

There are many ideologies about religion, some believe in religion while others don't. In every religion there is a leader, God, God's, higher being, or person who shows how a religion functions and what followers should believe and how they should behave. In Christianity there is only one God. God is the Creator of all, the highest power, and the Father of humanity. In the book of Isaiah it states, "...They are to be afraid no longer, but must trust in the power and in the word of the incomparable Lord of creation¹." The Bible states that God is the 'Lord of Creation' meaning he is the one who thought of and build the Earth. Christians believe their God is everything; the Creator, the Highest Being, the Father of all, and the much more.

While Christians have always believed in one God, Hinduism is well known for their study and worship of many Gods. In Hinduism all Gods are different but are the same, all Gods have different purposes and historical stories but, "...All Hindu Gods and Goddesses are the same God or divine energy, nameless and without form²." When the quote states that Hindu Gods '... are the same God or divine energy' the writer means that all the Gods that people worship are just aspects of one energy that is called The Divine Energy. The Divine Energy is Earth and it's happening. The diversity of gods and goddesses in Hinduism allows for Hindus to study or worship a God(s) for specific reasons. Certain families may worship Shiva for pure consciousness or Ganesh for truth and knowledge.

While Hinduism and Christianity are different when it comes to their beliefs on the number of higher beings, the Mayans and Hindus share the belief that Gods came in many numbers. The Mayans believed that there were many Gods such as Kukulcan who is known as the winged God and was a feather serpent, Chac the god of rain and thunder, Kinich Ahau the Sun god, and Yumil Kazob was know as The Maize god and was a god of agriculture. Each God has a power, a purpose and was given human sacrifices. Along with worshipping Gods the Mayan people worshipped their rulers. Each ruler was said to be a demigod and should be worshipped as such³. Although each of these religions seems very different, their Gods do share a common similarity. A similarity between Hinduism and the Mayans is that they all believe in beings that have taught, preserved, and protected their followers.

Throughout time there has always been a creation story. Every creation story I have ever heard has been different from the one before. In Christianity, the world was created in six days and on the seventh day God rested; on the first day, God gave the Earth light and separated the light and dark; on the second day, God separated the water and clouds; on the third day, God created the dry land and called it Earth with vegetation and called the water sea; on the fourth day, God created the sun and the moon; on the fifth day, God created underwater creatures and created the birds; on the sixth day, God created the wild animals and man in his image; and on the seventh day, God rested⁴. In Christianity, God created the world in seven days. In Hinduism, the Creation story begins with the Ocean. The Ocean created a snake, which held Vishnu⁵. With Vishnu's birth a sound started and woke up the flower, which then grew out of Vishnu. Out of the middle of the flower came the God Brahma⁶, Vishnu then told Brahma to create a world.

¹ The Cambridge Companion to The Bible, Bruce Chilton and Howard Clark Kee

² http://www.sanatansociety.org/hindu_gods_and_goddesses.htm

³ <http://www.crystalinks.com/mayangods.html>

⁴ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fl9ocWb3J0M&feature=related>

⁵ Vishnu is known as the preserver of the universe.

⁶ Brahma is known as the job of creation.

Brahma then created the heavens, earth and the sky, put vegetation and animals with senses and then created humans⁷. The Mayans believed in a more complex story: there was once nothing but a creature, of dragon shape with feathers, called Hear-of-Sky thought, “Who is there to speak my name? Who shall I make it dawn?” When Heart-of-Sky said the word Earth, the Earth was created and then rose out of the sea. He only had to think of something and it was so. He thought of mountains, trees, creatures, and sounds. Then Heart-of-Sky thought of respect and praise but his creations wouldn’t obey, so he crumpled up the Earth and started over. Heart-of-Sky gave Earth Grandparents because they were wise spirits would ‘carve people from wood.’ The Grandmother and Grandfather then were put on Earth; they then created ‘wood people.’ Wood people were shown as imperfect as the first Earth so Heart-of-Sky tried to destroy the wood people but they rebelled and attacked. But when the wood people attacked their faces were crushed and they turned into monkeys. The Mayans believe that is why monkeys look like humans; they were ‘an experiment in human design⁸.’ One similarity between all these creation stories is that each story shows that Earth was not just created quickly and out of no where, but through a process and with time.

The soul has been a mystery to those who seek for an exact science and definition to the soul. Some believe that the soul is one’s consciousness and others believe it does not exist. Christians believe that a person consists of the body, mind and soul. The soul is the conscious and subconscious of the mind, which are emotions and will⁹. In Hinduism the soul is a consciousness of life and it is the masters and lord of all, it is also the protector of all beings. The soul is something that can only be found through studying the ancient text and when the soul is found that person and their soul become a Sage¹⁰. The Mayans believed that a human had more than one soul, some souls died with the body and some died before. The soul was a part of a person or an experience; an example of a Mayan soul is the animal companion spirit¹¹. In all three religions; Hinduism, Christianity, and the Mayan’s all believed in a soul. They all believed that the soul was something that existed in a person and was a part of their being like air or bones.

A moral code is a similar aspect people who are religious and those who are not share. Christianity states that a sin is when God’s law is broken, the most well known of Christian sins are characteristics parents teach their children when they are young; not to cheat, steal, lie, ECT. Christians believe that their laws reflect the moral purity of one’s nature and ad that Christian laws are the reflection of God’s character. God’s laws were created and based on moral purity¹². In Hinduism the sin is the destroyed merit of goodness. When a sin is acted upon your sin will break free in you and will flow freely. Sin satisfies its hunger with desire, which the Gods don’t poses. Desires and sins are the difference between the real world and the heavens. Hindu people

⁷ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9yWwFWpbRo>

⁸ <http://www.criscenzo.com/jaguarsun/popolvuh.html>

⁹ <http://www.christian-faith.com/forjesus/spirit-soul-and-body-tripartite-nature-man>

¹⁰ http://1stholistic.com/prayer/Hindu/hol_Hindu-eternal-soul.htm, A Sage is also known as a saint.

¹¹ http://books.google.com/books?id=eHwLgl2dMg0C&pg=PA203&lpg=PA203&dq=do+the+m+ayans+believe+in+the+soul&source=bl&ots=Ubr1AIZvsb&sig=-P07HZpYk3S_qOqBROv7odkxjxWM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=T86UT-PJJifliALQjfHfDw&ved=0CCwQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q&f=false

¹² <http://carm.org/what-is-sin>

pray to be more like the Gods and they don't sin so as to be closer to their Gods¹³. The Mayan people believed that a sin was caused by not performing homage to the Gods; an example of a sin to the Mayans would be to not perform the Mayan Dance. Dancers dressed as the Gods while performing the Mayan Dance, the dancers would then reenact the creation story. This dance showed how grateful the Mayan people were of the Gods.

The 'traditional' belief about sins and the after life is that if you sin enough in your life you will not be able to enter the heaven or more pleasant after life rather than going to a hell or unpleasant afterlife. In Christianity those who are good Christians go to Heaven because they love God, those who do not love God and are a sinner go to Hell.¹⁴ Like Christianity, Hinduism beliefs state that those who do not perfect their soul and self through meditation and those who don't have good karma will be reincarnated until they reach Nirvana where the soul is finally released from reincarnation¹⁵. The Mayans believed in a Heaven and an underworld, all those who either died in childbirth or who were sacrificed were sent to Heaven, those who died of other causes would be sent into the underworld where the sinister Gods would torture and rule over for eternity.

There are so many religions in this world that knowing which to believe is like asking someone to pick blindly from a chocolate box. Most religions seem to be the same; a God, moral code to follow, prayer, ECT. But once you bite into each religion you learn more than there is that meets the eye. You then learn the sacred traditions, familial expectations, and much more that comes with joining a community.

While growing up I was forced to go to church. I never liked going to church because there were always so many rules; you had to stand when you sang, you had to go up to the alter, and people would always ask you questions about stuff you didn't really care about. When I was really young I used Church as an excuse to get all dressed up, I had this deep green dress that I insisted on wearing at all times that required wearing a nice dress. When I grew up into a young teen I hated Church so much that I would throw fits so as to avoid going, I don't think I hated religion or services so much as I hated the people that went and the fact that it was conformity, and obviously being a new teen I had to rebel and refuse. I was a complete pain with Church and religion until recently when I finally got over my self and went to church for the sake of my mom, who likes Church and always begs for my sister and I to join her, we still refuse to go now and then. My dad doesn't come to church with us unless it's a special occasion like Christmas or Easter, but I think that since he has grown up going to Church he doesn't need the experience of going to Church as much as my sister and I



¹³ [http://www.hinduism.co.za/sin.htm#\(Karma\)](http://www.hinduism.co.za/sin.htm#(Karma))

¹⁴ <http://soulrefuge.org/2011/11/01/who-goes-to-heaven-and-who-goes-to-hell-according-to-the-bible-2/>

¹⁵ http://1stholistic.com/prayer/Hindu/hol_Hindu-eternal-soul.htm

do. I've never been forced into any religion but I have been given the opportunity to join, while I have learned to respect religion and to contain myself for Church every once in a while, I do have my own views and I'm not sure where I got my views. Maybe my religious views are a mix between what I have learned in life and Christianity? Maybe my views are just from life? Maybe my views are all from Christianity? I will never know but one thing is for sure, my beliefs share common ground with the Mayans, Hinduism, and Christianity.

Religion is a broad subject filled with many ideas, beliefs, stories, and traditions. While writing this paper I learned a lot about how certain religions explain the world and its unexplainable abilities. This paper has helped me point out what those similarities are between Hinduism, the Mayans, and Christianity. I was able to find similarities in almost every aspect of each religion that I studied; what is a soul? Is there an afterlife? And, is there a higher being? With every question the answer would be similar in some way or another, sometime only two religions were similar and sometimes all three had common beliefs. Although I know that there are many differences in religions and beliefs, I wrote this paper because I believe that the connections are what make religion just as interesting as its differences.

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