

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

THE ESSENCE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Christianity	Islam
Righteousness and justice are parts of the holiness of God that are seen in His treatment of His creatures. God will never do anything that is not morally perfect. "For the LORD is righteous, he loves justice" (Psalm 11:7).	There is no law of righteousness in the being of Allah. He does as He pleases, guiding some men aright and others astray. Allah created some men and spirits to send them to hell: "... that I will fill hell with the jinn and mankind together" (Sura 32:13).
God loves all mankind. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son" (John 3:16). "God is love" (1 John 4:8)	Allah has no affection or feeling for any creature. Love is conditional to those who believe and do good works. "Lo! those who believe and do good works, the Beneficent will appoint for them love" (Sura 19:96).
God is always faithful to His covenants and doesn't change His mind. "The LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations" (Deuteronomy 7:9). "The Father ... does not change" (James 1:17)	Allah does not make covenants with man. He can and does change His mind. "And when we put a revelation in place of [another] revelation—and Allah knowest best what He revealeth" (Sura 16:101).

UNITY AND TRINITY

Christianity	Islam
God is triune (one God is three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). These three persons are bound together in a relationship of love, not as three distinct "gods." "The LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Deuteronomy 6:4).	Allah is unitary, without persons, "so believe in Allah and His messengers, and say not Three—Cease! [it is] better for you! Allah is one God. For is it removed from His transcendent majesty that He should have a son" (Sura 4:171).
The Father is recognized as God. "The Son of Man [Jesus] ... On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval" (John 6:27).	The doctrine of tawhid (oneness) in Islam states that Allah is utterly transcendent (Quran 112:1–4). In other words, He is unknowable by "personal" beings like us.
The Son is recognized as God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... The Word became flesh" (John 1:1, 14)	Muslims believe that Allah created Jesus in the likeness of Adam. "Lo! the likeness of Jesus with Allah is as the likeness of Adam. He created him [Jesus] of dust, then He said unto him: Be! And he is" (Sura 3:59).

Jesus Christ is the second person in the Godhead. "... his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20).	Many Muslims mistakenly believe that the Trinity is God, Mary, and Jesus. "And when Allah saith: O Jesus, son of Mary! Didst thou say unto mankind: Take me and my mother for two gods beside Allah? He saith: Be glorified! It was not mine to utter that to which I had no right" (Sura 5:116).
The Holy Spirit is God. "You have lied to the Holy Spirit.... You have not lied to men but to God" (Acts 5:3-4).	A holy spirit is mentioned three times in the Quran. "Say: the holy spirit hath revealed it from thy Lord" (Sura 16:102). All Muslim commentators agree that the holy spirit means the angel Gabriel.
God is Spirit. "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24)	Allah is neither a person nor spirit. There is nothing whatever like unto Him. "Naught is as His likeness; and He is the Hearer, the Seer" (Sura 42:11).
God has revealed Himself. "No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known" (John 1:18). "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets ... but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son" (Hebrews 1:1-2)	Allah is close with us by His knowledge, not by His personal self. God is completely "other."

THE IDENTITY AND MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST

Christianity	Islam
Conception. Mary's child, Jesus, was conceived by the Holy Spirit. "Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.... The Holy Spirit will come upon you" (Luke 1:30-31, 35).	Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary by a special miracle. "O Mary! Lo! Allah hath chosen thee.... She said: My Lord! How can I have a child when no mortal has touched me?" (Sura 3:42, 47). The Muslim commentator Zamakhshari says the virgin conceived "when the angel Gabriel blew up her garment." Cited in Zwemer, <i>The Moslem Doctrine of God</i> , Pg. 84.
<i>Divinity.</i> Jesus affirms that He is the Son of God. "The high priest said to him, 'I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.' 'Yes, it is as you say,' Jesus replied" (Matthew 26:63-64)	Jesus speaks from the cradle, saying He is a prophet (slave of Allah), negating that He is the Son of God. "How can we talk to the one who is in the cradle, a young boy? He spake: Lo! I am the slave of Allah. He hath given me the Scriptures and hath appointed me a Prophet" (Sura 19:29-30).

<p><i>Nature.</i> Jesus committed no sin. He lived a perfect life. “Christ suffered for you ... ‘He committed no sin’” (1 Peter 2:21–22).</p>	<p>Jesus was considered righteous, along with others. “... John and Jesus and Elias. Each one [of them] was of the righteous” (Sura 6:86).</p>
<p><i>Miracles.</i> Jesus healed the sick and raised the dead (all by His power). “‘But that you may know that the Son of Man [Jesus] has authority on earth to forgive sins’ He said to the paralytic, ‘I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.’ He got up” (Mark 2:10–12).</p>	<p>Jesus Christ healed the sick, raised the dead, and made a clay pigeon become alive. All were done with Allah’s permission. “When Allah saith: O Jesus ... thou didst shape of clay as it were the likeness of a bird ... heal him who was born blind and the leper ... raise the dead, by my permission” (Sura 5:110).</p>
<p><i>Ministry.</i> Jesus completed the work God had given Him. “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.... I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do” (John 17:1, 4)</p>	<p>Jesus’ life and ministry were inferior to those of earlier prophets as well as those of Muhammad. Sura 13:38 states that Allah had designated wives and children for all His prophets. The exception was Jesus. His ministry lasted only three years.</p>
<p><i>His Messenger.</i> Jesus taught that the Holy Spirit would come after His death and resurrection. “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever ... the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send</p>	<p>Jesus’ limited ministry was to announce the messenger who would follow him, Ahmad (a variant of Muhammad). “Jesus son of Mary said ... I am the messenger of Allah ... bringing good tidings of a messenger who cometh after me, whose name is the Praised One [Ahmad]” (Sura 61:6).</p>
<p><i>Death.</i> Jesus Christ died on the cross as the perfect sacrifice for sin. As foretold in Isaiah 53:6, “The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” “The Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead” (Acts 17:3).</p>	<p>Jesus did not die; someone else died in His place. “They slew him not nor crucified, but it appeared so unto them” (Sura 4:157).</p>
<p><i>Resurrection.</i> Jesus Christ rose from the dead after three days. “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day” (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)</p>	<p>God took Jesus to paradise as He had done with Enoch and Elijah. “But Allah took him unto Himself” (Sura 4:158).</p>
<p><i>Authority.</i> Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and earth. He rules and expands His kingdom from heaven. “Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him” (1 Peter 3:21–22).</p>	<p>Jesus does not rule. Only Allah has this power.</p>

<p><i>Intercession.</i> Jesus has become a High Priest, interceding for His followers. “Because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood.... He always lives to intercede for them” (Hebrews 7:24–25)</p>	<p>Jesus humbly indicates His inability to function as intercessor. “Allah’s Apostle said, ‘Allah will gather all people on the Day of Resurrection and they will say, “Let us request someone to intercede for us with our Lord.” ... They will go to him [Jesus], and he will say, “I am not fit for this undertaking, go to Muhammad”” (Hadith 8:570).</p>
<p><i>Return.</i> Jesus will return from heaven to earth to rule forever. “Jesus Christ ... the ruler of the kings of the earth.... Look, he is coming with the clouds” (Revelation 1:5–7).</p>	<p>Many Muslim scholars believe Jesus will return from heaven and punish Jews and Christians for their failure to accept Muhammad as the Prophet. He will help establish Islam as the only religion of the world. “By Him in Whose Hands my soul is, son of Mary [Jesus] will shortly descend amongst you people [Muslims] as a just ruler and will break the Cross and kill the pig” (Hadith 3:425).</p>
<p><i>Judgment.</i> When Jesus returns, He will judge the living and the dead. “When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven ... he will punish those who do not know God” (2 Thessalonians 1:7–8)</p>	<p>Jesus will judge the people by the Law of the Quran. “Allah’s Apostle said, ‘How will you be when the son of Mary descends amongst you and he will judge people by the Law of the Quran and not by the Law of the Gospel?’” (Hadith 4:658).</p>