

I. Introduction

- A. Judaism – the history, culture and spirituality of the Jewish people – *Galatians 1:13*
 - 1. Oldest religion in the world still in practice
 - 2. Monotheistic religion – Christianity and Islam
 - 3. Theocracy – Judaism believes earth is ruled by God
 - 4. Geographic religion – centered around Palestine
- B. Sacred Scriptures – all written in Hebrew (except Daniel, Ezra and Jeremiah)
 - 1. The Law – *Torah* – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy
 - 2. The Prophets – *Major and Minor* – Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
 - 3. The Writings – *History and Psalms* – Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Ester, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs
- C. Outstanding Personalities
 - 1. Abraham – “father of the faithful” – *Genesis 11:25*
 - 2. Moses – “law giver” – Exodus – Deuteronomy
 - 3. David – “a man after God’s own heart” – *I Samuel 16 – I Kings 2 – I Chronicles*
 - 4. Elijah – “the prophet” – *I Kings 17 – II Kings 2*

II. History

- A. Slavery in Egypt – 12 Tribes of Israel in Bondage – 1200 BC
 - 1. Exodus from Egypt – Moses speaks for God
 - 2. Law at Mt. Sinai – an agreement or covenant...The Ten Commandments and 613 laws
 - 3. 40 years in the desert – for doubting God
- B. Bound for Canaan - 1200-900 BC
 - 1. Joshua conquers the Promised Land – good news
 - 2. Baal (deities of the earth) and Ashteroth (goddesses of fertility) mixed in-bad news
 - 3. Communal faith in a righteous God – Revelation and Relationship
- C. The Kingdom of Israel - 900-586 BC
 - 1. Not God’s idea – people cried out for a king
 - 2. Saul, David, Solomon – United Israel
 - 3. Divided Israel – Judah and Israel
- D. The Exile to Babylon – 586-539 BC
 - 1. Judgment against Israel – **unrighteousness**
 - 2. Isaiah and Ezekiel taught sovereignty of God, holiness, suffering and deliverance
- E. The Second Temple – 516 BC–70 AD
 - 1. Jews return home; revival of the law
 - 2. Legalist Judaism on the rise – **Levitical Code**
 - 3. Elaborate scheme of religious practices
 - 4. Apocalyptic literature appeared – end times
 - 5. Messianic idea developed – anointed one of God
 - 6. Herodians take control of the state of Israel
 - 7. Romans Destroy Temple, Jerusalem and Israel after a 3 year rebellion
- F. The Dispersion (Diaspora) – 70-1948 AD
 - 1. Scattered throughout the world
 - 2. Persecuted by Arabs, Muslims, Christians
 - 3. Called for independent homeland – Zionist Movement – 1897

III. Elements in Judaism

A. Strengths

1. Conception of the one supreme holy God
2. Moral laws for the world
3. The difference between sin and righteousness
4. The responsibility of humanity
5. The relationship of humanity to God
6. Conception of worship
7. The belief in purpose, faithfulness, holiness and service

B. Weaknesses

1. Exclusiveness – Jews and everyone else- loss of witness, blessing and services
2. Election – Jews are God’s only people – special purpose and plan
3. Legalism – Bound to law which promotes self-righteousness
4. Evangelism – lack of reach out to others

IV. Covenants

A. Covenant with Noah – *Genesis 9:1-17*

1. Blessing from God to be fruitful and multiply
2. All life given into the control of humanity
3. Accountability and Judgment established
4. The sign of the rainbow for the seal of the covenant

B. Covenant with Abraham – *Genesis 15:1-12*

1. Sons and daughters without number – by faith
2. The Promised land to be given to them as a witness

C. Covenant of Circumcision – *Genesis 17:1-27*

1. Father of many nations- name change
2. Sealed with the sign of circumcision – 8th day
3. Testimony to the nations and kings of the earth

D. Covenant of the Law – *Exodus 19:1-25*

MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS: CONFUCIANISM

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I. Early Chinese Society

A. Three Ideas of Traditional Wisdom

1. Tian (heaven) – impersonal sacred power
 - a. Source of the world – creation
 - b. Moral force automatically rewarding
2. Dao (the Way) – ultimate ordering principle of this world
 - a. Change-patterns, cycles and seasons are all related to the order
 - b. Chinese calendar beginning in February follows the Dao
3. Yin and Yang – life force – neutral
 - a. Yin – covered by clouds, dark, hidden, secret, cool – **female principle**
 - b. Yang – bright and shiny, light, open, warm – **male principle**
 - c. *Yi Jing – Book of Change* – contains the Yin and Yang and 64 other hexagrams used for fortune-telling and divination; written around 1000 BC

B. Religious Practices

1. Ancestral Worship – high regard for the dead, especially fathers
2. Shang-di – Supreme Ruler – king of the people and ruler of the spiritual world – His envoy in the wind
3. Tian Ming (Mandate of Heaven)
 - a. Emperor of China is known as the son of heaven
 - b. China itself is the center of the earth – Zhong Guo – (China) – center country

II. The Age of the Hundred Philosophers

A. Confucius – Kong Zi (551-579 BC)

1. Born to lower nobility; very poor
2. Held several minor government positions
3. Very outspoken against government policies
4. Earned a living as a teacher and tutor
5. Devoted himself to editing Chinese classicals of history – *Wu Jing*
6. Collection of Confucius' sayings - *The Analects*

B. Lao-Zi – Old Philosopher – Father of Daoism

1. Probably legend – older than Confucius
2. Keeper of the records in the imperial court
3. Headed west in his 80th year; disillusioned that people were unwilling to follow the good path
4. Authored the classic *Daode Jing – The Way and Its Power*

C. Mencius – Meng Zi (372-289 BC)

1. Confucian scholar who held a government position
2. Promoted and added on to Confucian thought – especially in psychology

D. Zun-Zi (300-238 BC) – political philosopher who expanded the Confucian teachings in areas of law and discipline

E. Mo-Zi(471-391BC)–opposed Confucianism; concentrated on liberating the working class & peasants

F. Zhuang-Zi (369-286 BC) – mystic who immersed himself in Daoism – very radical teaching in the spiritual application of Daoism

III. Confucian Philosophy

A. Combination of Political Theory and Human Nature

1. Legitimate rulers receive a mandate from heaven
2. Legitimate rulers bear responsibility for the well-being of the people and order in the country

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B. Human Nature

1. People are shaped by li (convention or ritual)
2. Li establishes value, responsibility and response
3. Sages, philosophers or superior people must master li and then be models for others
4. All humanity then can master li and reach ren – the fullness of humanity
5. Ren promotes peace, harmony, order and well-being

C. The Ideal Person

1. *He was above egoism*—did not worry about personal relationships; he served the common good
2. *He was not narrow* – selfless and fearless behavior
3. *He was a man of ren* - justice to humanity
 - a. Comfort the old
 - b. Be faithful to friends and family
 - c. Cherish the young

“Let the ruler be a ruler, the minister be a minister, the father be a father, and the son be a son.”

IV. Daoism

A. Distinction Between Knowledge and Self

1. Actions (wei) and desires (yu) – finding harmony between the two
2. Names (ming) – forgetting the differences between good and bad; beautiful and ugly; high and low
3. Doctrine – “abandon knowledge, discard self”
 - a. take the path of least resistance
 - b. life is an illusion
 - c. inaction is preferable to action because the universe is inactive

B. Naturalness

1. Opposite to the world of human beings
2. Self-forgetfulness – no personal interests, the group more important than the individual

V. Summary of Chinese Philosophical Thought

A. Confucius

1. Respect for family, fathers, government and rulers
2. People can be educated to equality
3. Impersonal divinity that rewards and punishes – “out there”
4. Humanity essential good

B. Lao-Zi

1. Harmony with nature – learning to be positive
2. Looking inward instead of outward

C. Mencius

1. Humanity essentially and originally good
2. Application and education can improve humanity

VI. Modern Chinese Mind Set

A. Progressive – Communists and Buddhists

1. Humanity is evolving – innately good
2. Chinese are the highest form of humanity

B. Pragmatic – Confucius

1. Everything has order – must be practical
2. Development – takes time, education and planning

C. Passive – Lao-Zi

1. Take the path of least resistance
2. Middle of the road
3. Let life and nature run their course

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D. Patriarchal – Ancestral Worship

1. Devotion to family, unity, country
2. Religion serves a purpose by using or invoking the dead

VII. Witness to the Chinese

A. Cultural Reference

1. Shang-di – Supreme Ruler
 - a. Creation over evolution – complexity of life – *Romans 1:20*
 - b. Heaven and hell – how to get to heaven and avoid hell – *Romans 2:6-11*
2. Dao – The Way
 - a. Introduce Jesus Christ as the Way, the truth and the life – *John 14:6*
 - b. Relationship of God the Father; God the Son; and God the Spirit – *John 16:12015*
 - c. Sacrifice of Jesus Christ on a cross – *Hebrews 10:10*

B. Historical Reference – Book of Genesis

Chinese Proverbs

Mencius – “Between father and son there should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between old and young, a proper order; and between friends, fidelity.”

Confucius – “Do not worry about having position, think of how to be fit for a position. Do not worry because no one knows you, think of being worthy to be know.”

Traditional – “A boy can shoulder the roof beam. While a girl cannot even prop up a door frame.”

MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS: BUDDHISM

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I. The Rise of Buddhism

A. Origins c.563-483 BC

1. Founded in northeastern India and based on the teachings of Siddhartha Guatam – the Buddha or Enlightened One
2. Began as monastic movement within the dominant Hindu tradition. Buddha rejected aspects of Hindu philosophy, authority of the Brahman (priest) sacrificial rites and the social order of the castes.
3. Great Renunciation – when Siddhartha left his wife, son and palace for monastic life – age 29
4. The Enlightenment – able to review all his past lives and rise to a higher state of consciousness – became Buddha

B. Teachings

1. The Four Noble Truths
 - a. All existence is suffering
 - b. All suffering is caused by craving
 - c. All suffering can be ended
 - d. The way to end suffering is by practicing the Noble Eightfold Path
2. The noble Eightfold Path
 - a. Right View – to light the way
 - b. Right Intentions – to guide the way
 - c. Right Speech – the dwelling place
 - d. Right Action – to keep straight
 - e. Right Livelihood – the reward of life
 - f. Right Effort – the steps of life
 - g. Right Thoughts – the breath of life
 - h. Right Contemplation – the peace of life
3. The Formula for Conversion
 - a. I take my refuge in Buddha
 - b. I take my refuge in *Dharma* (metaphysical law)
 - c. I take my refuge in the *Sangha* (Buddhist Monastic Order)
4. Anatman – Denial of a Permanent Soul
 - a. Five Aggregates – body; feelings; perceptions; predispositions (karma); consciousness
 - b. Three Marks of Anatman – renewed existences
 1. no soul
 2. nothing permanent
 3. suffering
5. Karma – Actions and ethical Consequences
 - a. Good actions are rewarded; bad actions are punished
 - b. One's Karma determines such matters as one's species, beauty, intelligence, longevity, wealth, and social status
 - c. Types of rebirth include human, animal, ghost, demon or Hindu god
6. Nirvana – Ultimate Goal for Buddhism
 - a. State of consciousness beyond definition – final rebirth into nothingness
 - b. Karma is based on works and nirvana is based on virtues
 1. loving – kindness
 2. compassion
 3. Sympathetic joy
 4. equanimity – *See Buddhist Literature*

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II. The Development of Buddhism

A. Buddhist Literature – developed around 100 BC

1. *Sutra Pitaka* – dialogues between Buddha and other people – very popular
2. *Vinaya Pitaka* – more than 225 rules governing conduct for the monastic life
3. *Abhidharma Pitaka* – seven separate works on psychological phenomena and metaphysical analysis

*These are known as the *Tripitaka* or Three Baskets

B. Major Branches of Buddhism

1. Theravada – Way of the Elders – oldest – directly descends from Buddha
2. Mahayana – The Great Vehicle
 - a. Developed around 100AD; stresses ongoing revelation that has gone beyond Buddha
 - b. Triple Body – *Trikaya* – body of essence, body of communal bliss, body of transformation – the ultimate absolute
 - c. *Bodhisattva* – an enlightened being who delays nirvana in order to help others in their salvation. *Can be a human being or a statue of a certain Buddha*
3. Tantrism – The Diamond Vehicle
 - a. Strong emphasis on sacramental action – prayer and meditation
 - b. Influences and dominates Tibet, China and Japan
4. Zen – meditation and personal enlightenment
5. Pure Land – devotion to an infinite light and a final paradise
6. Nichiren – repeating a certain formula to gain enlightenment

C. Monastic Life – *Sangha*

1. Identified by yellow or orange robes and shaved heads
2. Includes monks and nuns
3. Recitation of communal rules and confession of violations
4. Celibacy and alms receiving – focal point for monastic life
5. Zen Sangha must work for food and living
6. Pure Land Sangha can marry and have children
7. Monks performed services for blessings, transformations, and funerals

III. Modern Buddhism

A. Lay Worship – individual rather than congregational

1. Ceremonies – Theravada
 - a. Taking the Three Refuges
 - b. Meditative walks in clockwise direction around a sacred garden
 - c. Carrying flowers as a sign of reverence
 - d. Celebrating Buddha's birthday
 - e. Personal reading of Buddhist literature
2. Ceremonies – Mahayana
 - a. Burning incense at altars
 - b. Worshipping bodhisattvas at home or in temples
 - c. Giving offerings to the dead to help correct karma

B. Buddhist Countries

1. Theravada – Sri Lanka, Thailand, Cambodia, Burma, Laos, India
2. Mahayana – China, Japan, Taiwan, Nepal, Korea, Vietnam, Northern India

IV. Buddhist Literature

A. The Mahayanist “Thought of Enlightenment”

1. Like all the great religions of the world, Buddhism has produced a variety of inspirational worship. Santideva, a Madhyamika philosopher of the early eighth century AD, extolled the religious life of the Mahayana in a famous devotional poem called *Entering the Path of Enlightenment*. After praising the thought of enlightenment (bodhisattva), Santideva confesses the transgressions that have, in the past, kept him in bondage to the phenomenal world of impermanence and suffering. He then launches into a great affirmation of compassion and of the central element in life for all Mahayana followers, the act of *bodhisattaparigraha*, or grasping the thought of enlightenment.
2. I rejoice in exultation at the goodness, and at the cessation and destruction of sorrow, wrought by all beings. May those who sorrow achieve joy!
3. I rejoice at the release of embodied beings from the sorrowful wheel of rebirth. I rejoice at Bodhisattvahood and at the Buddhahood of those who have attained salvation.
4. I rejoice at Oceans of Determination (*cittopada*), the Bearers of Happiness to all beings, the Vehicles of Advantage for all beings, and those who teach
5. With folded hands, I beseech the perfect Buddhas in all places: May they cause the light of the Dharma to shine upon those who, because of confusion, have fallen into sorrow.

B. The Equanimity of Zen Master Hakuin

Equanimity has always been one of the most prized of Buddhist virtues, and in practically all Buddhist traditions it has been associated with the most exalted levels of spiritual attainment. In the Zen context this distinctively Buddhist virtue of equanimity is highlighted in a famous story about the Zen priest Hakuin (1685-1767).

The Zen master Hakuin was praised by his neighbors as one living a pure life. A beautiful Japanese girl whose parents owned a food store lived near him. Suddenly, without any warning, her parents discovered she was with child. This made her parents angry. She would not confess who the man was, but after much harassment at last named Hakuin. In great anger the parents went to the master. “Is this so?” was all he would say. After the child was born it was brought to Hakuin. By this time he had lost his reputation, which did not trouble him, but he took very good care of the child. He obtained milk from his neighbors and everything else the little one needed. A year later the girl-mother could stand it no longer. She told her parents the truth – that the real father of the child was young man who worked in the fishmarket. The mother and father of the girl at once went to Hakuin to ask his forgiveness, to apologize at length, and to get the child back again. Hakuin was willing. In yielding the child, all he said was: “Is that so?”

MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS: ISLAM

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I. Introduction to Islam

A. Mohammed the Prophet

1. Born in Mecca in 570 AD (died 632 AD)
2. Claimed to be the prophet to restore the true religion
3. Mohammed means “The one who is praised”
4. Received recitations from the archangel called the Quran (Koran)

B. Quran

1. Considered to be holy written by Islam
2. Muslims also believe in:
 - a. The Law of Moses
 - b. The Psalms of David
 - c. The Injil (or the gospel of Jesus Christ)
3. Quran supersedes all other scriptures
4. Contains 114 revelations – shortest first, longer last
5. *Hadith* – collection of Islamic traditions and structures, some political

C. Definitions

1. Islam – means “submission”; official name
2. Muslim – follower of Islam or “one who submits”
3. Caliph – spiritual leaders following Mohammed
4. Ayatallah – spiritual masters or leaders in Islam
5. Cleric – local leader of a mosque
6. Jihad – overall defense of Islam to the utmost capacity

II. Five Pillars of Islam

A. Creed (shahada)

1. “There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is His prophet”
2. Repetitive prayer – in Arabic

B. Prayer (salat)

1. Five times a day facing toward Mecca
2. Will kneel at home, work or at a mosque

C. Alms Giving (zakat)

1. Every Muslim must pay 2.5% of his accumulated wealth
2. The more you pay, the greater reward

D. Fasting (sawn)

1. During the month of Ramadan – dawn to dusk
2. Looking for cleanliness, righteousness and purity

E. Pilgrimage (hajj)

1. Type of Worship – once in a lifetime journey
2. Visit the Sacred Mosque in Makkah and kiss the Black Stone

III. Sects of Islam

A. Sunni – main body of Muslims

1. Insist upon “the way” (sunna)
2. Conservative
3. Turkish Moslems

B. Shia – First legitimate successor of Muhammad was Ali

1. Split off early
2. Liberal
3. Persia and Africa
4. Influenced by Mysticism, Pantheism, and Zoroastrianism

MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS: ISLAM

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C. Sufi – Men can become divine by a process of asceticism and mysticism

1. Named from coarse wool (suf)
2. Persia and India

IV. Five Articles of Faith

A. The Oneness of God

1. “Allah is for the Muslim an absolute, infinite, conscious power, not in any way divisible, and having no father, mother, or offspring. He created everything and everything is subjected to His will. As one modern Muslim put it, ‘The innate power within atoms is the order of Allah.’”

B. The Angels

1. Often worshipped
2. They administer His kingdom, but don’t share His divinity
3. They watch each person and keep record

C. The Books of God

1. Abraham’s books
2. Torah of Moses
3. Zaboor (Psalms of David)
4. Injeel (Gospel of Jesus)
5. Qur’an

D. The Prophets of God

1. Perfect revelation to Muhammad
2. Up to 124,000

E. Life After Death

1. Resurrection of bodies for Judgment Day
2. Muslims – Eternal Paradise, Others – Eternal Hell

V. Feasts and Festivals

A. “Little Feast” (‘Id al-Fitr)

1. End of the Fast of Ramadan
2. 1st day of Shawwal

B. “The Fest of Sacrifice” (‘Id al-Adha)

1. 10th day of the month of Dhu-al-Hija
2. Pilgrims outside of Mecca

C. The new Year Festival (Muharran)

1. 1st days of the 1st month

D. Festival of the Prophets Birthday (Mawlid an-Nabi)

1. 12th day of the month Rabi ‘al-awwal

E. The Festival of the Prophet’s night Journey (Lailat al-Mir ‘aj)

1. Night preceding the 27th day of the month of Rajab

VI. Islam versus Christianity

A. 5 in Islam 3 in Christianity

B. Jesus

1. One of up to 124,000 prophets
2. Born of a virgin, but not the Son of God
3. Sinless, but not divine
4. He was not crucified, He ascended without dying
5. Messiah and *ayat allah*
6. He will return again to live and die

C. Holy Spirit is the angel Gabriel

D. Salvation

1. Humans are basically good, but fallible and need guidance
2. The balance between good and bad deeds determines eternal destiny in Paradise or Hell
3. God's grace may tip the balance, but it is arbitrary and uncertain

E. Other

1. Go to Mosque for prayer, sermons, and counsel
2. Worship services held on Fridays
3. Missionary Efforts
4. Holy War (jihad)
5. Righteous living

Islamic Beliefs

At first glance, Islamic belief appears to be almost compatible with Christianity and/or Judaism. Often people claim that the Muslims believe in the same God as Christians: "They just don't accept Jesus Christ." However, as we shall see, the Muslim God is not like the Christian God. Islam rejects the biblical doctrines of the Trinity and the Deity of Christ.

God

For the Muslim, Allah is the only true God. There is no such blasphemous thing as the "Trinity." Jesus Christ is a prophet of Allah; he is not the Son of God or God himself (Surah 4:171). The Muslim God is unapproachable by sinful man. He is so perfect and holy He can only communicate with mankind through a progression of angels and prophets. The Muslim God is a god of judgment, not grace; a god of wrath rather than love. The Muslim's desire is to submit to the point where he can hold back the judging arm of Allah and, perhaps, through the capricious whim of Allah, inherit eternal life in an earthly paradise of gluttony and sexual gratification. Muslims have no concept of God as a loving and compassionate Father.

Jesus Christ

As we mentioned above, Jesus Christ to the Muslim is just one of many prophets of Allah, Jesus Christ was the prophet for His people in His day. The prophet Muhammad supercedes Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is not the Son of God or a part of any Trinity. Jesus Christ did not atone for anyone's sins although He was himself sinless. Jesus Christ did not die on the cross. Various Muslim traditions say that he either miraculously substituted Judas Iscariot for himself on the cross, or that God miraculously delivered Him from the hands of the Romans and Jews before He could be crucified. Most Muslims believe that Jesus Christ was taken bodily into heaven without having died (Surah 4:157).

Sin and Salvation

Sin and salvation in Islam is associated with two concepts: works and fate (kismet). Every Muslim who hopes to escape the judgment of Allah must fulfill the works of the Five Pillars of Faith (Surah 10:109). These include: 1) Recitation of the Shahadah ("There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the prophet of Allah"); 2) five daily prescribed prayer (*Salat or Namaz*) in Arabic. These prayers include genuflection and prostration in the direction of the holy city, Mecca; 3) Almsgiving (*Zakat*), which is unlike tithing since Muslims are only required to give one-fortieth of their income as charitable contributions; 4) Fasting (*Saum or Ruzeh*) during the entire month of Ramadan, when Muslims are supposed to fast from all food and drink from sunrise to sunset in atonement for their own sins over the previous year (However, after sunset many Muslims enjoy a feast and some get up before sunrise to eat some more before the sun rises and the fast begins again); and 5) A pilgrimage (*Hijj*) to Mecca, the holy city at least once in a Muslim's lifetime.

Jihad is the duty to engage in holy war against unbelievers or enemies of Islam if called upon to do so. It is one of the basic requirements of Muslim faith. Allah promises a heavenly reward to all who die in holy war.

Background

I. Introduction to Hinduism

- A. One of the World's Oldest Religions – 2000 – 1500 B.C.
 - 1. Confined primarily to the peoples in and around the Indian subcontinent.
 - 2. Controlled by a rigid caste system – fear and works.
- B. An Hereditary Graded Social Structure – The Caste System:
 - 1. Brahmins – Priestly and intellectual class – *mouth*
 - 2. Kshatriyas – The rulers and warrior class – *arm*
 - 3. Vaisyas – Farmer and business class – *thighs*
 - 4. Sudras – Workers and servants – *feet*
 - 5. The Untouchables – Outcasts: lepers, criminals, the poor and homeless.
- C. Hindu Sacred Writings:
 - 1. The Four Vedas (Books of Knowledge) 1000 B.C.
 - a. The Veda of Verses – Rig Vedas – prayers
 - b. The Veda of Sacred Formulas – Yajur Veda
 - c. The Veda of Chants – Samu Veda
 - d. The Veda of Charms – Atharva Veda

II. Types of Hinduism:

- A. Priestly – prayer and personal sacrifice
 - 1. Reincarnation began here with the elevation of priests to deities
 - 2. The caste system reinforced by the priests
- B. Philosophic – salvation by self – knowledge in Brahma
- C. Legalistic – The Laws of Manu teach the:
 - 1. Sacredness and supremacy of the Vedas
 - 2. Importance of sacrifice
 - 3. Way of knowledge and philosophy
 - 4. Final release from transmigration, i.e., reincarnation.
- D. Devotional – The Bhagavad Gita
 - “Do your caste duty and trust Brahma for your release.”
- E. Popular – rituals for meals; birth and marriage; death and funerals; sacrifices, purifications and holy days; plus rules and regulations for reincarnation.

III. Essentials of Hinduism:

- A. Reverence for the Veda – most do not know them; most cannot read them
- B. Belief in the all-inclusive Being – Brahma
- C. Karma – law of consequences – good works and bad works determine station in life
- D. Transmigration – reincarnation – movement from one life to another.

Acts 17:16-23:

*While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers asked, “What is this babbling trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be advocating foreign gods.” They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean.” (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.) Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “Men of Athens! I see as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: **TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.** Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.*

I. Comparison between Hinduism and Christianity

A. Supreme Being

H - impersonal Brahma: philosophical absolute beyond all things ethical or metaphysical

C - personal, perfect in character, creatively purposeful, ethical, loving and redemptive

B. Humanity

H - humanity is a temporary manifestation of the impersonal Supreme: not really responsible

C - individual with moral character capable of tragic selfishness, disobedience and degeneration; responsible before God and others; designed for life mortal and eternal

C. The World

H - temporary, worthless illusion

C - part of the divine plan, wisdom and power of God; created to be understood and enjoyed as a subordinate means of moral and spiritual life.

D. Sin

H - no real sin; neglected caste rules will lead to reincarnation; on with Brahma and compliance of caste are means of elevation

C - real sin against God, fellow humans and self; Christians struggle against sin

E. Salvation

H - Three Methods

1. intellectual way of knowledge - pantheism - universal interaction

2. emotional way of devotion - any deity - will do; sacrifice and meditation

3. practical way of works - ceremonial law - and caste system

C - devotion and love to God - Father through Jesus Christ and His sacrifice

F. Society

H - born and live in a fourfold caste system to be accepted unquestioningly

C - mutual service and responsibility to God, one another and family

II. Contradictory Elements in Hinduism

A. No personal character or moral responsibility in supreme being

B. No permanent worth for humanity

C. No universal moral standard (except caste/social distinctions)

D. No possible improvement in a person's social status, except after death

Major World Religions: Sikhism

III. Analysis of Evil and Salvation in a Christian Perspective

The Kind Of Evil	The Special Distress	The Corresponding Salvation
Physical	Pain, suffering, sickness	Good health
Intellectual	Ignorance	Knowledge
Metaphysical	Limitation on individuality	Wholeness, oneness with God
Emotional	Sorrow	Peace, serenity
Volitional	Failure	Power, success, change
Social	Disorder, injustice	Orderly justice
Legal	Crime	Obedience to command, submissiveness
Aesthetic	Ugliness	Beauty
Ceremonial	Impropriety	Propriety, substance
Moral	Wrong	Right
Religious	Sin against Deity	Righteousness and redemption
Personal	Selfishness	Unconditional love

IV. Points of Disagreement between India's Two Religions

	Nature of Evil	Method of Overcoming Evil	Resulting Salvation
Hinduism	Intellectual-ignorance of Brahma	By Knowledge of pantheism	Mystical reabsorption into the infinite
Buddhism	Emotional-unsatisfied desires	By suppression of desires	Passionless peace, Nirvana
	Material World	Individual Soul	Supreme Soul
Hinduism	Unreal, an illusion	Unreal, a temporary emanation	The only Real, the All
Buddhism	Unreal	Unreal	Unreal
	Value of Asceticism	Value of Morality	
Hinduism	Optional, though theoretically unnecessary	Unimportant; ultimately illusory	
Buddhism	Of desires, rather than of only the body	Quite important; yet distinctly subordinate	

I. Origins of Sikhism

- A. Guru Nanak (1469-1538 A.D.)
 - 1. Founded Sikhism; centered in the province of Punjab
 - 2. Appointed his successor because his sons were not qualified
- B. Guru Angad (1538-1552 A.D.) recorded most of Nanak's teachings and history
- C. Guru Amardas (1552-1574 A.D.) organized and strengthened the Sikh community
- D. Guru Ramdas (1574-1581 A.D.) \
 - 1. Focused Sikh worship at temples with shrines of past Sikhs
 - 2. Introduced the principle of hereditary leadership by appointing his own son as the next Guru
- E. Guru Arjan (1581-1606 A.D.)
 - 1. Compiled the Granth – writings from the former Gurus
 - 2. Relinquished the dress codes and religious attire
 - 3. Started collecting a religious tax from the Sikh
 - 4. Extended the Sikh religion beyond Punjab
- F. Guru Har Govind (1606-1638 A.D.)
 - 1. Took up the sword and made Sikhism a militant religion
 - 2. Fought against the Muslim invaders
- G. Guru Har Rai (1638-1660 A.D.) defeated by Muslims
- H. Guru Har Kishan (1660-1664 A.D.) continued in military operations against Muslims
- I. Guru Tegh Bahadur (1664-1675 A.D.) influenced all of India with Sikhism by military conquests
- J. Guru Govind Singh (1675-1708 A.D.) transformed Sikhism into a militant theocracy; last of the Gurus
- K. Sikh Monarchy broke into feudal states in the 1700s
 - 1. Loyalty transferred from the Gurus to the Granth (holy writings)
 - 2. Became known as the "Lions of Punjab"
 - 3. Last Sikh monarch Moharoja Dhulip Singh converted to Christianity after giving his Koh-i-nur diamond to Queen Victoria of England

II. Sikh Theology – Islam and Hindu Mixture

- A. Salvation
 - 1. Knowing God – a relationship of obedience and service
 - 2. Absolute submission – identifying with the mystical world – humanity and God together
- B. Worship
 - 1. Meditation – primary religious activity; the highest duty for humanity
 - 2. Teachers – gurus who inform and instruct the communities on life and practice
 - 3. Pure Congregation – disciples of Sikhism, devoted and obedient men and women
- C. Conception of God and Humanity
 - 1. Monotheism – prayer uttered everyday:
 - “There is but one God, whose name is true, Creator, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unborn, self-existent, great and bountiful. The true one was in the beginning. The true one is, was and also shall be.”
 - 2. Sovereignty of God – absolute and inscrutable
 - 3. World is transitory and void – God is the only true one

III. Sadhu Sundar Singh (1889-1933)

- A. Converted to Christianity after a personal revelation of Jesus
- B. Devoted to the teachings of Jesus Christ – particularly to forgiveness and mercy
- C. Supported missionary and evangelistic activities; disappeared while on a mission to Tibet
- D. Sadhu's Meditations

1. The Great Exchange

By giving up our sins and by following the truth, we are made free forever (John 8:32.) The works of those who are thus made free and spend all their life in God's service, that is, of those who die in the Lord, will follow them (Rev. 14:13). To die in the Lord does not mean death, for the Lord is "the Lord of the living and not of the dead", but to die in the Lord means losing oneself in his work. As the Lord said: "Those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it." (Luke 14:24)

2. The Holy Spirit

The same breath is blown into the flute, cornet and bagpipe, but different music is produced according to the different instruments. In the same way the Holy Spirit works in us, God's children, but different results are produced, and God is glorified through them according to each one's temperament and personality.

3. Finding God

Real joy and peace do not depend on power, kingly wealth, or other material possessions. If this were so, all people of wealth in the world would be happy and contented, and princes like Buddha, Mahavira and Bhartari would not have renounced their kingdom. But this real and permanent joy is found only in the Kingdom of God, which is established in the heart when we are born again.

The secret and reality of this blissful life in God cannot be understood without receiving, living and experiencing it. If we try to understand it only with the intellect, we will find our effort useless. A scientist had a bird in his hand. He saw that it had life, and wanting to find out in what part of the bird's body the life was, he began dissecting the bird. The result was that the very life of which he was in search disappeared mysteriously. Those who try to understand the inner life merely intellectually will meet with a similar failure. The life for which they are looking will vanish in the analysis.

In comparison with this big world the human heart is only a small thing. Though the world is so large, it is utterly unable to satisfy this tiny heart. Our ever growing soul and its capacities can be satisfied only in the infinite God. As water is restless until it reaches its level, so the soul has no peace until it rests in God.

I. The Structure of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC)

A. Definitions

1. Catholic – *Gk katholikos* – universal: used since the beginning of the 2nd Century
2. Diocese – fundamental
3. Bishop – chief liturgical figure; head of diocese
 - a. Confers Holy Orders – ordination and/or matrimony
 - b. Wield highest jurisdictional powers within the diocese
 - c. Delegates administrative duties
 - d. Assigns priests to specific ministries
4. Clergy – secular and religious workers
 - a. Secular – staffs and administrates local parishes or ministries
 - b. Religious – committed to religious orders or congregations under the authority of the bishops
5. Pope – final authority in all matters of the RCC
 - a. Bishop of Rome - overseer
 - b. Vicar of Christ – deputy of Jesus
 - c. Appoints and transfers bishops to dioceses
6. Synod of Bishops – representative body of bishops and others to counsel the pope.
7. Ecumenical Councils – gathering of all bishops for general church meeting. Only 21 meetings since the beginning of the Church; most recent being the second Vatican Council (1962-65); highest authority in all the church
8. Cardinal – highest dignitaries in the church after the pope
 - a. appointed by the pope and constitute the Sacred College – elect the papal successor
 - b. located and serve throughout the world – total 163
9. Curia – bureaucracy assisting the pope in the Vatican City
10. Eastern Rite Churches – connected to RCC but adhere to their own centuries – old traditions; include Maronite, Chaldean, Ruthenian and Ukrainian; also called Uniate Churches

B. Apostolic Session – continuous transmission of ministry from Jesus until today

1. Pope successor of St. Peter – *Matthew 16:16-18*
2. Magisterium – absolute authority of the church

C. Monasticism – *Gk monasterium* – living alone; members of religious orders or communities who take certain vows and obey simple rules or covenants.

D. Saints – veneration of saints, especially of Mary.

1. Immaculate conception of Mary – 1854 by Pope Pius XI
2. Assumption of the Virgin – 1950 by Pope Pius XII
3. Often criticized for letting veneration obscure the worship of God

E. Worship – centered on the Mass every Sunday and on special feast days. Mass is also celebrated at marriages, funerals and ordinations

II. The Sacraments of the RCC

A. Mass – celebrated in the vernacular with a liturgy

1. Definitions

- a. Eucharist (thankfulness) Holy Communion
- b. Sacrament – to ordain, to make sacred, mystery
- c. Communion – *Gk koinonia* – having in common, partnership, fellowship

2. Transubstantiation – bread and wine change in to the body and blood of Christ

B. Penance – Confession and forgiveness of sin; reconciliation with God and people

C. Baptism – water baptism for both adults and children (with confirmation)

D. Confirmation – acceptance of full membership into Christ's Church

Major World Religions: Roman Catholicism

Mid-America Conference

- E. Holy Orders – entering the clergy, monastic life or Christian service
- F. Matrimony – bonding between two Christians, cannot be dissolved
 - 1. Purpose of Matrimony – foster mutual love and procreate children
 - 2. Annulment – marriage null and void from the beginning after examination by RCC authorities
- G. Anointing the Sick – anointing and praying for the sick and dying – no longer called extreme unction or last rites
- H. Other Practices
 - 1. Praying the Rosary – very popular
 - 2. Fasting – strict observation of certain fasting days
 - 3. Catholic Education – Catholic-only schools and universities for RCC members

III. Catholic View on the Reformation

- A. Counter reformation – reaffirming the traditions under attack
 - 1. Scholastic theology – synthesizing faith and reason
 - 2. Primacy of the pope – infallible leader of the RCC
 - 3. Sacraments – securing all seven acts as sacred
- B. Controversial issues
 - 1. Bible only – different views on final authority of faith
 - a. RCC – two sources – scripture and tradition interpreted by the pope
 - b. Protestant – scripture alone interpreted by individual
 - c. Methodist – scripture alone supported by tradition, reason and experience
 - 2. Devotion to Angels and Saints – Protestants feel this to be unscriptural

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you

Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the time of our death

- 3. Purgatory – middle place between heaven and earth
- 4. Papal Supremacy – the apostolic successions

IV. The Roman Catholic Church in the United States

Total population – 60 million

9 cardinals, 45 archbishops, 344 bishops, 50,320 priests, 19,787 parishes, 226 seminaries for training clergy

7,292 elementary schools, 1360 high schools, 232 colleges & universities

Major World Religions: Protestantism

Mid-America Conference

The **Protestant Church** is the result of religious revolutions in the Christian Church of Western Europe throughout the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries. The Reformation ended the ecclesiastical and political supremacy of the pope in Christendom and established Protestant Churches, which influenced society on a religious, cultural, economical, political and educational level.

I. History of the Church

A. Early Conflicts

1. Judaism (130-140 A.D.) – Jewish nationalism and identity
2. Gnosticism (80-200 A.D.) – supreme knowledge; secret revelation
3. Montanism (190-250 A.D.) – Montanus, Maximilla and Prisca – incarnations of the Holy Spirit
4. Greek Philosophy (100-300 A.D.) – connecting Christianity to pagan thought (i.e. Stoicism, Pythagoreanism, Peripateticism and Neoplatonism)
5. Canonization of Scripture (100-350 A.D.) – which scriptures were inspired?
6. Marcion (100-160 A.D.) – taught that Jesus was not human
7. Roman Persecution (112-312 A.D.) – severe harassment, persecution, execution

B. Legalization of Christianity

1. Edict of Milan (312 A.D.) – authorized religion of the Roman Empire
2. Council of Nicaea (313 A.D.) – adoption of the Nicene Creed to counteract Arianism
3. Germanic Invasions (400-476 A.D.) – power struggle in central Europe

C. Roman and Byzantine Churches

1. Byzantine – Eastern Orthodox (337 to present) – ruled by the patriarchs of Constantinople
2. Roman – Western Catholic (337 to present) – ruled by papal authority from Rome
3. Great Schism (1054 A.D.) – break between East and West
 - a. Language barriers – Latin and Greek
 - b. Cultural and political barriers
 - c. Papal supremacy versus all bishops equal
 - d. Theological issue of “Where did the Holy Spirit come from?”
 - e. Economic and military expansion of the West – the Crusades
4. Constantinople captured by the Turks (1453 A.D.) – Orthodox Church continued

D. Catholic Reforms

1. The Crusades (1095-1250 A.D.) – attempted to secure the Holy Land from the Muslims
2. Dominicans (1200 A.D.) – an order of preachers sent to proclaim the gospel and church unity in France
3. Franciscans (1200 A.D.) – revival for the poor and outcast; strong missionary effort
4. Universities (1200-1400 A.D.) – established schools for education and discipline, Theology main discipline
 - a. Apocalyptic – a new age of the Holy Spirit
 - b. Mystical – self-denial and union with God
 - c. Scholastic – synthesize faith and reason

5. Nationalist Reformers

- a. John Wycliffe (1369-1415 A.D.) – England – Oxford theologian; translator
 - b. John Huss (1369-1384 A.D.) – Czech Republic – rector at the University of Prague
 - c. Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498 A.D.) – Italy – Dominican preacher
6. Councils of Pisa, Kostnity and Basel (1409-1443 A.D.) – Rome’s attempts to reform medieval society

Major World Religions: Protestantism

Mid-America Conference

II. The Reformation

- A. Martin Luther (1483-1546 A.D.) – started German reformation with his 95 Theses in 1517
 - 1. Justification by grace alone through faith alone (vs – works righteousness)
 - 2. Authority and superiority of scripture above everything else (vs tradition or humanism)
 - 3. Priesthood of all believers, equality in the eyes of God (vs-clergy and laity separation)
 - 4. Other Changes
 - a. Baptism and communion only valid sacraments
 - b. Bishops necessary for the church – archbishops, cardinals and popes not necessary
 - c. Abolished clerical celibacy
- B. Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531 A.D.) – started the German Swiss reformation in Zurich
- C. John Calvin (1509-1564 A.D.) – started the French Swiss reformation in Geneva
 - 1. Sovereignty and majesty of God
 - 2. Predestination of humanity into godly and ungodly
 - 3. All creation deemed good by God
- D. John Knox (1513-1572 A.D.) – Scottish reformer
- E. English Reformation
 - 1. National reformation led by Henry VIII for personal gain – divorce and remarriage
 - 2. King and parliament acted together through law to establish a separate church: Anglican Church or Church of England

III. Results of the Reformation

- A. Spiritual Changes
 - 1. Establishment of streams of theology
 - a. Catholic
 - b. Lutheran
 - c. Reformed
 - d. Anglican – later revised into Wesleyan theology
 - 2. Liberty granted to the common people
 - 3. Worship and work took new meanings
 - 4. Emphasis placed on education
- B. Social Changes
 - 1. Social order and rights introduced
 - 2. Civil independence from a central authority
 - 3. Republican principles of government
 - 4. New leadership, new countries, new regimes of power birthed
 - 5. Scientific study promoted