

Other Eastern Religions & Christianity

Key Bible Verse for All Apologetics:

“but in your _____ honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being _____
to make a _____ to anyone who asks you for a _____
for the _____ that is in you; yet do it with _____
and _____,” - 1 Peter 3:15 (ESV)

Bible Study: The One True God Deut. 6:4-5

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. - Duet. 6:4-5

“_____” PRONOUNCED ***Sha-ma*** (hear) in Judaism

Destroy “_____” Deut. 12:1-4

You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. - Deut. 12:2

You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way. - Deut. 12:4

Biblical truth: There is _____.

the Holy Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Any and all other “gods” are false, deceptive and lead only to sin, separation from the one true God ultimately leading to an unfilled life, physical and eternal death (separation from God).

_____ = one God

_____ = the belief that there are many gods,

or a plurality of deities

Prominent polytheistic worldview/belief systems include:

- Hinduism
- Taoism/Daoism
- Shintoism
- Animism

Source: *The Compact Guide to World Religions*, Dean C. Halverson, Gen. Ed.

Hinduism and Christianity Contrasted

	HINDUISM	CHRISTIANITY
GOD	Impersonal	Personal
HUMANITY	Continuous in the sense of being extended from the Being of God	Discontinuous in the sense of being separate from the Being of God; continuous in the sense of being made in God's image
HUMANITY'S PROBLEM	Ignorance	Moral rebellion
THE SOLUTION	Liberation from illusion and ignorance	Forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with the personal holy God
THE MEANS	Striving to detach oneself from the separated ego and seeking to be aware of one's unity with the divine through self effort	Repenting of sin and trusting in the completed and substitutionary work of Jesus Christ
THE OUTCOME	Merge into the Oneness; the individual disappears	Eternal fellowship with God; the person is fulfilled in a loving relationship with God

Taoism and Christianity Contrasted

	TAOISM	CHRISTIANITY
THE ULTIMATE	The <i>Tao</i> : An impersonal force of existence that is beyond differentiation. We are to align ourselves with the <i>Tao</i> , but we cannot know it in an interpersonal way.	God: The personal Creator who is ontologically separate from His creation. He both knows us (Jeremiah 12:3) and can be known by us in a personal way (John 17:3).
THE MEANING OF GOODNESS	The ultimate form of the <i>Tao</i> is beyond moral distinctions. The <i>yin/yang</i> duality that flows from the <i>Tao</i> represents the balance and the interaction between good and evil. Thus, good and evil are coequal and mutually dependent.	The existence of good is prior to the existence of evil; and moral righteousness is based on the very character of God. Contrary to Taoism, evil is necessary neither to the existence of nor the knowledge of God's goodness.
NATURE	Nature has always existed; it is not created. Nature is moral in the sense that moral laws are like the laws of nature—impersonal principles that have inevitable cause-and-effect consequences.	A creation of God and an expression of the creativity of His being. Nature is morally neutral; persons are moral.
HUMANITY'S PRIMARY PROBLEM	Human life is in chaos because we do not align ourselves with the "Way" that flows through nature. Such non-alignment results in disorder and disharmony in society and in one's self.	Human life is in chaos because we have rebelled against God, our Creator. This has caused us to be separated from Him, and it leads to spiritual emptiness.
THE SOLUTION	Reliance on our ability to become aware of the way in which the <i>Tao</i> operates in the world and to align ourselves with it. Transformation comes from our purposeful inactivity (<i>wu-wei</i>) and to "go with the flow" of the <i>Tao</i> .	Reliance on what God has accomplished on our behalf through Jesus Christ. Transformation comes as we repent of our sins (selfishness), trust in the forgiving and reconciling work of Jesus Christ, and allow the Holy Spirit to give us new life.
THE OUTCOME	The result of aligning ourselves with the <i>Tao</i> is to have order and harmony in society and peace within one's self. "To know harmony means to be in accord with the eternal" (chap. 55; Chan, 166).	As we repent of our sins and trust in Christ, we will have peace with God and within ourselves, meaning in life, and society will be more ordered.
THE AFTERLIFE	The person's individual consciousness ceases to exist, but his/her life force is "recycled." Through remembrance, the family keeps them "immortal."	The person's individual consciousness continues to exist, either in fellowship with God or separated from Him.

The Nature of the Gods (*Kami*) Contrasted with God

SHINTO	CHRISTIANITY
There are many gods (<i>kami</i>).	There is one triune God.
The <i>kami</i> are procreated by other gods.	God created all things and persons.
The <i>kami</i> indwell material objects and the natural world.	God transcends the world in His being.
The <i>kami</i> may be either helpful or hurtful.	God is loving and absolutely good.
The <i>kami</i> are the gods of Japan.	God is the Creator and Lord of all peoples.

The Human Relationships to the Gods (*Kami*) or God

SHINTO	CHRISTIANITY
The <i>kami</i> are offended by ritual or ceremonial pollution related to blood or death.	God is alienated by the moral rebellion expressed by the self-centeredness or disobedience of His creatures.
The <i>kami</i> might commune with those who are ritually purified and who wait for their presence.	God promises to be present to anyone who calls upon Him for forgiveness.
Shinto believers can fulfill their duty while following their own life agenda.	Christians follow God when they fulfill God's agenda and will.
Shinto believers gain the good graces of the <i>kami</i> by following the principles of purification.	Christians enjoy a relationship with God through trustful reliance (faith) on God.
Enjoying the good graces of the <i>kami</i> depends on human efforts.	A relationship with God is a gift (grace) that no one can deserve.

Animism

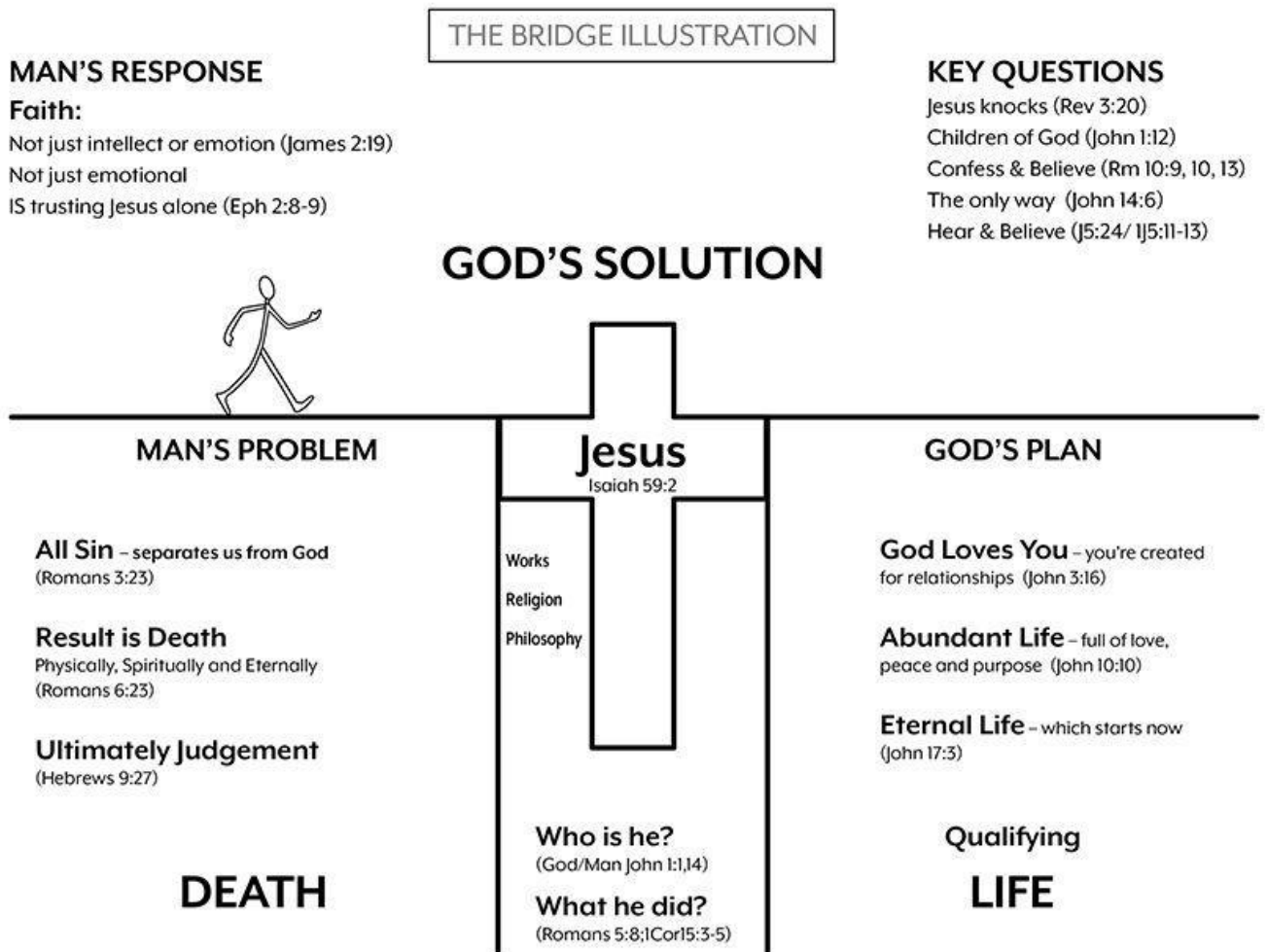
44

The Animistic and Biblical Worldviews Contrasted

	ANIMISM	CHRISTIANITY
GOD	God exists, but He is beyond our abilities to know Him or to communicate with Him.	God exists, and although He is beyond our comprehension, He is nevertheless knowable; and He has made himself known to us through Jesus Christ and through the Bible (Hebrews 1:1-2).
ULTIMATE/ IMMEDIATE ISSUES	Formal religions are concerned only with the <i>ultimate</i> issues of sin and salvation; but animism offers the power to cope with the <i>immediate</i> , everyday needs.	The God of Christianity is concerned <i>both with the ultimate and the immediate</i> issues. God desires to provide not only for our eternal needs but also for our daily needs (1 Peter 5:7).
THE SPIRITS	The spirits are seen as being either intermediaries between us and God or as representatives of God.	The spirits are deceptive; they seek to take the place of God in our lives.
THE POWER OF THE SPIRITS	The spirits and the instruments of magic have the power either to do harm to others or to bring benefit to us.	The spirits do have power, but our utilizing such power leads to bondage. God has demonstrated through Jesus Christ that He is greater than the spirits and magic, for "the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" (1 John 4:4; see also Exodus 8:18) and He has "disarmed the powers and authorities" (Colossians 2:15). Submitting to God brings freedom (John 8:32-36) not bondage.



Steps to Peace With God or The Bridge Illustration



Supplemental Material

Websites

Steps to Peace with God website with Billy Graham (version 1)

<https://stepstopace.org/>

Steps to Peace with God website (version 2)

<https://peacewithgod.net/steps-to-peace-with-god/>

Handouts

1. A Japanese Gospel Message (Shintoism)

<https://missionexus.org/a-japanese-gospel-message/>

2. I am a Hindu, why should I consider becoming a Christian?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Hindu-Christian.html>

3. How does God judge those who were raised in non-Christian cultures?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/God-judge-religions.html>

Digging Deeper

Got Questions website (www.gotquestions.org)

- What is Hinduism and what do Hindus believe?
<https://www.gotquestions.org/hinduism.html>
- Witnessing to Hindus - what is the key?
<https://www.gotquestions.org/witnessing-Hindus.html>
- What is Brahmanism?
<https://www.gotquestions.org/Brahmanism-Vedism.html>
- What is mandala in Hinduism?
<https://www.gotquestions.org/mandala-hinduism.html>
- What is an avatar in Hinduism?
<https://www.gotquestions.org/avatar-hinduism.html>
- What is Taoism/Daoism?
<https://www.gotquestions.org/taoism-daoism.html>
- What is Shintoism?
<https://www.gotquestions.org/Shintoism.html>

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association has a helpful FREE app that includes a Steps to Peace with God presentation.

There is an Iphone/Ipad, Android & Windows version available here:

<https://billygraham.org/grow-your-faith/mobile-app/>