



*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live...we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ...in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

Ephesians 2:1–10 (NIV)

## I. The Origin of Hinduism

- Hinduism developed in India
- The Old Persian word for India is \_\_\_\_\_
- Those who developed the faith in India are called “Aryans”
- The Aryans migrated north into Iran and then into Europe, and took their culture and religion with them
- In Europe, the Aryan pantheon of gods became the Greco-Roman gods of Zeus, Hades, Poseidon and others
- In India, that same pantheon of gods became the Hindu gods of Vishnu, Brahma, Shiva and others

## II. Hindu Sacred Texts

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
It is one of the world’s oldest sacred texts. It contains descriptions of historical and mythological events. The stories describe the Hindu gods and their relationship with nature and humanity. Hindus believe these stories were given directly by God to the sages who compiled them.
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
These are commentaries on the Rig Veda and the three other Vedic books. Hindus believe these books are inspired by the gods, but not given directly by the gods.
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
This is the longest poetic work in the world, and contains the most important story called the Bhagivad Gita.

## III. What Do Hindus Believe?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Hindus speak of the One True God in the singular, called Brahman, and consider all the other gods to be manifestations of Brahman. Brahman holds all wisdom and knowledge. All life comes from Brahman, but Brahman is impersonal, unknowable, and somewhat removed from humanity.

**2. There is no sin, only \_\_\_\_\_**

Hindus believe that a piece of God resides in the soul of each person and longs to be reunited with God. Because God resides in each person and God is perfect, humans are incapable of sin.

**3. \_\_\_\_\_**

This is the way Hindus seek salvation. The word means “duty.” Hindus seek salvation by pursuing spiritual knowledge.

**4. \_\_\_\_\_**

This means “works” or “deeds.” Good karma is built up through good thoughts and deeds. Bad karma is built through bad thoughts and deeds. If at the end of this life we have more good karma than bad karma, we move to the next life.

**5. \_\_\_\_\_**

This is a cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Hindus believe that as our souls are reborn through this process of many lives, they gain spiritual knowledge to become spiritually mature enough to eventually be united with God.

**6. \_\_\_\_\_**

This is the state of salvation for Hindus. At this point the soul is united with God. There is nothing left of the individual. Our individuality and distinctiveness are gone.

**IV. How Does Hinduism Differ From Christianity?**

**1. Christians believe God is \_\_\_\_\_**

Hindus believe that God is in everything and everything is a part of God. Christians believe that God is the Creator, but not the creation.

**2. Christians believe human beings are \_\_\_\_\_**

Hindus believe that our soul is a piece of God and therefore we are incapable of sin. Christians believe that all humans are sinful and we stand in need of a Savior. Although we invite the Holy Spirit in, the Holy Spirit remains distinct from our humanness.

**3. Christians believe that God is \_\_\_\_\_**

Hindus believe that God is impersonal. Christians believe in a very personal God who longs for us to know and love Him. God is so personal that He came to us!

**4. Christians do not worship \_\_\_\_\_**

Hindus worship and offer sacrifices to the images of their gods. Christians believe no idol can ever contain the essence of God. We are told in the Old Testament not to make idols by which to worship God (Exodus 20:4–6).

**5. Christians believe salvation is a free gift from God, and \_\_\_\_\_**

Hindus believe that salvation is obtained by works—building good karma through a cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Christians believe that salvation is a gift God gives through faith—grace bestowed upon us by God.