

Essay on hinduism and buddhism

[Religion](#), [Buddhism](#)



**ASSIGN
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Hinduism and Christianity

The understanding of different religions can sometimes be made easier by comparing and contrasting key systems of belief to determine how these religions are both alike and different. Exploring ways they are alike promoted commonality, while discussing their differences opens the mind to different ways of thinking. Many religions hold very similar values, just different in different contexts.

Area and Culture of Origin

The Hinduism is the third largest religion in the world. Also called Hindu Dharma, it is also considered the oldest religion in the world. This goes by many names, but its practices began in the most ancient of our civilizations and still remain one of the world's most respected religions. It is estimates that about one billion people practice Hinduism (Studies, 2009.). Hinduism is practiced worldwide but the heart of the religion originated from the Indian continent (Rampertab, 2002). The religion is considered a way of life for its followers. Being a devout Hindu means embracing Hindu ideals from birth to death.

Much like Hinduism, Buddhism also originated in India (" Buddhist study," 2012). The tradition traces its origin to Siddhartha Gautama, also known as Buddha. The religion divided into three separate branches, some of this separation was influenced by the different regions. Buddha is considered a spiritual leader and enlightened (" Buddhist study," 2012).

Theological Concepts

The religion is said to be a guide on how to live as told by Lord Krishna (Studies, 2009). Hindus believe that all religions lead to the same goal and worship all forms of “ god”. Hindus do not try to convert others to Hinduism. Hindus have one god that they consider beyond human understanding, but that one god can appear in different forms (Heritage, 2011 pg 1 nr.). The rules of god are according to everyone’s desires to protect the good and punish evil.

Buddha's lessons are often divided in the Four Noble Truths. The Eightfold Path gives followers a guide for living (Partridge, 2011). The four noble truths are “ 1) human life is full of suffering; 2) suffering stems from cravings for pleasure and avoidance of pain; 3) suffering can be eradicated; 4) the path of freedom from suffering is the path of enlightenment.” (" Buddhist study," 2012).

Hinduism has no real founders or scripture. The four Vedas, Upanishads, Smrutis, Ithihasas, and the Puranas are all examples of some of their religious texts, although they have no one main book associated with Hinduism(Studies, 2009 pg 1 nr.).

Both religions use rituals, offerings, or chanting as ways to show appreciation to their religion. Charity and meditation are also highly encouraged (Heritage, 2011). They hold beliefs of non-violence. Both also believe in reincarnation.

Religious Stereotypes

If I could add another category to the worksheet, I would add one about religious stereotypes. Often these misunderstandings prevent one religion

from understanding another. Hinduism has been subject to stereotypes and unfair judgments, but as with all religions it has its flaws. In my opinion the use of the caste system is not relevant to today's society (Rampertab, 2002 pg. 1 nr.). The caste system goes against the ideas of equality. Although it is not generally promoted outside of India, it is not acceptable in today's modern world. I do not feel that within today's society that there should be any place for discrimination based on social ranking. Some also claim that Hinduism promotes slavery (Rampertab, 2002 pg. 1 nr.). There is no evidence to support these claims other than some domestic slavery that resides in India, but the issue should still be examined. The ranking system of citizens is also outdated. Hindus often draw comparisons with pagans because of their worshipping of idols (Heritage 2011, pg1 nr.). The Hindu world draws power from symbolism; however idol worship is looked down upon in some other cultures. Likewise they are also often criticized for worshipping both gods and goddesses, compared to religions that focus on a male deity. Hindus allow for an assortment of gods, male, female, human and non-human in form.

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Buddhism also suffers from stereotypes. Many are confused about the three different sects and their beliefs (" Buddhist study," 2012). Also there is

confusion as to who Buddha is. Many only connect him with the “ fat” statues they see. They do not understand the Buddha represents a person, not a God, who is a spiritual leader (" Buddhist study," 2012). Buddha is symbolic of the path one takes to enlightenment. Buddhism has become very popular all around the world because of its emphasis on tranquility and peace, yet few truly understand its origins and doctrines.

Introducing a Dialogue

In order to introduce a follower of one religion to another, I would approach them through friendship (Legends 2007, pg1 nr.). Being non-judgmental in personal interactions will help understanding on both parts (Olsen 2007, pg1 nr.). Always be positive when speaking of your religion. Criticism will only hinder the conversation. Bragging is also considered improper for the situation, remarks about being the best people or best religion is too prideful and off putting.

It should not be suggested that they should separate from their culture of family to learn about other religions (Legends 2007, pg1 nr.). Preaching that the ways of your religion are the only way to live can offend others so it is better for a person to learn for themselves without being overly pushy. Condemning others with threats of hell if they do not convert is just bad manners! This would endear no one to the religion! Be patient, everyone must decide their faiths in their own time.

Take time to learn about both Hinduism and Buddhism. The more you know the better you will be able to draw comparisons between Hinduism and Buddhism. You should always emphasis teachings that both religions embrace. These shared beliefs can help develop a better understanding

between both sides. You may even learn some teachings from another religion that will enrich your own life!

It may be helpful to relate your own experiences. Express the good it has brought to your life, the message of your faith should be strong enough without needing to lecture. Most of all remember only the other person can decide what they choose to believe in. All one can do is relate their experiences and learning in hopes of enriching another's life with this knowledge.

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