

# Is Christianity the only true world Religion?

Many people who claim to be Christians believe that any religion one professes is all right. But if Christianity is not superior to other religions, then as Professor D.S. Sama has noted, "it just may as well join hands on equal terms as their friend and ally in a common cause".

The majority of the world's religions are more of a philosophy of life than a religion, and those that are religious usually incorporate many gods. In the Hindu religion, as an example, one can essentially do as he wishes; follow any ritual or custom he chooses, and still be a Hindu. They accept the principle that all religions are true and lead to the same goal. Then there is Buddhism. Gautama Buddha was married and had a child. At age 30, he abandoned his home and family never to return. This he supposedly did in answer to an inner craving that was not satisfied. He sought for inner peace through a life of abstinence and asceticism.

According to tradition, Buddha received enlightenment while sitting under a "bo tree" meditating. There is no way of knowing what part of Buddhist teachings came from Buddha himself since no record of his teaching seems to have been committed to writing for over 200 years. Then too, Buddhism in its original form was not a religion at all. It was more a system of psychological ethics. Buddha felt no particular need for a god. To him, worship was useless and prayer empty.

Confucius claimed to be an agnostic concerning the next life and the world of the gods. His mind was immersed in the affairs of this life. To him, human nature was naturally good. He did not object to ancestor worship. His primary interest was in society and the state.

Muhammad, the founder of Islam, was married and had twelve or thirteen wives, not counting slave girls in his harem. He did teach the concept of "one God". He was active in civil, political, and military affairs. He led armies that in time captured the territory of Arabia. The teachings of Muhammad were soon recorded in what is known as the Koran. Of course, like Confucius, Buddha and others, Muhammad went to his grave and remains there.

When one turns to Christianity with Judaism as its forerunner, many things stand out by way of comparison. The first is a strict monotheism. Jehovah God is the Creator and the sustainer of the universe, of life and of all things. This is in striking contrast to a gross polytheism found in the majority of religions, Islam being an exception. Only in the Judaeo-Christian religion does one find a logical, sensible, and reasonable explanation of the creation. The accounts of creation found in other that the Genesis record are written on a low mythological plane with a sordid conception of deity. At times the gods plot and fight against one another.

Only in Christianity do we find a prophetic message heralding one who is to be sent out from God as man's deliverer and Savior; the only begotten Son, designated God with us and known as prophet, priest, king, wonderful, counsel-or, mighty God, everlasting Father, prince of peace. (Read Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:21-23; Hebrews 3:1). This prophetic story has its setting in Jewish history centuries before the birth of Christ. Moses told how God would raise up a prophet to whom the people should listen. Deuteronomy 18:15. Micah said he would be born in Bethlehem - Micah 5:2. The entire 53rd Chapter of Isaiah describes him as God's suffering servant, sent out from the Lord to redeem mankind from sins. Joseph was told, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21. This puts Christianity into a category all to itself.

When Jesus was born, numerous forces and factors converged on this event to confirm the message of the prophets. Mary, his mother, was reminded by an angel that her conception was divinely authorized. Read Luke 1:26-35. Joseph, who was engaged to Mary, was informed by the angel that her conception was of the Holy Spirit - Matthew 1:20. The angels announced his birth to the shepherds Luke 2:5-11. John the baptizer was commissioned to prepare the way for Jesus. Read John 1:23-34.

Jesus immediately affirmed His divine nature. He said He had come down from heaven to do the Father's will - John 6:38-39. He claimed to be "the living bread", John 6:51; "the light of the world", John 8:12; "the Good Shepherd", John 10:14; "the resurrection and the life", John 11:25. He supported His claim by miraculous

works, even to raising the dead. Read John 11. The climax came when He was placed in the tomb and came forth on the third day. (This record is found in Matthew 27 and 28; Mark 15 and 16, and Luke 23 and 24).

For a period of 40 days after His resurrection, He appeared to His apostles instructing them about His coming Kingdom. Read Acts 1:1-5. At the end of this period, He ascended into heaven. Acts 1:9 reads, "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Verses ten and eleven inform us that two men in white clothing stood beside them and said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand you gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven." Here, briefly stated, is why we choose Christianity. It is validated by a risen Lord.