

③ In Hinduism, god is the un-definable, impersonal Brahman, a ¹⁸ _____ absolute.

• Hinduism is more a philosophy than a theology (a study of God).

• God's Word teaches that man, born in ¹⁹ _____, will be ruled by ²⁰ _____ until He has received Jesus Christ who broke the power of sin.

Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Psalms 51:4, "Against You, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge."

Isaiah 59:1, 2, "Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear. ² But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear."

• God's Word tells us that God is a ²¹ _____ Being who ²² _____ and cares for all people.

Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Psalms 50:15, "And call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor Me."

⇒ Hindus teach that there are many ways to God. Each person can choose the way best suited for him or her. The Hindu sees ultimate Reality, Brahman, as being an undifferentiated oneness.

• Jesus stated specifically that He was the ²³ _____ way to God.

John 14:6, "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'"

④ In Hinduism Jesus is ²⁴ _____ God but just one of many incarnations, or avatars, of Vishnu.

Matthew 16:16 "Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'"

Author John B. Noss of *Man's Religions* states, "It is not one religion, but rather a family of religions ... Hinduism is fluid changing...Hinduism is the whole complex of beliefs and institutions that have appeared from the time when their ancient (and most sacred) scriptures, the vedas, were composed until now ...Hindus have an extraordinarily wide selection of beliefs and practices to choose from: they can (to use Western terms) be pantheists, polytheists, polytheists, monotheists, agnostics, or even atheists." [Source: *Man's Religions*, New York: MacMillan Company, 1969, p. 88].

⑤ Hinduism is led into ²⁵ _____ doctrine by its many sacred writings which lack the inspiration and authority of the Bible.

ANSWERS 1. 799; 2. Christian; 3. responsible; 4. one million; 5. ritualistic; 6. caste; 7. reincarnation; 8. works; 9. faith; 10. Works; 11. Knowledge; 12. Devotion; 13. created; 14. enlightenened; 15. karma; 16. reincarnation; 17. one; 18. philosophical; 19. sin; 20. sin; 21. personal; 22. loves; 23. only; 24. not; 25. errant

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Similarities and Differences of Belief Systems:
Christianity carefully compared to the Cults and other Religions.

Hinduism:

The Oldest Religion in the World

Message #9 in the *Similarities & Differences* series

Wednesday, May 22, 2002

Dr. Jerry Johnston's Sermonar

We learn about the heart of Jesus in Matthew 9:35-38

"Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸ Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest.'"

⇒ The heart of Jesus is moved with compassion over the ¹ _____ million people enslaved by Hinduism, the oldest religion in the world!

Dr. Everett L. Cattell, a missionary to India for 20 years said, "Christianity made its first impact on Hinduism through the Syrian Christian Church of Malabar, possibly starting with the ministry of Thomas who is alleged to have gone to India. These Christians however soon became satisfied to develop into a respectable caste, living peaceably alongside Hindus with never a thought for evangelism. This was true until late in the last century when under the stimulus of modern Christian missions a reform movement comparable with a combination of Luther and Wesley sprang up...which has shown a commendable and fruitful zeal for evangelism. With the coming of Ziegenbalg in 1706 and Carey in 1793 commenced the era of modern missions. The impact of these missions had two phases. At first there were notable high-class converts. This produced the reaction as noted above. But during the last half of the last century the impact of Christianity gave hope to the multitudes of oppressed, downtrodden, and exploited outcasts. Great mass movements occurred which have raised the total of the Christian population today (see demographics on FACTOID page). [Source: *Religions in a Changing World*, Chapter VIII. Hinduism by Everett L. Cattell, C 1959, Moody Press, Chicago, p. 202.]

- God has called every ² _____ to take the Gospel into a world of darkness!
- If we disobey people may be lost forever and we will be ³ _____ before God.

Matthew 28:19, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

2 Corinthians 5:20, "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."

HINDUS: Where are they?

Over 700 million live in **India**. Other countries include: **Bangladesh**...mid-1995, 14,700,000 (12.4); mid-2000, 15,994,593 (12.4); **Bhutan**...mid-1995, 394,450 (21.4); mid-2000, 435,909 (20.5); **Fiji**...mid-1995, 256,755 (33.4); mid-2000, 272,031 (33.3); **Mauritius**...mid-1995, 492,320 (44.3); mid-2000, 508,236 (44.0); **Nepal**...mid-1995, 16,348,100 (76.9); mid-2000, 18,353,935 (76.7); **Sri Lanka**...mid-1995, 2,055,500 (11.5); mid-2000al, 2,124,481 (11.3); **Suriname**...mid-1995, 73,600 (18.0); mid-2000, 74,413 (17.8) and **Trinidad**...mid-1995, 281,000 (22.3); mid-2000, 294,949 (22.8).

- **Nepal** is the only nations where Hinduism is the state religion.
- There are more than ⁴ _____ Hindus in **North America**.

[Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, Second Edition, Volume 1, Oxford University Press, C 2001.]

HINDUISM: It's History

The term Hinduism is derived from the Sanskrit word *Sindhu* or *Indus* (ocean or river), a geographical instead of theological designation first used by the Persian invaders.

- **Hinduism** began as a polytheistic and ⁵ _____ religion.
- **Hinduism** created a ⁶ _____ system which birthed the concept of ⁷ _____.

Castes were an outgrowth of vocational classifications: Brahmins were priests and scholars; Kshatriyas the rulers and soldiers; Vaishyas the merchants and farmers; and Sudras the peasants and farmers.

CHRISTIANITY'S OBJECTIONS TO HINDUISM:

- 1 For a Hindu, salvation is based on ⁸ _____. Christianity bases salvation on ⁹ _____ in Christ. Hinduism teaches:

- **The Way of** ¹⁰ _____. The way of works, **karma marga**, is a path to salvation through religious duty. It consists of carrying out the prescribed ceremonies, duties and religious rites. The Hindu believes by doing so he can add favorable karma to his merit. Even more, if he does them religiously, he believes it is possible to be reborn as a Brahmin on his way toward liberation from the wheel of karma.
- **The Way of** ¹¹ _____. Another way of achieving salvation--in the Hindu program -- is jnana marga, the way of knowledge. The error in man's thinking is this: man sees himself as a separate and real entity.

- **The Way of** ¹² _____. The way of devotion, bhakti marga, is chronologically the last of the three ways of salvation. It is that devotion to a deity which may be reflected in acts of worship, both public and private.

WHAT GOD'S WORD SAYS ABOUT MAN AND SALVATION

- **Man is** ¹³ _____ by God as a person with a body, soul and spirit. Man is born in sin and in need of God's forgiveness and the righteousness of Christ through the new birth.

Genesis 1:27, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

Titus 3:5, "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy."

I Thessalonians 5:23, "May God Himself, the God of peace sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

- **Man cannot save himself or evolve into some type of** ¹⁴ _____ status on his own.

Ephesians 2:8,9, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not of works, so that no one can boast."

2 Corinthians 5:21, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

- 2 **Hindus are enslaved by the teachings of** ¹⁵ _____ and ¹⁶ _____.

Reincarnation is the belief that the atman, a person's uncreated and eternal soul, must be repeatedly be recycled into the world in different bodies.

Dr. Mahendra Singhal, a former Hindu, said, "Hindus believe in going to the extremes to demonstrate their love for someone. A mother, for example, would go hungry to feed her children. A father would deprive himself of everything so that his children could go to school. The image of Jesus Christ that made the strongest appeal to me was the limit to which He was willing to go to show His love toward me, and I did not even know Him at the time. I have discovered in my witnessing to Hindus that they are generally moved by the depiction of Jesus on the cross to validate His love towards us." [Source: The Compact Guide to World Religions, Bethany House Publishers, C 1196, p. 100.]

- **God's Word emphatically states that man dies** ¹⁷ _____ !
Hebrews 9:27, "Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment."
Revelation 20:12, "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they done as recorded in the books."
- **God's Word teaches the law of sowing and reaping, however, it has nothing to do with reincarnation.**
Galatians 6:7, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows."

HINDUISM

Illiteracy is estimated at 48% nationally, but in certain areas and among certain disadvantaged groups, it is as high as 87%. Life expectancy is 64 years, but a variety of diseases ravage the impoverished villages, cutting their productive years to no more than 40.

Good housing is limited to parts of cities. In the villages, most people still live in one-room hovels, which in many instances, also house the cattle, and in the cities, millions live in slums and shacks built of cardboard or tin. Sanitization facilities are nonexistent in villages and small towns beyond open latrines serviced by the untouchable class of scavengers

POVERTY:

Although electricity is available in most cities, firewood and dried cow dung are the most common means of cooking in the villages. Nearly 44% of the urban population and 51% of the rural population live below the poverty level. This means that the majority of Indians live in unrelieved misery all their lives.

WOMEN:

Women do not have equal property or inheritance rights and are discouraged from participating in equal measure in public life. Female bondage, forced prostitution, dowry deaths (killing of young brides by the husband or his family because they do not bring enough money as dowry), and child marriage remain common in many parts of India. Child prostitution is rampant in the large urban areas. In Bombay alone there are over 100,000 prostitutes, most of them minors.(Source: World Christian Encyclopedia)

PASTOR JERRY HIGHLY RECOMMENDS:

World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World by David B. Barrett, George T. Kurian and Todd M. Johnson. Two volumes by Oxford University Press, Copyright 2001.

Fast Facts of False Teachings by Ron Carlson and Ed Decker, Harvest House Publishers, Copyright 1994.

World Religions by Dean C. Halverson, General Editor, Bethany House Publishers, Minneapolis, Minnesota, Copyright 1996.

The Kingdom of the Cults, by Walter Martin, Hank Hanegraaff, General Editor, Bethany House Publishers, Copyright 1997.

HINDUISM

A PROFILE OF INDIA (As of 2000)

Official name: Bharat (The Republic of India)

Official language: Hindi (Deuanagari script), English

Political divisions: 32 provinces

Armed forces: 1,265,000

Population: 1,013,662,000

Under 15 years: 337,651,000

Education

Adult literacy: 52% (male 65%, female 37%). **Schools:** 812,925

Universities: 7,958 **School enrollment:** female/male 62%/83%

Health

Access to health services: 85% **Access to safe water:** 81%

Hospitals: 15,067(8 beds per 10,000) **Doctors:** 405,253 **Blind:** 9,000,000

Deaf: 60,406,200 **Murder rate:** 4 **Lepers:** 5,500,000

Underweight prevalence under 5: 53%

Religious Affiliation

NAME	1900 %/adherents	1970 %/adherents	mid-1900 %/adherents	1995 %/adherents	mid-2000 %/adherents	mid-2025 %/adherents
Hindus	80% 184,022,700	78.1% 433,214,000	75.2% 639,696,000	75% 700,513,000	74.5% 755,135,081	72.9% 969,491,800
Muslims	13.9 31,552,000	11.3 62,877,000	11.9 101,000,000	11.9 111,000,000	12.1 122,570,042	12.2 162,500,000
Christians	1.7 3,820,200	4.2 23,353,000	5.7 48,100,000	5.8 54,500,000	6.1 62,341,006	7.4 98,200,000
Population	229,900,000	554,910,900	850,785,000	933,665,123	1,013,662,000	1,330,449,000

HINDUISM is the principal religion of India, having developed over the past 5 millennia through a series of definite periods each with its own distinctive examples: Vedic, Brahmanic, Philosophic, Devotional, and Reformed Hinduism. Unifying factors are esteem for the Vedas; the ideas of Karma, reincarnation and non-violence (ahimsa); respect for the holy man (sanyasi); and acceptance of caste as the socio-religious framework of society. The Hindu proportion of the population has decreased gradually over the last century by an average 1% every 10 years, due to the influx and growth of immigrant religions and also to the Muslim fertility being higher than that of the Hindu population.

HINDUISM

3 CLASSIFICATION OF MODERN-DAY HINDUISM

Hinduism is divided into hundreds of sects centering on various deities (totaling 3 million in number), classified under 3 heads:

- 1 **REFORMED HINDUISM** – opposed to polytheism and idol worship which reject belief in incarnations of gods (Arya Samaj, Shankar Acharya Vedanta Hinduism), and the Ramakrishna Mission (and also Sikhism).
- 2 **SHAVITES** (Followers of Siva, the goddess of Kali and other deities) Vaishnavites (followers of Vishnu, Ram, Krishna and other deities) popularly called Sanatanists or idol-worshippers, the vast majority, 98%, are in this category. There are also Saktas, worshippers of the divine mother Sakti, female aspect of the deity. Shaivites predominate in South India, and **Vaishnavites** predominate in western and northern India.
- 3 **NEWER SECTS SPREAD TO WESTERN WORLD** – These include the Divine Light Mission...the movement centered on devotion to the internationally-known **Guru Maharaj Ji** (born 1958); Ananda Marga (Path of Bliss), a violent politico-religious Bengali sect; followers of Sri Aurobindo, Sri Chinmoy, Sai Baba, et alii. Although traditionally Hinduism has not been a missionary religion, the reform movements and newer sects have been active in proselytism and conversion.

SIKHISM

Owes its origin to Guru (teacher) Nanak (AD 1469-1538) who was a follower of the pact of Kabri. Although a Hindu by birth, Nanak was influenced by the Islam of his native Lahora. Sikhism, which is therefore a reform movement of Hinduism, has its center in Amritsar where the Golden Temple has been built. They numbered 20,448,395 in 1995.

BUDDHISM

began in India where its founder, Gautama Buddha (BC 560-480), lived out his life; and enjoyed great prestige for a thousand years thereafter under outstanding emperors including Asoka, Kamishka, Chandragupta II and Harsha. The number of Buddhists grew to 6.5 million by 1995, remaining at 0.70% of the population.

JAINISM

is a Hindu reform movement dating back to the 6th century BC. Its founder Mahavira (BC 599-527) better known as the Great Hero, was the last of the 24 Tirthankaras, those who obtained salvation (moksha) through self-abnegation. Jains emphasize ascetism, the Three Jewels (knowledge, faith, and

HINDUISM

right conduct), non-violence (Ahimsa) and a modified view of transmigration from that prevalent among Hindus. By 1995 the number of Jains grew to nearly 3.9 million, but their strength relative to the national population declined to 0.40%.

BAHAI

has had in India its most spectacular successes in one country, numerically. By 1995, nearly 1.5 million Indians were followers of the Bahai faith.

CHRISTIANITY

according to Malabar tradition, Christianity was introduced in India by the apostle Thomas in AD 52.

By 200, the Orthodox tradition is considered to have been established in south. A bishop is known to have been sent from Jerusalem to India in AD 345, and a traveler in 530 reported Christian communities in the southwest and in Ceylon.

Protestant missions began in 1706...and by 1800 a Christian community of 20,000 had been formed. In 1793 the BMS missionary William Carey arrived at Serampore and the modern era of Protestant missions began.

The numerical growth of professing Christians over the last century has been remarkable: from 1,506,098 in British India in 1881 to 8,392,038 (2.35%) in 1951, 10,728,086 (2.4%) in 1961, 14,223,382 (2.60%) in 1971, and about 35 million (3.7%) in 1995. Christianity is the second largest religious minority, after Islam, but the geographical spread of Christians is very uneven.

COUNTRY STATUS:

India is the second most populous nation in the world and it is likely that by 2050 it will become the most populous. Few nations can match India in the infinite variety of its races, tongues, religions and cultures. It is home to 14 major languages and hundreds of minor ones, five major religions and thousands of minor ones, and two major races, and thousands of ethnic and tribal groups. The political unity of India was a creation of the British who ruled over India for over a century. Although India is ostensibly a secular state, Hinduism, practiced by 75% of the people, dominates the national culture.

HUMAN NEED:

India's large and growing population magnifies every human need and problem into Himalaya-like proportions. With a growth rate of 18% annually, the people added to the country every year equal the population of Australia. India's carrying capacity has been estimated at no more than 300 million, so that, in effect, over 600 million are not being properly fed, clothed or housed.