

Open Discussion

May 25, 2025

If you were to design a religion, what would it look like?

[My comments and writings are in italics.]

The professor asked this question in one of my online classes through Hillsdale, Ancient Christianity. He commented that it would most likely not resemble Christianity at all. This is where we are starting today.

With some assuredness, can the professor make this comment, and if so, why?

As Christians, we often do not feel as if we seek to raise arguments about others' religious practices. We can stand strong in our faith, knowing and believing in the Holy Scripture. Yet, apart from a few overzealous believers, most usually approach the differences between Christian and other beliefs with respect. However, I believe we can say with certainty that the professor is correct. Why? We need only to look back through history and see the different beliefs and practices our world has witnessed.

Today, we live in a world that teaches that man came from monkeys, our world is billions of years old, and we need to be afraid of nearly everything we do. Pastors across the globe have fallen into the teaching of evolution and seek to mock those of us who do not believe. In my studies, I have read statistics demonstrating that evolution is the most common teaching that has turned people away from creation.

In not believing or honouring God as our creator, it becomes much easier to deny and squirm away from God's commands and offering of salvation, just because we have to be accountable.

Classes and assignments teach us about apologetics and how to defend our faith through reason. However, I feel the use of reason, as opposed to faith and grace, wisdom and knowledge, places too much of faith and belief back into man's hands. We do not develop our faith separate from the work of the Holy Spirit, and although as we look back upon our life changes,

experience seems to have given us reason to believe. However, this faith is the product of the gift of faith, that no man may boast.

1 Corinthians 1:26-31: 26 For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; 27 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, 28 and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, 29 so that no man may boast before God. 30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, 31 so that, just as it is written, “LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD.”

As I read these verses, I realized that all the wisdom and knowledge I need to follow my Lord's ways come through the external and internal work of the Holy Spirit. I say external for the understanding that the Godhead is infinite, unbounded or unlimited; boundless; endless: God's infinite mercy. He will always be with us, and His influence in our daily lives impacts our world. Internal, for it is as we say, Christ within us, meaning the Spirit who indwells, is the fullness of the Godhead.

I have discussed these issues, so we may consider them as we consider creating a religion of our own. What would that religion look like? Could we ever outdo what God has already done?

History shows us that man has always created a god, something they believe is a higher power, and will serve us as needed. This is a drastic change in who serves who. Man has gone so far in their beliefs in their own gods that they give them power over themselves and how they are to serve the god they established, in other words, their gods have been granted power even to the death of the believer.

Buddhism –

“History Of Buddhism. The history of Buddhism spans from the 6th century BCE to the present, starting with the birth of the Buddha Siddharta Gautama. This makes it one of the oldest religions practiced today. Throughout this period, the religion evolved as it encountered various

countries and cultures, adding to its original Indian foundation Hellenistic as well as Central Asian, East Asian, and Southeast Asian cultural elements. In the process, its geographical extent became considerable so as to affect at one time or another most of the Asian continent. The history of Buddhism is also characterized by the development of numerous movements and schisms, foremost among them the Theravada, Mahāyāna and Vajrayana traditions, punctuated by contrasting periods of expansion and retreat.

Siddharta Gautama's life. After an early life of luxury under the protection of his father, the king of Kapilavastu (later to be incorporated into the state of Magadha), Siddharta entered into contact with the realities of the world and concluded that real life was about unbearable and inescapable suffering and sorrow. Siddharta renounced his meaningless life of luxury to become an ascetic (a person who leads an austerely simple life, especially one who abstains from the normal pleasures of life or shuns material satisfaction). He ultimately decided that asceticism was also meaningless, and instead chose a middle way, a path of moderation away from the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification.

Under a fig tree, now known as the Bodhi tree, he vowed never to leave the position until he found Truth. At the age of 35, he attained Enlightenment. He was then known as Gautama Buddha, or simply “The Buddha”, which means “the awakened one”.

For the remaining 45 years of his life, he travelled the Gangetic Plain of central India (region of the Ganges/Ganga river and its tributaries), teaching his doctrine and discipline to an extremely diverse range of people.”

So, enlightenment and wisdom do not come from the God of the Bible but instead from sitting under a fig tree. I can see this partially in that if you continue to have things hitting you on the head, it would only be wise to move out from under the tree. The story of Siddharta Gautama is much more colourful than what is written here.

<https://buddhism-guide.com/history-of-buddhism/>

Hinduism

“The term Hinduism as a religious label refers to the indigenous religious philosophy of the peoples living in modern-day India and the rest of the Indian subcontinent. It is a synthesis of many spiritual traditions of the region and does not have a clearly defined set of beliefs in the same way that other religions do. It is widely accepted that Hinduism is the oldest of the world's religions, **but there is no known historical figure credited with being its founder. Hinduism's roots are diverse and are likely a synthesis of various regional tribal beliefs.** According to historians, the origin of Hinduism dates back to 5,000 years or more.”

A little here, a little there, some of this, some of that, and we have a new religion.

<https://www.learnreligions.com/theories-about-the-origin-of-hinduism-1770375>

The Formation of Islam

The rise of Islam is intrinsically linked with the Prophet Muhammad, believed by Muslims to be the last in a long line of prophets that includes Moses and Jesus. Because Muhammad was the chosen recipient and messenger of the word of God through the divine revelations, Muslims from all walks of life strive to follow his example. After the holy Qur'an, the sayings of the Prophet (hadith) and descriptions of his way of life (sunna) are the most important Muslim texts.

“Religion and Society in the Near East, 600–1800 A.D.

Jonathan Berkey's book surveys the religious history of the peoples of the Near East from roughly 600 to 1800 CE. The opening chapter examines the religious scene in the Near East in late antiquity, and the religious traditions which preceded Islam. Subsequent chapters investigate Islam's first century and the beginnings of its own traditions, the 'classical' period from the accession of the fiAbbasids to the rise of the Buyid amirs, and thereafter the emergence of new forms of Islam in the middle period. Throughout, close attention is paid to the experiences of Jews and Christians, as well as Muslims. The book stresses that Islam did not appear all at once, but emerged slowly, as part of a prolonged process whereby it was differentiated from other religious traditions and, indeed, that much that

we take as characteristic of Islam is in fact the product of the medieval period.

This book has been written for students and for all those with an interest in the emergence and evolution of Islam.

Jonathan P. Berkey is Associate Professor of History at Davidson College. His

publications include *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East* (2001).”

https://assets.cambridge.org/97805215/82148/frontmatter/9780521582148_frontmatter.pdf

The difference between Islam and Muslim is that Islam is the religion, and Muslim is the person practicing the religion. Although they claim Allah and God, Yahweh, to be the same God, they deny the Trinity and Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. Islam teaches that man has changed the Scripture to demonstrate the uniqueness of the Trinity, that the God of the Holy Bible is not what Christians know Him as. In order to do so would be to erase out of the Old and New Testaments every verse, which is over three hundred references addressing Jesus’ work in the Father’s plan. I think nearly everyone reading this sees the problem in the Muslim teaching.

“ Allah’s Eternal Nature and His Distinction From Creation

Islam rejects characterizing God in any human form or depicting Him as favoring certain individuals or nations on the basis of wealth, power or race. He created human beings as equals. They may distinguish themselves and get His favor only through virtue and piety.”

<https://aboutislam.net/counseling/ask-the-scholar/muslim-creed/who-is-allah/>

Jainism

Jainism is an Indian religion that emphasizes complete non-violence and asceticism. Followers of Jainism are called Jains, and there are about 4 million worldwide.

Jainism emerged in 6th-century BCE India, the same time Buddhism was developing. The faith is named for the jinas, spiritual conquerors who have achieved liberation and perfection. Included among these are the 24 spiritual leaders called "ford-makers" or tirthankaras. The last of the tirthankaras was Mahavira (599-527 BCE), a contemporary of the Buddha who is generally considered the founder of Jainism.

Jinas are believed to reside in the top level of heaven, above the realm of the gods. Accordingly, liberated souls are revered more than the gods. Jainism incorporates the traditional Hindu concepts of karma and reincarnation, but rejects the Veda scriptures, castes and the idea of a creator god.

The goal of life in Jainism is to reach liberation by a life of purification, discipline, and nonviolence as taught by the tirthankaras. Jain rituals center around sacred images and mantras.”

Who decided this would become a world religion? We should view these religions as man-made and not God given. I do not want to do anything more here than expose the types of religious practices that come with manmade ideas. These religions leave us with far more questions than Christianity ever will.

There are more Religions than most of us could think of, and we wonder how so many came without the God of the Bible. Reading these will tell us. Most are different in religious practices; many are denominational differences within Christianity, and are worth reading.

I will shorten this up and give those of you who seek to further understand how immense religious practices have become in our world today, visit the site below.

List of Religions, Worldviews, and Belief Systems

<https://religionfacts.com/religions>. Going to this link, the religions listed below are just a click away.

This page provides an index to our articles on religions from ancient faiths to new religious movements. It is not comprehensive, of course, and grows

regularly. It includes sects and denominations (like Baptists and Zen) along with major religions (like Christianity or Buddhism).

Religion Facts is very inclusive with what is regarded as a "religion" for purposes of this index and this website. Some of these belief systems may not be "religions" according to traditional definitions (they might better be called "philosophies" or "movements"), and some are even anti-religion. The grounds for a group's inclusion is simply that it offers an explanation of ultimate reality or the purpose of life and has attracted a significant number of followers.

See our [Big Religion Chart](#) to compare the basics of over 40 of these faiths.

- [Ahmadiyya](#)
- [Aladura](#)
- [Amish](#)
- [Anglicanism](#)
- [Asatru](#)
- [Assemblies of God](#)
- [Baha'i Faith](#)
- [Baptists](#)
- [Buddhism](#)
- [Candomble](#)
- [Cao Dai](#)
- [Catholicism](#)
- [Chinese Religion](#)
- [Christian Science](#)
- [Christianity](#)
- [Church of God](#)
- [Church of God in Christ](#)
- [Church of Satan](#)
- [Confucianism](#)
- [Dragon Rouge](#)
- [Eastern Orthodoxy](#)
- [Epicureanism](#)
- [Falun Gong](#)
- [First Satanic Church](#)
- [Foursquare Church](#)
- [Greek Religion](#)
- [Hare Krishna](#)
- [Hasidism](#)
- [Hellenic Reconstructionism](#)
- [Hinduism](#)
- [Illuminati](#)
- [Intelligent Design](#)
- [Islam](#)
- [Jainism](#)

- [Jehovah's Witnesses](#)
- [Judaism](#)
- [Kabbalah](#)
- [Luciferianism](#)
- [Lutheranism](#)
- [Mahayana Buddhism](#)
- [Mithraism](#)
- [Mormonism](#)
- [Neopaganism](#)
- [Norse Religion](#)
- [Oneness Pentecostalism](#)
- [Ophites](#)
- [Order of Nine Angles](#)
- [Orthodox Judaism](#)
- [Our Lady of Endor](#)
- [Palladists](#)
- [Pentecostalism](#)
- [Presbyterianism](#)
- [Protestantism](#)
- [Pure Land Buddhism](#)
- [Quakers](#)
- [Rastafarianism](#)
- [Reform Judaism](#)
- [Satanism](#)
- [Scientology](#)
- [Shi'a Islam](#)
- [Shinto](#)
- [Sikhism](#)
- [Stoicism](#)
- [Sufism](#)
- [Sunni Islam](#)
- [Taoism](#)
- [Tendai Buddhism](#)
- [Theravada Buddhism](#)
- [Tibetan Buddhism](#)
- [Typhonian Order](#)
- [Umbanda](#)
- [Unification Church](#)
- [Unitarian Universalism](#)
- [Vajrayana Buddhism](#)
- [Vineyard Churches](#)
- [Wicca](#)
- [Worldwide Church of God](#)
- [Zen](#)
- [Zoroastrianism](#)

Article Info

Article Title	<i>List of Religions, Worldviews, and Belief Systems</i>
Date Published	<i>March 17, 2004</i>
Last Updated	<i>August 30, 2024</i>
Full URL	<i>https://religions</i>
Short URL	<i>https://rlft.co/1615</i>
MLA Citation	<i>“List of Religions, Worldviews, and Belief Systems.” ReligionFacts. 17 Mar 2004, https://religions. Accessed 25 May 2025.</i>
Embed Link	<i>List of Religions, Worldviews, and Belief Systems — ReligionFacts</i>

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