

Christianity And Islam



A journalist once remarked, “All religions are the same; they only differ on matters of creation, sin, heaven, hell, salvation and God.” This is a humorous way of saying that despite what people want to believe, all religions are not the same.

Christianity and Islam differ substantially, and this brochure will describe those differences. One thing is for sure: mutually exclusive religious propositions cannot both be true. Either Jesus Christ is God come in human flesh as Christianity claims, or Jesus Christ is merely a prophet below Mohammad as Islam claims. Herein a case will be made for the truths of Christianity.

The doctrinal differences will be presented, and then it is up to the reader to decide which faith sounds like the voice of God. Jesus taught that one’s choice is ultimately based on the disposition of the heart.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.
(John 10:27)

God

Islam

There is only one God, Allah. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity is polytheism and idolatry.

Christianity

God is three persons in one: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the Trinity is not traditional polytheism because the three persons of the Godhead are described in the Bible as being one essence.

There is nothing intrinsically unacceptable about the doctrine of the Trinity. All that we can know about God must be revealed by God Himself. If God reveals that He is three persons in one, why should that disturb us?

The Hebrew name of God, “Elohim,” is plural in form. In Genesis 1:26, God referred to Himself in the plural, “Let us make man in our own image..”

Islam has often mischaracterized the Christian teaching about Jesus as if God had relations with Mary and produced a biological son named Jesus. The Gospels teach that the Spirit of God only placed the person of Jesus in the womb of Mary.

Jesus is called the “Son of God” because He was the member of the Trinity that took upon Himself a human body. Before coming to earth, Jesus’ Old Testament title was “Jehovah God.” When Jesus was born through Mary, the title “Son of God” was given to Him to describe His new humanity and the new relationship He had with God the Father.

The angel answered and said to her (Mary), “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.”
(Luke 1:35)

Jesus Christ and Mohammad

Islam

There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is the prophet of Allah. There have been twenty-eight prophets of Allah. These include Adam, Noah, Moses, David, Jesus, and Mohammad. The final and greatest prophet is Mohammad. Jesus was not God incarnate, for God would never become a man.

Christianity

Jesus Christ is God come in human flesh. This was God’s great surprise for mankind. Rather than remaining distant from His creation, God entered our world not only to walk in the shoes of His people, but, more important, to die for their sins. God commissioned and spoke to prophets, but they were mere men preparing the world for the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which translated means, “God with us.”
(Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23)

And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.
(1 John 5:20)

For by Him (Jesus) all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.
(Colossians 1:15-17)

Mohammad was an Arab religious and political leader in the 6th century. He helped his people by uniting the tribes, moving them from polytheism to monotheism, and introducing stricter morality. Nevertheless, he was not the Messiah, but a fallible human teacher. The history of Mohammad’s multiple wives and violence is well documented in Islamic literature.

Scriptures

The Koran

Mohammad received revelations from God which are preserved in the Koran. Since the teachings of the Koran are Allah’s perfect and final word, the Koran can be used to judge the accuracy of the Christian Scriptures. The Bible must have been changed by the Christians, because what the Bible now teaches about the birth, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus contradicts Islamic teachings.

The Bible

Many people in history have claimed to receive revelations from God. These visions might be wishful thinking or possibly demonic forces disseminating false religion by impersonating the Spirit of God. Islamic literature recounts that when Mohammad received his first revelations, he feared that he was possessed by demons.

Jesus said, “Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many”(Matthew 24:11). Therefore, Jesus taught the people never to accept unsubstantiated claims. Jesus Himself said, “If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true”(John 5:31). Jesus gave two proofs:

(1) His miracles. Jesus said, “If I do not do the works [miracles] of My Father, do not believe Me (John 10:37).”

(2) The writings of previous prophets. Jesus said, “You search the Scriptures . . . it is these that testify about Me (John 5:39).”

Mohammad performed no Messianic miracles, and his teachings were inconsistent with the message of God’s prophets (Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, etc.). These Old Testament prophets only pointed to the coming of Christ. Jesus Christ was to be not merely one of the prophets, but the savior of the world.

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
(Isaiah 9:6)

Sin and Salvation

Islam

Mankind is born with a pure nature and is able to choose for or against God. If a man sins, he can ask for pardon from Allah who will be merciful. If a Muslim's good works outweigh his bad works, he will enter into heaven (Sura 7:8-9; 21:47).

Christianity

Mankind is unwilling to choose for God because all are born with a sinful nature.

There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God. (Romans 3:10-11)

In order for a man to be saved, the Spirit of God must infuse life to the soul.

Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3)

Since righteous deeds cannot pay the judicial penalty for past sins, God, in love, chose to take the penalty of our sin upon Himself. Jesus came to die a substitutionary death for the sins of mankind.

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45)

Salvation through the cross of Christ is the unique teaching of Christianity. While every other religion in the world teaches that a person can save himself by his works, only Christianity teaches that righteousness is imputed to a person as a gift from God on the basis of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus... For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law. (Romans 3:23-24,28)

The Law

Islam

Salvation comes by keeping the five pillars of Islam. This includes praying five times a day, giving 1/40th to the poor, fasting during the month of Ramadan, in addition to many other legal requirements of dress and diet.

Christianity

Christians are instructed to live by the law of love and to keep the moral law of God embodied in the Ten Commandments. With the advent of Christ and the New Covenant, God's people were freed from Old Covenant regulations. Legalistic rituals and rules are not true righteousness; nor do they impress God. Jesus rebuked the religious leaders in His day for their formalism (Matthew 6 &15).

The New Testament instructs Christians not to let others judge them in regard to diet or holy days (Colossians 2:16).

The legalistic religions which teach "do not handle, do not taste, do not touch" are condemned as being pagan superstition. (Colossians 2:20-21)

It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. (Galatians 5:1)

Choosing the True Faith

The choice of either Christianity or Islam often depends upon culture and prejudice. People tend to stay with whatever religious traditions are perpetuated in their national origin. Those raised in Italy tend to be Roman Catholic; Japan—Buddhist; India—Hindu; Saudi Arabia—Muslim; Utah—Mormon; Israel—Judaism; Southeastern U.S.—Baptist, etc. Most religion is a matter of culture and convenience rather than investigation and conviction.

But let's say an open-minded person is willing to consider that his whole nation may have succumbed

to false teaching. Mankind's propensity to follow error is well demonstrated in history. If a person is genuinely seeking the truth about God, upon what would he base his choice of religion?

A man who admires power would be attracted to the religion that is most rich and popular. However, Jesus said, "That which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God (Luke 16:15)."

A self-righteous man, who believes he can earn heaven through his own merits, might gravitate toward any number of works-based world religions, even some legalistic distortions of Christianity. However, Jesus said, "By the works of the law no flesh will be justified (Galatians 2:16)."

Jesus taught that humility and contrition are the criteria by which men come to the true religion. The person who is attracted to the New Testament message of Christ is the person who finally recognizes himself as an unworthy sinner unable to save himself by self-righteous efforts.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. (Matthew 5:3-6)

And Jesus answered and said to them, "It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:31-32)

But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me, the sinner!" I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted. (Luke 18:13-14)

When it comes to Islam or Christianity, the choice hinges upon whether the individual has a leaning toward a works-based concept of God and salvation or a grace-based concept of God and salvation.

If you believe you can live a good life, earn your way to heaven, and you are willing to stand before God in your own righteousness, know that this is what you are choosing to do. The Christian is, instead, choosing to trust in the blood of Christ shed for the payment of his sin.

Much more then, having now been justified by His (Jesus') blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. (Romans 5:9)

That I may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith. (Philippians 3:9)

The greatest obstacle to accepting Christ is surrendering one's own self-righteousness. This is what offends the world about the cross of Christ – that we can't save ourselves. Only God could pay the price to take away the debt of our sin.

If this message rings true to you, then believe on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. If you decide to hold on to the way of Islam, at least this brochure has introduced to you the alternative. The day may come when you discover Islam provides no remedy for your sin.

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