los Angeles, California.

Key Writings

Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health and others by Hubbard. The Way to Happiness

Who is God?

Does not define God or Supreme Being, but rejects biblical description of God. Everyone is a “thetan,” an immortal spirit with unlimited powers over its own universe, but not all are aware of this.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is rarely mentioned in Scientology. Jesus was not the Creator, and not an “operating thetan” (in control of supernatural powers, cleared from mental defects). Did not die for sins.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.

How to Be Saved

No sin or need to repent. Salvation is freedom from reincarnation. One must work with an “auditor” on his “engrams” (hang-ups) to achieve the state of “clear,” then progress up the “bridge to total freedom.”

What Happens After Death

Hell is a myth. People who get clear of engrams become operating thetans.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Members observe birth of Hubbard and anniversary of publications of Dianetics. Controversy follows the group worldwide. Time magazine and Reader's Digest have published damaging exposés. Various media have reported that church leaders have had indictments and/or convictions for burglary, wiretapping, conspiracy, and other felonies.

New Age

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Based on Eastern mystics, Hinduism, and paganism. Popularized in part by actress Shirley MacLaine, 1980s-90s. Beliefs vary.

Key Writings

No holy book. Use selected Bible passages; I Ching; Hindu, Buddhist, and Taoist writings; and Native American beliefs. Writings on astrology, mysticism, and magic.

Who is God?

Everything and everyone is God. God is an impersonal force or principle, not a person. People have unlimited inner power and need to discover it.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is not the one true God. He is not a savior, but a spiritual model, and guru, and is not an “ascended master.” He was a New Ager who tapped into divine power in the same way that anyone can. Many believe he went east to India or Tibet and learned mystical truths. He did not rise physically, but “rose” into a higher spiritual realm.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Sometimes a psychic force. Man is divine and can experience psychic phenomena such as contacting unearthly beings.

How to Be Saved

Need to offset bad karma with good karma. Can tap into supernatural power through meditation, self-awareness, TM, and “spirit guides.” Use terms such as “reborn” for this new self-awareness.

What Happens After Death

Human reincarnations occur until person reaches oneness with God. No eternal life as a resurrected person. No literal heaven or hell.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Can include yoga, meditation, visualization, astrology, channeling, hypnosis, trances, tarot card readings, and contact with spirits. Use of crystals to get in harmony with God (Energy), for psychic healing, for contact with spirits, and for developing higher consciousness, or other psychic powers. Strive for world unity and peace, and holistic health.

Judaism Key Person or Founder Date, Location

The Jewish people have an everlasting covenant with God. This religion is very unique to where God has blinded their minds to receiving (Truth) because of their response to their Messiah Rom 11:25,26 . This veil will be one day uncovered and a great offer of Salvation will come to the Jews. Many Jews however have received Christ as Savior. They are called Messianic Jews

Abraham of the Bible, about 2000 B.C., in the Middle East. Three main branches of Judaism, each with its own beliefs.

Key Writings

The Tanakh (Old Testament), and especially the Torah (first 5 books of the OT). The Talmud (explanation of the Tanakh). Teachings of each branch: Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform, Writings of sages, such as Maimonides.

Who is God?

God is spirit. To Orthodox Jews, God is personal, all-powerful, eternal, and compassionate. To other Jews, God is impersonal, unknowable, and defined in a number of ways. No Trinity.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is seen either as an extremist false Messiah or a good but martyred Jewish rabbi (teacher). Many Jews do not consider Jesus at all. Jews (except Messianic Jews and Hebrew Christians) do not believe he was the Messiah, Son of God, or that he rose from the dead. Orthodox Jews believe the Messiah will restore the Jewish kingdom and eventually rule the earth.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Some believe the Holy Spirit is another name for God's activity on earth. Others say it is God's love or power.

How to Be Saved

Some Jews believe that prayer, repentance, and obeying the Law are necessary for salvation. Others believe that salvation is the improvement of society.

What Happens After Death

There will be physical resurrection. The obedient will live forever with God, and the unrighteous will suffer. Some Jews do not believe in a conscious life after death.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Meeting in synagogues on the Sabbath (Sabbath is Friday evening to Saturday meeting), Circumcision. Many holy days and festivals, including Passover, Sukkoth, Hanukkah, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Purim. Jerusalem is considered to be the holy city.

Hinduism

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

No one founder. Many sects. Began 1800-1000 B.C. in India

Key Writings

Many writings, including the Vedas (oldest, about 1000 B.C.), the Upanishads, and the Bhagavad-Gita.

Who is God?

God is "The Absolute," a universal spirit. Everyone is part of God (Brahman) like drops in the sea. People worship manifestations of Brahman (gods and goddesses). People are God, but are unaware of it.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus Christ is a teacher, a guru, or an avatar (an incarnation of Vishnu). He is a son of god as are others. His death does not atone for sins and he did not rise from the dead.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.

How to Be Saved

Release from the cycles of reincarnation. Achieved through yoga and meditation. Can take many lifetimes. Final salvation is absorption or union with Brahman.

What Happens After Death

Reincarnation into a better status (good karma) if person has behaved well. If one has been bad, he can be reborn and pay for past sins (bad karma) by suffering.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Some disciples wear orange robes, and have shaved heads. Many Hindus worship stone and wooden idols in temples. Gurus demand complete obedience. Disciples meditate on a word, phrase, or picture. Yoga involves mediation, chanting, postures, breathing exercises. Foundation of New Age and Transcendental Meditation.

Hara Krishna

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (1896-1977). Founded 1965 in New York. Based on Hindu teachings from the A.D. 1500s.

Key Writings

Back to Godhead magazine. Prabhupada's translations of and commentaries on Hindu scriptures, especially Bhagavad-Gita, As It Is.

Who is God?

God is Lord Krishna (Krsna). Krishna is a personal creator; the souls of all living things are part of him. ISKCON teaches that what Krishna does freely for his own pleasure (intoxication, sex outside of marriage) is prohibited to his devotees.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is not important. He is usually thought of as an enlightened vegetarian teacher who taught meditation. He is not an incarnation of God. Some Krishna devotees consider Christ to be Krishna. Others say he is a great avatar (teacher).

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.

How to Be Saved

Chanting Krishna's name constantly, total devotion to Krishna, worshipping images, and obeying the rules of ISKCON throughout many reincarnated lives, releases a follower from bad karma.

What Happens After Death

Those who are unenlightened continue in endless reincarnation (rebirth on earth) based on the sinful acts of a person's previous life.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Public chanting of Hare Krishna mantra, yoga, food offerings, soliciting donations. Vegetarian diet. No intoxicants, no gambling. Sex for procreation only. ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) attracts new members through feasts and Indian cultural programs. Followers are given new names, and often cut family ties.

T.M. Transcendental Meditation

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Founded 1959 in California, based on Hinduism and yoga. Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Key Writings

Hindu scriptures, including the Bhagavad-Gita. Meditations of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Science of Being and the Art of Living, other writings by the founder.

Who is God?

Each part of creation makes up “God” (Brahman). Supreme Being is not personal. All creation is divine: “all is one.”

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is not uniquely God. Like all persons, Jesus had a divine essence. Unlike most, he discovered it. Christ didn’t suffer and couldn’t suffer for people’s sins.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.

How to Be Saved

Humans have forgotten their inner divinity. Salvation consists of doing good in excess of evil in order to evolve to the highest state (final union of the self with Brahman) through reincarnation.

What Happens After Death

Reincarnation based on karma (reaping the consequences of one's actions) until loss of self into union with Brahman. No heaven or hell.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Mentally recite a mantra (word associated with a Hindu god). Meditate twice a day to relax and achieve union with Brahman. Maharishi University in Iowa offers advanced T.M. programs in "levitation" and "invisibility." Practices include yoga, Hind astrology, use of crystals, and idol worship (offerings of flowers, fruit, and cloth for Maharishi's dead teacher).

Buddhism

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama). Founded about 525 B.C. in India.
Offshoot of Hinduism.

Key Writings

The Tripitaka (Three Baskets), which has more than 100 volumes.

Who is God?

Buddhism is mostly atheistic. Many Buddhists do not believe in a God or Supreme Being of any kind. Others speak of the Buddha as a universal enlightened consciousness or as a god.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus Christ is not part of this belief. Buddhists in the West generally view Jesus as an enlightened man.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.

How to Be Saved

Goal of life is nirvana, to eliminate all desires or cravings, and in this way escape suffering. The Eightfold Path is a system to free Buddhists from desiring anything.

What Happens After Death

People do not have a soul or spirit. However, one's desires and feelings may be reincarnated into another person. No heaven or hell.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Eightfold path recommends right knowledge, intentions, speech, conduct, livelihood, right effort, mindfulness, and meditation. Some Buddhist groups talk about an eternal Buddha (life-force). Some Buddhist offshoots include Zen, Nichiren Shoshu, and Tibetan (occultic) Buddhism.

Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Nichiren Daishonin. Began A.D. 1253 in Japan. Modern: Tsunesaburo Makiguchi in 1930. Headquarters on Mt. Fuji, near Tokyo, Japan.

Key Writings

The Lotus Sutra (a sutra is a book claiming to give the literal words of Gautama Buddha, founder of Buddhism). The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin plus writings of Daisaku Ikeda.

Who is God?

The mystic law of cause and effect (karma) is the essence of reality. It is embodied in the Lotus Sutra and in the Japanese title of the book.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus Christ is not part of this belief.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.

How to Be Saved

Enlightenment, prosperity, and healing come from chanting “nam-myoho-renge-kyo,” a mantra (phrase) expressing devotion to the law of karma. Fulfilling worldly desires brings enlightenment.

What Happens After Death

Repeated reincarnation until one is awakened to the Buddha nature. Then reincarnation ends. No heaven or hell.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Group chanting of a Japanese phrase (mantra) of devotion out of The Law of the Lotus Sutra (the law of karma). Traditional Buddhists consider this group a cult, since the object of Buddhism is desirelessness and the object of Nichiren Shoshu is fully gratifying one's desires. Followers worship a parchment, the Gohonzon, which contains the names of deities.

Islam

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Muhammad (570?-632). About A.D. 610, in Mecca and Medina.
Headquarters in Mecca, Saudia Arabia, Main sects: Sunni, Shi'ite.Key
Writings

Qur'an (Karan), scripture in Arabic. Hadith (Muhammad's words and deeds). Biblical Law of Moses, Psalms, and Gospel of Jesus (the Injil) accepted by Qur'an, but considered by Muslims to be "corrupted."

Who is God?

God (Allah) is one. God revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel. God is a severe judge (though sometimes merciful) and is not depicted as loving.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is one of up to 124,000 prophets sent by God to various cultures. Abraham, Moses, and Muhammad are others. Jesus was born of a virgin, but is not the Son of God. Sinless. Not divine or God Himself. He was not crucified (he ascended to heaven without dying). He is referred to as messiah and ayatollah (ayat allah, sign of God). Jesus will return in the future to live and die.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Qur'an refers to Jesus as spirit of God. Muslim scholars see the angel Gabriel as the Holy Spirit.

How to Be Saved

Humans are basically good, but fallible and need guidance. The balance between good and bad deeds determines eternal destiny in paradise or hell. God's mercy may tip the balances but it is arbitrary and uncertain.

What Happens After Death

Resurrection of bodies. Final day of reckoning and rewards. Eternal paradise for those who believe in Islam. Eternal hell for infidels, those who reject Islam.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Followers are called Muslims. Go to mosque for prayers, sermons, counsel. Holy efforts to spread Islam (jihad). Five pillars of Islam: Confess that Allah is the one true God and that Muhammad is his prophet. Pray five times daily facing Mecca. Give alms (money). Fast during the month of Ramadan. Make pilgrimage to Mecca (once in a lifetime).

Baha'i World Faith

Key Person or Founder Date, Location

Mizra Ali Muhammed (the Bab) and Mizra Husayn Ali (Baha'u'llah).
Founded 1844 in Iran. Headquarters in Haifa, Israel.

Key Writings

Writings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha: Kitab-i-Aqdas and Kitab-i-Iqan.
The Bible, interpreted spiritually to conform to Baha'i theology.

Who is God?

God is an unknowable divine being who has revealed himself through nine "manifestations" (religious leaders) including Moses, Buddha, Confucius, Jesus, Muhammad, and Baha'u'llah.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is one of many manifestations of God. Each manifestation supersedes the previous, giving new teachings about God. Jesus, who superseded Moses, was superseded by Muhammad, and most recently by the greatest, Baha'u'llah. ("Glory of Allah"). Jesus is not God and did not rise from the dead. He is not the only way to God. Jesus has returned to earth in the form of Baha'u'llah.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Holy Spirit is divine energy from God that empowers every manifestation. "Spirit of Truth" refers to Baha'u'llah.

How to Be Saved

Faith in the manifestation of God (Baha'u'llah). Knowing and living by Baha'u'llah's principles and teachings.

What Happens After Death

Personal immortality based on good works, with rewards for the faithful. Heaven and hell are conditions, not places.

Other Beliefs and Practices

Baha'i originated as an Islamic sect and is severely persecuted in Iran. Baha'i teaches that all religions have the same source, principles, and aims. Stress on oneness and world unity. Regular local gatherings called "feasts" occur every 19 days. Administrative meetings (at various levels) are called "spiritual assemblies."

Note:

Beware of secret societies such as Masons, Eastern Stars, many Sororities and Fraternities. They will have you making lifelong alliances with Idol Gods that are not of the Bible.

If you have done this: ask the Lord to forgive you and renounce these covenants and commitments immediately. Many will need Deliverance because of the curses that can be attributed to long commitments to these alliances.

If your parents have be part of these organizations; pray that the Lord will forgive your forefathers and cleanse your family of idol worship. This will destroy any generational curses and sicknesses. Ist John 1:9