

Christianity v.s. Islam

Christianity and Islam are two of the largest religions in the world. As of 2012, according to a study conducted by Adherents.com, Christianity had the largest amount of followers with the numbers going over 2.2 billion followers. Islam came in a close second with 1.6 billion adherents. While there are many disagreements between the followers of both religions, there are just as many similarities whose laws satisfy both Muslims and Christians.

Islam originally derived from a place called Makkah, on the eastern side of the Arabian peninsula, now in Saudi Arabia. It was revealed to a man named Muhammad, while atop a mountain, that he was chosen to be the messenger of God.

The Prophet Muhammad was a native to Makkah.

The origin of Islam is generally said to be from the Prophet Muhammad but the Qur'an says otherwise.

The Qur'an says that Islam existed on Earth long before the Prophet Muhammad walked upon it.

Islam is established on five pillars. The five pillars are the key fundamentals of what makes Islam the religion it is. The first pillar is the Shahadah. It is the most central and fundamental expression of what Islam is. The Shahadah states that "I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger." This is the core and single belief of the Muslims. The second pillar is Salah. Salah is the mandatory daily prayers that every Muslim needs to fulfill whether they are a man or a woman. Muslims are all

expected to pray five times a day. Once in the early morning, then afternoon, then mid-day, then late evening, and finally at night before going to bed. The third pillar is to give Zakaah. (i.e. Charity) to the poor, needy, and others who are less ~~un~~fortunate. The fourth pillar of Islam is fasting. (i.e. Sawm) Fasting in the month of Ramadan is obligatory upon all muslims whether young or old, saving for a few exceptions of the traveller, pregnant, or incapable. The fifth and last pillar of Islam is Hajj. Hajj is a pilgrimage that is mandatory upon all muslims to at least make once in their lifetime. Every muslim is obligated to make the journey to visit the Holy Ka'abah located in Makkah. This pilgrimage occurs every year in the 12th month of the Islamic calendar.

Like many other religions, Islam has a few sects branched out, after the prophet Muhammad passed away, people began to argue about who should be his successor. The Shi'ites argued that it should be someone from the prophet's family - (Ali R.A. - the cousin of the prophet). The Sunnis retorted that that was not a necessary rule. The division between the two parties became stronger and stronger and soon bloodshed followed. This resulted in the two parties becoming rivaling sects in Islam with many disagreements between them.

According to many historians, Christianity originated from Jerusalem after the Romans occupied it. At the time, the society was a mix

of Jews and Classical Greeks from the Roman Empire. Christianity spread rather quickly and is the largest religion in the world.

Christians believe in God composed of three distinct beings. The first is God Himself, or as the Christians call Him, The Father. The second is Jesus Christ whom they refer to as God's Son. The third and last being is the Holy Spirit. All of these three serve distinct purposes but are all one deity at the same time.

The Quran is known as the Holy Book in Islam. It was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad directly from Allah through Angel Gabriel. The Quran contains almost all of the guidelines, do's and don'ts, and other historical documents/events. According to the Quran, Allah swore that he would protect the Quran from being fabricated or changed in any way possible. Until this day, the Quran still has not been changed.

The Bible is the sacred text of the Christians. Christians consider the texts to be divine revelation and a record of the relationship between God and humans both spiritually and emotionally. The Bible has been modified many times over the years thus dividing Christians into different groups that follow different traditions.

There have been many, many arguments between Christians themselves thus bringing to

attention the rivalry between Catholic Christians and Protestant Christians. Many of these arguments stem from a deep and bloody history with some being just friendly arguments. There is a lot of animosity between Catholics and Protestants mainly because of the mass persecution and murder and outright slaughter that the Catholic Romans had committed unto the Protestants. This, and the disagreement about specific roles and authority made up the total rivalry between the two branches of the Christian faith.

While many differences are visibly prominent amongst Christians themselves, there are also a few notable differences between Islam and Christianity. For many Christians, faith is founded on the belief in the Trinity (i.e. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). For Muslims, it is different.

They believe that there is only one God. He has no wife, no sons, no family. He is the Only, the One, the Creator.

Christians universally agree and believe that Jesus Christ, the Messiah, was the Son of God while Muslims believe that Jesus was another messenger sent by God to preach the same message all other messengers before him had been sent to deliver. Another highly debatable proposition between the two parties would be about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Christians believe that Jesus Christ shed his blood and was crucified in a horrible way because of all of the sins that humans had committed. They believed they would never be able to pay Him back or be forgiven by Him so Jesus was sent by God to bring the redemption of human kind by suffering and dying for them. While there is no authentic version of the Christian side of the story about whether or not this version is true, Muslims have proof for their version in the Qur'ān. In Surah 4, Ayah 157-158, Allah states:

"And they said we have killed the Messiah, Isa, Son of Maryam, the Messenger of God. They did not kill him, nor did they crucify him, though it was made to appear like that to them; those that disagreed about him are full of doubt, with no knowledge to follow, only superstition: they certainly did not kill him. On the contrary, God raised Him unto himself. God is Almighty and Wise."

In this ayah, we find that Allah states that Jesus in fact, did not die while crucified on the cross, but rather was lifted to the heavens and was replaced by another man who looked just like him. Muslims also believe that Jesus is still alive in the heavens and will once again descend onto Earth and kill Dajjal. He will rule the Muslims for a long and happy life, then die a man.

~~As many~~

As many differences there are between Christianity and Islam, there are a few similarities as well. For example, Christianity and Islam are both monotheistic religions (believe in one God). They both are a part of the Abrahamic religions as well. Both religions acknowledge Adam as the father of humanity/mankind. Both religions can also agree to the fact that Jesus was a miracle baby because of his mother, Mary, also known as Maryam in Arabic, had never been touched by a man in her life, and yet Allah had brought Isa (A.S.) into this life through Maryam (A.S.). Both Christianity and Islam also believe that Jesus Christ will one day descend back into this world for a final time before the Ending Times or The Day of Judgement as we know it.

Despite the differences, Christianity and Islam have many things in common. It can be believable that Christianity and Islam are two of the closest religions with their laws and rulings extremely similar before Christianity and the Bible being fabricated by many people (priests and ordinary people alike). Though Christians and Muslims are constantly in heated debates with one another, it can be agreed upon that they were almost the same religion with equivalent rules and regulations a few hundred years ago.