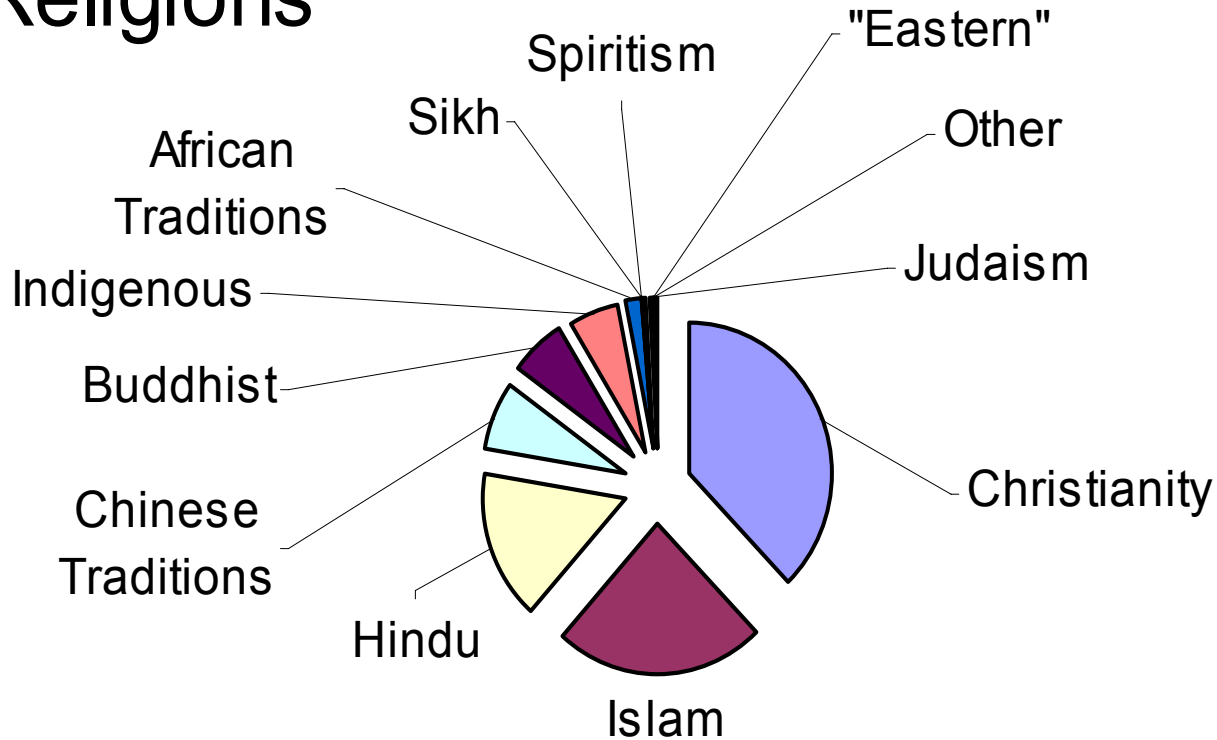


The Religions of the World

- According to the UN, there are 6.6 billion people alive today.
- Nearly 5 out of every 6 people on this earth claim to be adherents of one of these religions:
 - Christianity
 - Islam
 - Hindu
 - Buddhist/ “Eastern”

World Religions



Christian	2.1 Billion	Indigenous	300 Million
Islam	1.3 Billion	African	100 Million
Hindu	900 Million	Sikh	23 Million
Chinese	394 Million	Spiritism	15 Million
Buddhist	376 Million	Judaism	14 Million

Let's contrast what the other most popular religions say about the afterlife with what Jesus says:

The afterlife in Islam

- Jannah—paradise

- The Islamic texts describes life for its immortal inhabitants, one that is happy — without hurt, sorrow, fear or shame — where every wish is fulfilled. Traditions relate that inhabitants will be of the same age (33 years), and of the same stature. Their life is one of bliss including: wearing costly robes, bracelets, perfumes; partaking in exquisite banquets, served in priceless vessels by immortal youths; reclining on couches inlaid with gold or precious stones. Other foods mentioned include meats, scented wine and clear drinks bringing neither drunkenness nor rousing quarrelling. Inhabitants will rejoice in the company of their parents, wives, and children (provided they are were admitted to paradise) — conversing and recalling the past. Texts also relate "pure consorts" (*houris*), created in perfection, with whom carnal joys are shared — "a hundred times greater than earthly pleasure". Female inhabitants admitted to paradise will rank 70,000 times greater than *houris* through the merit of their good deeds.^[1]
- The dwellings for inhabitants will be pleasant, with lofty [gardens](#), shady valleys, fountains scented with [camphor](#) or ginger; rivers of water, milk, honey and wines; delicious fruits of all seasons without thorns; pavillions wherein *houris* are kept. One day in paradise is considered equal to a thousand days on earth. Palaces are made from gold, silver, pearls, among other things. Traditions also note the presence of [horses](#) and [camels](#) of "dazzling whiteness", along with other creatures. Large trees are described, mountains made of [musk](#), between which rivers flow in valleys of [pearl](#) and [ruby](#).^[1]

- Jahannam—hell

- Those who ignored, or only pretended to believe in [Allah](#) remain in Jahannam after [Qiyamah](#) ([Judgment Day](#)).
- Muslims believe that unfaithful Muslims not true to their religion will be punished in Jahannam, but will eventually be forgiven. Muslims also believe that those who are not Muslim will burn in Jahannam for everlasting.

According to Islam

- Gandhi is not in heaven.
- You (a non-Muslim) will not go to heaven.

What Hindus believe

Hinduism asserts that every one is divine. Atman, or self, is one with Brahman.

All of reality outside of Brahman is considered mere illusion. The spiritual goal of a Hindu is to become one with Brahma, thus ceasing to exist in its illusory form of "individual self." This freedom is referred to as moksha. Until moksha is achieved, a Hindu believes that he/she will be repeatedly reincarnated in order that he/she may work towards self-realization of the truth (the truth being that only Brahman exists, nothing else). How a person is reincarnated is determined by karma, which is a principle of cause and effect governed by nature's balance. What one did in the past affects and corresponds with what happens in the future, past and future lives included.

The Hindu caste system forms the basis of Hindu beliefs. A person is a member of a caste by birth or personal karma. The lowest members of the Hindu caste system are the laborers. Those outside the caste system are known as the untouchables, or outcasts. They are usually the poor. Salvation (moksha) is only possible for the upper three classes in the caste system: First: Priests, Second: Rulers or Warriors, Third: Merchants and Farmers. Salvation is not possible for those who are laborers because they are not twice born.

What Hindus believe, Continued

- Hindus have a strong belief in karma. Karma determines one's position in life as well as the cycle of life. Karma in other words, is cause and effect. There are three goals to which Hindus may give any of those. The first goal is through love and sex. The second goal is wealth and success. The third goal is seeking the common good. Hindus also believe in salvation through works, way of knowledge, and the way of devotion, all of which are achieved through fulfilling one's duties, meditation or worship. They also believe that Brahman is his creation and that all are divine, even objects have a divine nature. Brahman is an impersonal, absolute god that cannot be known by humans. One's soul is Brahman and each creation is god. There are many gods and goddesses in Hinduism, some of whom are intermarried and incarnate. Each deity have their own characteristics and represent various attributes.

The Afterlife for a Hindu

- The basic argument in Hinduism is thus this: take stock of who you are currently—your caste and your karma. If you are not a member of one of the three upper castes, you have performed poorly in a previous life. You should select a god or gods to worship who possess the qualities you lack to gain salvation (moksha). If you do well in this life, you will be reincarnated into a higher caste. If your new caste is one of the upper three, and you perform well in this life, you can achieve moksha.

According to Hinduism

- Gandhi achieved moksha
- You have not and will be reincarnated to a different state depending on your Karma

What Buddhists Believe

- *the 'Four Noble Truths' –*
 - *(1) to live is to suffer (Dukha),*
 - *2) suffering is caused by desire (Tanha, or "attachment"),*
 - *3) one can eliminate suffering by eliminating all attachments, and*
 - *4) this is achieved by following the noble eightfold path. The "eightfold path" consists of having [a] right*
 - *1) view,*
 - *2) intention,*
 - *3) speech,*
 - *4) action,*
 - *5) livelihood (being a monk),*
 - *6) effort (properly direct energies),*
 - *7) mindfulness (meditation), and*
 - *8) concentration (focus).*

The method of Buddhism

- For the Buddhist there is only ethical living and meditative appeals to exalted beings for the hope of perhaps achieving enlightenment and ultimate Nirvana. But more than likely one will have to go through a number of reincarnations to pay off their vast accumulation of karmic debt. For the true followers of Buddhism the religion is a philosophy of morality and ethics, encapsulated within a life of renunciation of the ego-self.

In Buddhism—no afterlife

- Buddha -- in Buddhism there is no beginning, and no end, instead there is an endless circle of birth and death.

So what is the goal of Buddhism

- The goal of Buddhism is Nirvana. It is a state that is free from any mind-contaminants (*kilesa*) such as [lust](#), [anger](#) or [craving](#); a state of perfect peace unobstructed by psychological conditioning (*sankhara*). All forms of craving are extinguished such that one is no longer subject to human [suffering](#) (*dukkha*) or further states of [rebirths](#) in the [samsara](#). The Buddha in the [Dhammapada](#) says of Nirvāṇa that it is "the highest happiness". This is not the sense-based happiness of everyday life, nor the concept of happiness as interpreted by Western culture, but rather an enduring, transcendental happiness integral to the calmness attained through [enlightenment](#) or *bodhi*. The knowledge accompanying nirvana is expressed through the word [bodhi](#).
- The [Buddha](#) describes the abiding in Nirvāṇa as "deathlessness" ([Pali](#): amata or amaravati) or "the unconditioned" and as the highest spiritual attainment, the natural result that accrues to one who lives a life of virtuous conduct and practise in accordance with the [Noble Eightfold Path](#). Such a life dissolves the causes for future becoming ([Skt](#), *karma*; [Pali](#), *kamma*) that otherwise keep beings forever wandering through the impermanent and suffering-generating realms of desire, form, and formlessness, termed [samsara](#).

According to Buddhism

- Gandhi may have achieved Nirvana.
- You could achieve Nirvana someday.

Do all roads lead to the same path?

- This is a common statement. However...
- Sincerity is the NOT the issue.
- Let's take a look at very sincere people
 - The Aztecs and the Incas (and Egypt)
 - Ziggurats for temple sacrifice
 - Killing young girls to appease the Sun God.
 - Jonestown in Guyana
 - Hitler

All roads do not lead to the same path...

- It is possible to be sincerely wrong...
 - The Egyptians, Aztecs, and Incas were wrong—the sun is not God and we should not sacrifice human lives to the sun.
 - The followers of Jim Jones were wrong—he was not a God and did not have the final message.
 - The followers of Hitler were wrong—God does not want us to create a master race of Arians by killing or otherwise eliminating undesirable people from society. Indeed, Jesus says he came especially for the downtrodden.

What do Jews and Christians say?

- **The Ten Commandments**

And God spoke all these words, saying,

- ²“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
- 1 ***“You shall have no other gods before me.***
- ²⁴***“You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God,*** visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶but showing steadfast love to thousands^o of those who love me and keep my commandments.
- ⁷“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.
- ⁸“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. ¹¹For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.
- ¹²“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.
- ¹³“You shall not murder.^o
- ¹⁴“You shall not commit adultery.
- ¹⁵“You shall not steal.
- ¹⁶“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- ¹⁷“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

What did Jesus say?

- John 14:6

- ¹“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to where I am going.”
⁵Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, **“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you had known me, you would have known my Father also.”**

What did the Apostles say?

- Acts 4:12
 - ¹⁰let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. ¹¹This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. **¹²And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**

What did Gandhi say of Jesus?

- “the message of the Sermon on the Mount always remains true for me”--- **Mahatma Gandhi**
- “I can say that Jesus holds a special place in my heart as a teacher who has exerted a considerable influence on my life". --- **Mahatma Gandhi**
- "A man who was completely innocent, offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act.” ---**Mahatma Gandhi**

The sermon on the mount on Judgemnt

- Matt 7:1
- ¹“Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. ²For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get.

The Parable of Weeds among the Wheat

- ²⁴He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ ²⁸He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Weeds

- ³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

The Heart of the Matter

- All people who walk this earth are destined to an afterlife.
- Jesus said the the afterlife is comprised of a “heaven” (the Bible goes on to describe it as a New Earth—see “What Happens When We Die” sermon for clarity on this point) or hell.
- People who confess their sin to God and receive Christ as Lord and Savior go to heaven.
- No Christian ever has the right to say somebody is going to hell.
- We therefore can not say that Gandhi is in hell but will say those who receive Jesus as Lord and Savior are destined for heaven.