

SCRIPTURE TRACK

False Prophets

There WILL be false prophets.

“If you want to hear someone, say something wrong, ask them what someone else believes” – Phil VanDeusen

Christianity is unique in many ways:

- Every other religion relies on one person receiving a “revelation” from their god
- Jesus taught publicly and validated his message by performing miracles.
- Miracles were witnessed by thousands of people and recorded by many independent sources
- Every other religion teaches us to earn our way to God
- Jesus is the only one who is still alive

How do we evaluate the claims of other religions?

- Use the same evidence-based analysis we used in apologetics

Hinduism (title for next three slides)

Core beliefs

- Many things are gods (330 million)
- Brahma – Supreme god that inhabits everything.
- Brahma is impersonal and unknowable
- Everyone is “divine”
- Karma and Reincarnation
- Vedas – Sacred Hindu writings

Buddhism

Core beliefs

- Also teach Karma and Reincarnation
- Goal is to achieve enlightenment – going through
- Multiple variations
- Buddha is not seen as god but as a “way shower”
 - Siddhartha Gautama is the man who started Buddhism
- Reincarnation (in some variations) is a punishment to work off debt (sin)
- Many things we say today (Zen, Karma, etc.) originate with Buddhism and Hinduism

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Islam vs. Christianity

Similarities

- Monotheistic
- Claim Abrahamic lineage/promise
- Claim Jesus in the Messiah, was born of a virgin, validate miracles
- Claim man is sinful and needs a path to God.

Differences

- Christianity – path is through Jesus
- Islam – path is through a law (Sharia)
- Christianity – Yahweh is 3-in-one and relational
- Islam – Allah is a monad, rejects any relational aspect (father, son, etc.)

The Quran

- Quran validates the Bible in several passages (claims within Quran)
 - Quran says the Quran was revealed to people the way the Bible was revealed to Moses.
 - Claims the Bible is not corrupt
- Claims Jesus was crucified but “only appeared to die”.
- Has Biblical characters (David, Moses, Jesus) but has different accounts

Muhammad

- Born in 570 AD
- Claims to receive prophecy directly from Gabriel in private
 - No witnesses or external verification

Personal Life

- Multiple wives – 11 at one time, one was 6 years old
- No external (outside of Quran) record of miracles
- Raided caravans and stole valuables
- Killed critics

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Mormonism

- Initial justification – The Bible was no longer reliable, a new revelation was needed to restore the church

Book of Mormon

- Translated golden tablets with help from an angel
 - Angel took the tablets, no one else ever saw or verified message
- 3,913 changes to the book of Mormon
 - Photographs from 1830's copy

Prophecies

- Multiple unfulfilled prophecies
 - Jesus would return by 1891
 - All nations would be involved in the American Civil War
 - Temple built in Missouri in Smith's lifetime

Summary

- It's good to understand the core teachings and messengers of other religions.
- Other religions are incompatible with Christianity (all religions are NOT different paths to the same god)
- We can test the teachings and the teachers
- Use good evidence-based analysis to find truth!