**Contrasting Doctrines—Christianity and Islam**

By Charles Strong

**Preface**

This study (1) will identify and elucidate major doctrinal differences between Christianity and the religion called Islam; (2) will point out the primary disparity between Christianity and “religion;” and (3) will also reveal logical and secular proof why the Christian Bible can be accepted and trusted as the Word of God, the Creator of the universe.

**Christianity vs. Islam**

Islamic (Muslim) Overview

The founder was Muhammad, born in A.D. 570 in Mecca, who in his earlier years was a manager of camel caravans and keeper of his wife’s estate. One day the angel Gabriel appeared to him who gave him the gift of reading in order to read a scroll on which words were emblazoned with fire and who eventually convinced him that he was to be God’s prophet to proclaim to His idolatrous people a pure monotheism. After many years of religious persecution and physical hardship, he established an army of believers that at 60 years of age he used to conquer Mecca and establish it as the Holy City of Islam.

At the age of 62 Muhammad died, but his pattern of conquest had been established—all enemies of Allah must be overthrown. It spread rapidly beyond the Arabian borders, capturing Jerusalem by A.D. 636, and from the Chinese frontier westward to the Atlantic Ocean by A.D. 715. It is now one of the world’s major religions—in 2003 the total Muslim population numbered approximately 1.7 billion, which was about 25% of the world population (6.3 billion). In 1980 they numbered about 500 million and were only about 14% of the world population.

Islam’s basic teaching (Islamic Creed) consists of 5 basic beliefs:

1. One alone God—Allah—who is unique, infinite, transcendent and who created and sustains all that exists (*Q*. 42:11).

2. Eternal life—paradise and hell—to which everyone will go upon their bodily resurrection after death and the Day of Judgment (paradise or hell is a product of works; non-Muslims all go to hell).

3. Angels as messengers of Allah (*Q*. 66:6; 16:50).

4. Revelation from God—*Quran* (given to Mohammad by Gabriel). They also accept the *Sunnah* (contains sayings, actions, and approvals of Mohammad), and the *Hadith* (traditions not contained in the Quran).

5. Human messengers—the prophets, Muhammad being the greatest (Adam through Christ were also prophets, but inferior ones (*Q*. 10:47; 14:4; 16:36; 21:25; 28:59; 33:40).

6. Decree and Plan of God—all good and evil happens with the decree of God and nothing can fail His Plan (*Qada wa Qadar*)

Islam’s 5 pillars or observances:

1) *Shahadah*: The “statement of faith” (creed): “There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the prophet of Allah”—the final prophet and servant.

2) *Salat*: The ritual prayers performed 5 times a day facing Mecca (*Q*. 4:103; 2:177).

3) *Zakat*: Alms giving, offering 1/40th of their income for the needy (*Q*. 9:60)

4) *Sawm*: Observance of Ramadan, the ninth month of Muslim’s lunar calendar where they abstain from food, drink, sex and all sorts of idle and immoral acts from dawn to sunset (*Q*. 2:183-187).

5) *Hajj*: Pilgrimage to Mecca, required of all Muslims, who can afford it both physically and financially, before their death (*Q*. 2:189; 3:97).

(Note: There is an unofficial 6th pillar known as the “holy war,” used to spread Islam.)

Holy Scriptures

**Islam**—The Quran is God’s last word to the world. Although it states that both the Old and New Testaments are divinely inspired, they have been altered by Christians and Jews and any of its doctrine that conflicts with the Quran is false. The Quran is the final authority (*Q.* 33:40). But it should be noted that historical evidence for the infallibility of the Quran is absent, while evidence for the inspiration and historical reliability of the Christian Bible is overwhelming.

**Christianity**—The authenticity, divine inspiration, and inerrancy of the Bible can be demonstrated by the following:

1) The enormous amount of reliable manuscripts available. These manuscripts exceed 24,000, the earliest concerning Christ were written within 25 years of Jesus’ death. No work of antiquity approaches the Bible’s documentary credibility, including *all* works that are accepted as historical fact.

Although critics of the Bible attempt to cast doubt on it by saying it was under the control of the Roman Catholic Church, which supposedly had “opportunity and motive” to change Scripture to meet its purpose,” there are two indisputable sets of records that mankind has in its possession today that *were not* historically controlled by the Christian church and which verify the authenticity of the message contained in the words of the Bible of today—the *Septuagint* and the *Dead Sea Scrolls*.

2) The enormous amount of fulfilled prophecy contained in it. Approximately 1010 specific prophecies are recorded in the Bible. 668 of these are historical, of which all but 2 have been verified as fulfilled (the remaining 2 are assumed fulfilled, but simply cannot be independently verified). Approximately 342 prophecies are yet to be fulfilled. Fulfilled prophecies, statistically speaking, is overwhelming proof that the Bible can only come from God, who alone knows the end before the beginning.

3) The existing proof of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (from the enormity of eye-witness accounts, etc.). The resurrection verifies that Jesus Christ was God and the only person who can authenticate Holy Scripture, which He has given to the world as the Christian Bible.

(Note: Muhammad’s record of his testimony was compiled by his followers 600 years after the events occurred, while the New Testament contains eyewitness or firsthand testimony of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.)

Jesus Christ—the person

**Islam**—Muhammad asserted that the Bible portrait of Jesus is incorrect, while the proper view was revealed to him by God. The Quran states that Jesus Christ is a human prophet *only* to the nation Israel, while Muhammad is the last and greatest prophet to the whole world.

**Christianity**—Jesus Christ, according to the Bible, is both God and man, God in human flesh. In Christianity the person of Jesus Christ is preeminent over any of its teachings. It is not that the teachings of Christ are unimportant, but the identity and nature of Jesus was and is vastly more important. The center of Christianity is the person of Jesus Christ. The claims of Jesus Christ are many and varied, as follows:

He existed before Abraham (John 8:58)

He was equal with God the Father (John 5:17-18; Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 2:9)

He was the image of God (Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3)

He could forgive sins, which only God can do (Mark 2:5-7; Isaiah 43:25)

He is the Creator of the universe (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16-17)

He is the Sustainer of the universe (Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3)

He claimed to be and was declared to be God manifest in the flesh (John 1:1, 14; 8:19; 10:25-33; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 John 5:20)

He claimed that to see Him was to see God the Father (John 14:8-9)

He received worship, homage reserved only for God (John 4:20-24; Acts 8:27; Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8; Matthew 8:2; John 9:35-39; Matthew 14:33)

**Islam** teaches that the birth of Jesus Christ was miraculous from Mary, but does not teach the biblical virgin birth. Muslims believe that God “created” Jesus totally human in substance and form but without human insemination within the womb of Mary; that He was not a god or the Son of God. The Bible is quite clear that through and by the agency of the Holy Spirit, God took upon Himself human flesh within the womb of Mary and was born the Son of God (Luke 1:26-37). This was necessary because it was *predicted* (Isaiah 7:14) and so that as a *perfect sacrifice* Jesus Christ could take on and fully pay for the sins of the world (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22, 24; 1 John 3:5).

The *resurrection* of Jesus Christ is concrete *verification* that He was who He said He was, God in human flesh. This is an *historical fact* that was witnessed by hundreds of eyewitnesses and although denied by Islam and much of the world down through the centuries, it has never been disproved. On the contrary, there is a massive amount of evidence, both biblical and secular, that proves this historical fact.

Jesus Christ—His death

**Islam**—The Quran, speaking of the death of Christ, states, “They neither killed nor crucified him: it had only the appearance of it.”

**Christianity**—The Bible is clear on this issue. Jesus Christ died first *spiritually* (during the 3-hour span of darkness when God turned away from Him—this is when He paid the penalty-price for the sins of the world) and then *physically* (by His own hand) on the cross of Calvary (Matthew 27:45-46; John 19:30; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18).

Salvation

**Islam**—A “religion” that teaches salvation by *works.* “They whose balances shall be heavy shall be blest. But they whose balances shall be light, they shall lose their soul, abiding in hell forever” (*Q*. 13:102-140). Muslims believe that if at death they have more good than bad works they will reach paradise; otherwise they will be banished to hell. And this is the *primary disparity* between Christianity and “religion”—all “religion” (some that even claim to be Christian) and cults base salvation on man’s self-efforts to keep a system of rules and practices. And even when a follower of “religion” does all that is required, he never really *knows* that he is “saved.” On the other hand:

**Christianity**—A *union* with God in the person of Jesus Christ that is totally apart from works or self-effort of any kind. It is a product of God’s love, mercy and grace and is based solely upon the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, which can only be apprehended (obtained) by non-meritorious *faith* (Romans 3:21-28; 8:1-4; Galatians 2:16). It is best summed up with the words by faith alone in Christ alone (John 3:16-18; 6:29; Acts 16:30-31; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). And upon the exercise of genuine *faith* (confidence/trust) in Jesus Christ for one’s personal salvation, the believer may *know* that he is both saved and that his salvation can never be retracted by either himself or God (John 3:14-18; 5:24; 6:38-40, 47; 10:24-30; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 1 Peter 1:3-5)

[Bible One - Charles Strong's Contrasting Doctrines—Christianity and Islam](http://bibleone.net/print_tbs63.html)

Also see [Holy Spirit – Ministries and Filling!](http://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word.php#Holy Spirit – Ministries and Filling!) in my website.