



Comparative View

Of

World Religions



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As Viewed by Biblical Christianity

Reference: paraphrased selection from 17 faiths compared to Biblical Christianity, Christianity, Cults & Religions, 1996 Rose Publishing.

Note: It is not clear what specific affiliation Rose Publishing has, but it seems that "Biblical Christianity" would represent the more literalist Protestant denominations, and perhaps to a lesser extent Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy.

	Founding	Writings	Who is God?	Who is Jesus?	Holy Spirit	To be Saved	After Death	Other
Biblical Christianity	30-33CE by Jesus Christ in Judean province of Palestine under Roman Empire	The Bible, orig. in Hebrew and Aramaic (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament)	One God in 3 persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; a spirit, personal and involved, eternal, loving and perfect.	God the Son; begotten of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary; only way to Father and salvation; died on cross as payment for man's sins, rose from the dead, then seen by over 500 eyewitnesses; will come again at the end of the world.	God the Holy Spirit; a person, not a force or energy field.	Salvation is by God's grace, not by good works; must be received by faith that Jesus died for their sins and physically rose again.	All await final judgment; all are resurrected, those saved live with Jesus in Heaven; those lost suffer separation from God (Hell).	Group worship in churches; no secret rites; Baptism; Communion; Jesus said His followers would be known by their love for one another.
Hinduism	1800-1000BCE in India	Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita and many others	God is "Absolute" universal spirit; everyone is part of God (Brahman) like drops in the sea.	Jesus was a teacher (guru) or an avatar (an incarnation of Vishnu); his death does not atone for sins.	Not part of this belief.	Release from the cycles of reincarnation; achieved through meditation; final salvation is union with Brahman.	Reincarnation into a better status (good karma) if person has behaved well.	Worship many gods and goddesses that are manifestations of Brahman.
Buddhism	525BCE by Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha) in India; offshoot of Hinduism.	The Tripitaka (three baskets) with over 100 volumes.	Mostly atheistic; Buddha is a universal enlightened consciousness or god.	Not part of this belief, although generally viewed as an enlightened man.	Not part of this belief.	Goal of life is nirvana, to eliminate all desires/cravings and in this way escape suffering.	People do not have a soul/spirit, but one's feelings can be reincarnated; no heaven or hell.	Eightfold path... right knowledge, intentions, speech, conduct, livelihood, effort, mindfulness and meditation.
Judaism	ca. 2000BCE by Abraham in the middle east	The Tanakh (Old Testament) and Torah (first 5 books of OT), Talmud (explanation of Tanakh), writings of sages.	God is spirit; to Orthodox Jews, God is personal and compassionate; to other Jews, God is impersonal.	Jesus seen as either an extremist false messiah or a good but martyred teacher. Orthodox Jews await the Messiah.	Another name for God's activity on Earth.	Some Jews believe that prayer, repentance and obeying the Law are necessary for salvation.	There will be a physical resurrection; obedient will live forever with God and unrighteous will suffer.	Sabbath is Friday eve to Saturday eve; circumcision; many holy days; Jerusalem is holy city.

Islam	610CE by Muhammad (570-632) in Mecca and Medina.	Koran in Arabic; Hadith (Muhammads's words and deeds); certain Biblical works accepted but considered corrupted.	God (Allah) is one; revealed the Koran to Muhammad through Gabriel; God is a severe judge (sometimes merciful) and is not depicted as loving.	Jesus is one of 124,000 prophets; born of a virgin but not Son of God; was sinless; ascended to heaven without dying (not crucified); a messiah and ayatollah (sign of God).	See the angel Gabriel as the Holy Spirit.	Humans basically good; balance between good and bad deeds determines eternal destiny in paradise or hell; God's mercy is arbitrary and uncertain.	Resurrection of bodies; final reckoning; eternal hell for infidels, those who reject Islam.	Five pillars... one God with Muhammad as prophet, pray 5 times daily, give money (alms), fast during month of Ramadan, pilgrimage to Mecca.
Baha'i World Faith	1844CE by Mizra Ali Muhammad (the Bab) and Mizra Husayn Ali (Baha'u'llah, glory of Allah) in Iran; HQ in Haifa, Israel.	Writings of founders; Kitab-i-Aqdas and Kitab-i-Iqan; The Bible	God is an unknowable divine revealed thru 9 manifestations, including Moses, Buddha, Confucius, Jesus, Muhammad and Haha'u'llah.	One of many manifestations of God; is not God and did not rise from the dead; not the only way to God; returned to Earth in the form of Baha'u'llah.	Divine energy from God.	Faith in the manifestation(s) of God; knowing and living by Baha'u'llah's principles and teachings.	Personal immortality based on good works; heaven and hell are conditions not places.	Originated as Islamic sect; teaches that all religions have the same source, principles and aims.
Mormonism (Latter-day Saints)	1830CE by Joseph Smith, Jr. (1805-1844) in western NY; HQ in Salt Lake City	The Bible (King James version); Book of Mormon; Doctrine and Covenants; Pearl of Great Price	God the Father (Elohim) was once man but became God; he has a physical body and a wife; no trinity, 3 separate gods; worthy men may one day become gods themselves.	Separate from Elohim; created by sexual union of Elohim and Mary; Jesus was married; death on cross does not provide full atonement for all sin, but does provide all with resurrection.	Separate from Father and Son; an electricity-like emanation from God.	Resurrected by grace, but saved (exalted to godhood) by works, incl. faithfulness to church, baptism, tithing, marriage and rituals; no eternal life without Mormon membership.	Three separate kingdoms (heavens) with some achieving godhood; apostates (heathens) and murderers go to outer darkness.	No alcohol, tobacco, or caffeine; near-mandatory 2-year mission; secret temple rituals members only; extensive social work; Blacks not granted full access to priesthood and privileges until 1978.
Jehovah's Witnesses (Watchtower)	1879CE by Charles Russell (1852-1916) in Pennsylvania, later Joseph Rutherford; HQ Brooklyn, NY.	The Bible (New World only); Watchtower publications	One-person God, Jehovah; no trinity.	First creation of Jehovah; Jesus is not God; before coming to Earth, was Michael the archangel; Jehovah made the universe thru Michael; died on a stake, was resurrected as a spirit; returned visibly in 1914; very soon he and the angels will destroy all non-Jehovah's Witnesses (Armageddon).	Impersonal Holy Spirit not God, but invisible force from Jehovah.	Baptism as JW; must earn everlasting life on Earth by door-to-door work; salvation in heaven limited to 144,000 anointed ones.	The 144,000 (already reached) live as spirits in heaven; rest must live on Earth for 1000 years or be annihilated.	Anointed ones may take part in yearly Lord's Evening Meal; do not observe holidays or birthdays; do not vote, salute flag, work in military, or accept blood transfusions.

Unification Church (Sun Myung Moon)	1954CE by Moon in South Korea; HQ in NYC.	Divine Principle by Moon considered the Completed Testament, Outline of the Principle, and The Bible; believe Bible is a textbook teaching truth, but not truth itself.	God is both positive and negative; the universe is God's "body"; God does not know the future, is suffering and needs man to make Him happy.	Jesus was a perfect man, not God; the son of Zechariah, not born a virgin; mission (failed) was to unite Jews and form perfect family; did not rise from the dead; second coming of Christ is Moon, who is superior to Jesus.	A feminine spirit who leads people to Moon.	Obedience to the True Parents (Moon and wife) eliminates sins.	Spirit world; no resurrection; members advance by convincing others to follow Moon; everyone will be saved, even Satan.	Mass marriages; contact with spirits of the dead.
Unity School of Christianity	1889CD by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore in Kansas City; HQ in Unity Village, Missouri.	Unity magazine, Lessons of Truth, Metaphysical Bible Dictionary, the Bible with interpretation of "hidden" meanings	Invisible impersonal power; interchangeable with Principle, law, being, mind, spirit.	Jesus was a man, not the Christ; Christ is a state of perfection in every person.	The law of God in action.	No evil, no devil, no sin; reincarnation until he learns truths and becomes "perfect".	Death is result of wrong thinking; reincarnation until enlightenment; no literal heaven or hell.	Prayer ministry by phone and mail.
Christian Science	1875CE by Mary Baker Eddy in Massachusetts; HQ in Boston.	Science and Health, With Key to the Scriptures, Manual of the Mother Church, Christian Science Journal and Sentinel; the Bible (not as reliable).	Impersonal principle of life, truth, love, intelligence and spirit; God is all that truly exists, matter is an illusion.	Jesus was not the Christ, but a man who displayed the Christ idea (perfection).	Impersonal power.	Humanity is already eternally saved; sin, evil, sickness and death are not real.	Death is not real; heaven and hell are states of mind; the way to reach heaven is by attaining harmony (oneness with God).	Members use Christian Science practitioners instead of doctors; healing comes from realizing one cannot be sick or die.
Scientology	1954 by L. Ron Hubbard in California. HQ in LA.	Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health and others by Hubbard; The Way to Happiness.	Does not define God; everyone is a "thetan", an immortal spirit.	Not a part of this belief.	Not a part of this belief.	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".	Hell is a myth; people who get clear of engrams become operating thetans.	Observe birth of Hubbard; much controversy follows this faith.

Rose Publishing states that "The final proofreading was done by Paul Carden, executive director of the Centers for Apologetics Research and former co-host for six years of the "Bible Answer Man" radio program sponsored by CRI (Christian Research Institute, San Juan Capistrano, CA). Other researchers who provided information and proofread rough drafts: Dr. James Bjornstad, Institute for Contemporary Christianity; Robert Bowman, Atlanta Christian Apologetics Project; H. Wayne House, author; Eric Pement, Sr. Editor, Cornerstone; and Brad Sparks, apologetics researcher."