

Comparing Christianity's Truth About God with World Religions

Word of God and God

- But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King (Jeremiah 10:10).
- Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other (Isaiah 45:22).
- There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy (James 4:12).
- For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live (1 Corinthians 8:5–7).
- For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse (Romans 1:20).
- God is love (1 John 4:8).
- Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows (James 1:17).
- A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families, he leads forth the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land (Psalm 68:5–6).
- The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth (Psalm 145:18).
- And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation” (Exodus 34:6–7).
- Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong (Habakkuk 1:13).

- God . . . works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will (Ephesians 1:3, 11).
- One of you will say to me: “Then why does God still blame us? For who resists his will?” But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? “Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’” (Romans 9:19–20).
- Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! (Romans 11:33).
- God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see (1 Timothy 6:15–16).
- No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father’s side, has made him known (John 1:18).
- In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son (Hebrews 1:1–2).
- Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar (Proverbs 30:5–6).
- I the Lord do not change (Malachi 3:6).
- Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever (1 Timothy 1:17).

Buddhism and God

- There is no absolute God in Buddhism, although many have interpreted Buddhism as a search for God. Buddha did not deny God’s existence but said that the question of His existence “tends not to edification.” Rather, those seeking enlightenment must concentrate on their own spiritual paths rather than relying on an outside support.
- Buddha did not claim divinity or even a divine source for his teachings. He provided himself as an example to humanity. His teachings have been compared to a raft that should be left behind once the other side of the river has been reached.
- Many Buddhists believe the existence of suffering and evil in the world offers evidence against belief in God.

- Although most Buddhists reject the concept of an ultimate God, the Mahayana school developed teachings of Buddha as still existing for the sake of men. This extended to many additional deities who came to be represented in art and revered in ways very similar to worship of Hindu gods.

Hinduism and God

- Many gods or incarnations of gods are worshiped by Hindus. Chief among them are *Shiva*, a fierce figure representing both the creative and destructive sides of divinity as well as the ideal of yogic meditation, and *Vishnu*, who incarnates himself many times through history in order to bring the message of salvation to man. Vishnu's incarnations (or *avatars*) include *Rama*, a benevolent king, and *Krishna*. The gods are sometimes amoral; their freedom from the usual restraints necessary to humans is often celebrated, and they are often represented with sexual imagery. Many lesser cults worship a complex variety of gods, all of whom are usually seen as manifestations of the one supreme being, *Brahman*.
- Brahman is seen by many Hindus as a personal, loving God who desires the salvation of all men. More usually, however, he is described as a supreme, impersonal being completely above all creation and uninvolved with life on earth.

Islam and God

- *Allah* means "the God," indicating the radical monotheism of Islam. "We shall not serve anyone but God, and we shall associate none with Him" (*Koran* 3.64). Any division of God is rejected, including the Christian beliefs in the Trinity and that Jesus is divine: "It is not meet for God to have children" (*Koran* 19.92).
- The power of Allah is often portrayed in the Koran, and it is emphasized that his purposes are always serious. Justice is Allah's most important value for Muslims.
- Allah is merciful and compassionate, but that mercy is shown mainly through him sending messengers to proclaim the truth of humanity's responsibility to live according to Allah's teachings.

Judaism and God

- The complete unity of God as a powerful ruler and as a loving deliverer is central to Judaism. Jews do not deny the problem of the existence of pain and suffering, although they freely admit it is a mystery. God is in control even in the midst of an evil world.
- God is not merely some supreme force but a Person. He contains the emotions of anger, sadness, and joy. He is a being who desires a relationship with His creation. He desires to share in the emotions of humanity.
- Yahweh God also includes some distance. He is above the world, and His ways are often beyond the understanding of people. The tension between God's nearness and farness is a recurring theme of Judaism, leading to passionate appeals by Jews for communication with God.
- God is seen as continually active in creation, constantly working in the world to offer individuals the opportunity to fulfill their obligations toward Him and toward other people.

Tribal Religions and God

- Tribal religions generally believe in a large number of gods or goddesses, each reigning over a family, clan, village, or certain locality such as a river or mountain. This belief has been called *henotheism*, meaning close adherence to a certain god while recognizing the existence of others.
- Many tribal religions believe in one supreme god who is the first source of all existence. Yet that god is usually considered too distant to be concerned with the lives of humanity.
- As a result, tribal religious beliefs often focus upon several local gods who generally lack mercy and love. Their ways are not always predictable, and followers desire to appease their anger or to gain material favors from them.
- The gods are usually connected in some way with dead ancestors. They relate to the tribe or community and support the customs that have kept the group functioning in the past.