

# A letter to my teacher – 15 things about me

[Profession](#), [Teacher](#)



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Paper Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Course RELB113: God and  
Human Life By: Akeem Favorite - 18100633 To: Dr. Earl Cameron December  
8th, 2011 One stark similarity existing between the Christian and Islamic  
faith is the plan of salvation. Both agree that the plan of salvation must be  
attained through the acceptance of ``God``. There are hundreds of different  
religions in the world; essentially all religions teach that there is some form  
of salvation.

Christianity and Islam are two religions that have much in common, when it  
comes to the topic of salvation. A common view shared by both is expressed  
through their belief that it is by God they are saved through the plan of  
salvation. Careful research reveals that there is a commonality between  
Christians and Muslims in the following areas: the Afterlife, God, Heaven, Hell  
and Judgement Day. Therefore, this research will explore the aforementioned  
existential similarities between Christianity and Islam. Christianity started  
about two thousand years ago in Judea with Jesus and his disciples.

Jesus was a Jew and observed the Jewish law as well as associated Himself  
with the Jews. In his early years, Jesus travelled from village to village  
teaching and preaching in the synagogues as well as healing those who were  
suffering. Jesus authorized many sinners to repent from their self-righteous  
and hypocritical ways, allowing them to realize that God is rooted in service  
and love. The ministry of Jesus touched the lives and hearts of many people.  
Jesus taught his disciples about the will of God and the will of the new  
covenant.

The new covenant is that Jesus himself would pay for the sins of all humanity by being crucified unjustly on a cross. Three days later, he would be resurrected, having conquered death to give hope to a hopeless world. The purpose of this new covenant is to restore those who accept it into a renewed fellowship of forgiveness and love with God. Just as Jesus taught, it all happened and his disciples witnessed an amazing miracle. Their teacher, Jesus of Nazareth died and rose again in three days to become their Messiah.

Bound by a great charge to share the love that the God of the universe had imparted upon them, the disciples began to proclaim this great gospel of hope throughout the territory. From a small group of ordinary men that lived in a small village in Judea, the history of the Christian church began, and the Christian faith since then has spread to the rest of the world. Jesus disciples preached a simple message: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3: 16). According to the Christian belief, salvation is found in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Salvation comes only by the grace of God; there is nothing a Christian can do to guarantee their own salvation, they cannot save themselves or determine their fate after death. Salvation is a process that begins when a person completely accepts Jesus Christ in their life, and it continues through that person's life and is completed when they stand before God on judgement day.

Jesus the son of God is the bridge to the Father. If Christians obey and believe in Him, as well as chose his way, Jesus cleanses them from their sins by His blood. "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have

fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. " (1 John 1: 7) Islam is a monotheistic religion of law that is primarily concerned with right practices. It was developed in the Middle East in the 7th century C. E.

The word Islam means "surrender" or "submission", this religion was founded on the teaching of the prophet Muhammad. Imam Ibn Katheer who was a historian and commentator writes in the Tafseer of the verse 17: 94-95 which is the Arabic word for Exegesis or Commentary, usually of the Qur'an said "Allah says pointing out His Kindness and Mercy towards His servants, that He sends to them Messengers of their own kind so that they will understand what he says and will be able to speak to him directly. If He were to send to humanity a Messenger from among the angels, they would not be able to deal with him face to face and learn from him, as Allah says, 'Indeed, Allah conferred a great favour on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger (Muhammad) from among themselves.' " During the age of 40, Muhammad began to receive visions and revelations from a higher power and Muhammad began to tell people about these visions and revelations and gained many followers. These visions and revelations lasted for 23 years and became the Qur'an. Islam has several branches and much variety within those branches.

The two divisions within the religion are the Sunni and Shi'a, each of these divisions has different means of maintaining religious authority. One of the combining characteristics of Islam is the five pillars, the fundamental practices of Islam. These five practices include: 1. Reciting the two-fold

Creed (shahada) (profession of faith) - There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet (or Muhammad is the messenger of God). 2. Prayer (salat) - At five set-times a day while facing towards the city of Mecca. 3.

Alms - giving (sakat) (zakat- means " purification", an act of worship\_ - Both obligatory and voluntary giving to the poor. 4. Fasting (saum) - Especially during the holy month of Ramadan. 5. Pilgrimage (hajj) - At least once in a lifetime - to Mecca, Saudi Arabia if at all possible, known as the Hajj. Even though Muslims may observe each of these pillars there is still no guarantee of salvation. Islam is based on a religion of self-righteousness. According to the Islam belief, salvation is found in Allah. In order to receive this salvation as a Muslim one must first submit themselves to the teaching of Islam and the will of Allah.

Islam is a religion of salvation by works and Islam teaches that forgiveness is conditioned upon good works and Allah's choice of mercy. In other words, Muslims believe by pleasing Allah and doing good works, they are gaining an entrance through personal merit. The Qur'an teaches that salvation is received on the basis of good works. According to Islam on the day of judgement a person's good and evil deeds will be weighed on a scale; good works are heavy and evil deeds are light. The person who shows forth with more good deeds than evil, will go to heaven compared to the person whose evil deeds outweigh the good.

Muslims believe that their chances for heaven are good if he 1: accepts the Muslim God Allah and his apostle Mohammed, 2: does good works and all

that is required of him by Allah, and 3: is predestined to Allah's favour. " If anyone desires a religion other than Islam (Submission to Allah), Never will it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost. " (Qur'an 3: 85; cp. 5: 10; 25: 68) In order to know the different views of Islam and Christianity we have to go back to the very beginning of time, the time of Adam and Eve.

The holy books of Islam and Christianity recount the story of Adam and Eve in the garden, and how they were told by God not to eat of a certain tree, but they disobeyed God. When linking the belief of salvation with Islam and Christianity the differences begin. Christianity calls Adam and Eve's sin " the fall of man", when Adam and Eve fell from the grace of God because of their sin. Christians believe that due to Adam and Eve's sin, all of mankind will die according to Romans 5: 12. This is because Christianity teaches that all the descendants of Adam and Eve have inherited the ability to sin.

Thus Christians believe in the doctrine of original sin, according to Romans 3: 23 we are all born as sinners. Islam on the other hand does not teach original sin but original forgiveness, Islam also makes mention of the story of Adam and Eve. In Islam Adam is the first prophet. Islam does state that Adam and Eve did sin in the garden, but unlike Christianity, that makes no mention of the repentance of Adam and Eve, Islam teaches that they did repent and ask God/ Allah for forgiveness and were fully forgiven, so that their sin had no consequences for the rest of human race according to the Qur'an. Qur'an 2: 27) thus Islam teaches original forgiveness and not original sin. Seeing that Christianity teaches original sin and Islam teaches original forgiveness this

then brings us to the difference of Salvation. Due to the original sin of Adam and Eve, mankind lost its relationship with God. In order to communicate with his children again, God did the best thing possible, God became flesh, and he became one of the creatures he made, man. Jesus came to earth because he loves his children; he came to deliver truth in a world of false beliefs. But the main reason he came to earth was to be the final sacrifice for their sins.

The simple reason was because they were not good enough compared to God's standard Jesus Christ. Jesus then came into a sinful world to teach the love of God and tell of the new covenant that was put in place to gain that connection with God. This new covenant was that Jesus Christ himself would pay the penalty for the sins of all humanity and be crucified on a cross, but would rise again in three days to live, having conquered death, to give hope to a hopeless world. By the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, salvation is then given to mankind.

His love prompted Him to become man to accomplish what only He could, to rescue mankind. Due to the fact that humanity is sinful, in a spiritually wrecked condition they are in need of redemption, but could not redeem themselves. No other person, but the Creator could accomplish that; no man with sin could qualify to redeem them with his life. God came to earth as man to cleanse the effect of the disease of sin inherited to all humanity. God loves his children and he who is perfect, righteous and holy lived among his creatures that are unholy, unrighteous, even those who were enemies of him.

While on the other hand Muslims believe that God forgave Adam for what he did and because of that no one should be made to bear the burden of someone else's sin or mistake because it is unfair. This God that the Muslims refer to as Allah is the God and creator of Jesus, and is the same God that Jesus refers to as father to whom he used to pray to. Muslims contradicts the idea that Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross. They believe Allah spared his messengers life from such an embarrassing death and placed Judas on the cross, which God made to look like Jesus so that he would suffer his rightful penalty for betrayal.

Through this teaching Muslims see themselves protecting the prophetic integrity of Jesus, since a true prophet, according to Islam, could not suffer the humiliation that Jesus did. Muslims affirm that Jesus ascended to heaven but deny that he died on the cross. Muslims do not feel that it was necessary for Jesus to pay for our sins. They believe that every man must bear and pay his or her own sins; for Jesus to be punished and responsible for our sins would be unjust in their eyes.

Since Muslims do not recognize the universal and corruptive power of sin, released as a result of original sin, they see no need for salvation. If there is no sin that has a hold on you, you do not need to be saved from it. This is why they do not hold any assurance of salvation. According to their view it is best to live a good life, pleasing God in all that you do. Submit to God and follow his commands. Religion, to the Muslim, does not mean salvation from sin; it means following the right path, or the shari'a, mapped out by Islamic law.



That is why salvation is exclusively based on works, or what man can do to exalt himself in the eyes of Allah. Although Christians and Muslims don't agree on many things, there are still some things that they both have in common. The first thing they have in common is their view of God. They both believe that there is one God and there is nothing or anyone else like him. There is no other entity in the entire universe worthy of worship besides him. He was born of a virgin and is the creator of man and this universe and is not created. He is also a sovereign God in the lives of men.

He is first, last and everlasting; he was when nothing was, and will be when nothing else remains. Despite being called Allah in Islam, this is the same God that Christians believe in. Both view God as all powerful, all knowing, all present, and all merciful. They both believe that only God can grant life to anything and he sent his messenger to guide all of mankind. They believe that God is a just God, but is also a God of principles and finally they both have a holy book that is the only true revealed book in the world that has been kept without change.

The second thing that these two religions have in common is death and the afterlife. They believe that this present life that they live is a trial in preparation for the next realm of existence. When a Christian or a Muslim dies the families of both of these religions have a funeral service to remember the loved ones time on earth, as well as their own existence here on earth is brief. Once this funeral service is done both religions place their loved ones back in the earth till the day of judgement where they will be taken up to heaven and judged and other make it to heaven or go to hell.

The third and final thing that Christians and Muslims have in common is their holy books and creation. Although they have different names for it and it is written differently, there are still has some similarities, such as the persons, events and the books. In both books you will find that they make mention of, Paul, David, Mary and Jesus. Both books contain some of the same events such as the story of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah and the flood, Abraham promised a son, Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah and other stories as well make mention of the same people and places.

They also have some of the same books such as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The Qur'an and the Holy Bible both teach a six day creation. Adam and Eve were created in innocent perfection and placed in a beautiful garden. There Satan tempted them to rebel against God by eating the forbidden fruit, experiencing God's wrath and judgement, and dismissal from the garden. In conclusion I have learned that even though these are two different religions, they both hold significant information. This information that is given to all of humanity is the plan of salvation.

Although Christians believe that salvation is based on the grace of God and Muslims believe that salvation is based on good works both teach that this salvation will lead them to judgement were they will either make it to heaven or hell. Even though Christianity was around six hundred years before Islam both believe in one God and his sovereigns to all of mankind and cannot wait till that day when they shall me their God. References <http://www.religionfacts.com/christianity/beliefs/salvation.htm> <http://www.comparativereligion.com/salvation.html#14> <http://www.ankerberg.com>

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