

**“Questions People Ask About Christianity
and Other World Religions--Hinduism”**

Ephesians 2:1-10 January 12, 2016

*****Please register your ATTENDANCE**

Sign up for REFRESHMENTS. Thank you!

Prayer Requests & Opening Prayer

Discussion Starters: What do you know about the Hindu faith? How is Hinduism similar to/different from Christianity?

The Apostles' Creed

Originally incorporated into the Roman Catholic Church at the Council of Milan in Italy around 390 B.C.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ, God's only Son our Lord:
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell.

The third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

--Read Ephesians 2:1-10. As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ 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. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Hindu Scriptures: *Rig-Veda, Upanishads, Mahabharata, Bhagavad-Gita (Story of Lord Krishna).*

Lord Krishna calls all people to self-sacrifice and the pursuit of wisdom which will give joy and a full life.

Hindu Beliefs: One true God, often known as *Brahman*. This one God can be known through as many as 330 million lesser gods and goddesses, including *Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva*—known as the “trimurti” of Hinduism, with *Brahma* as the creator, *Vishnu* as the maintainer or preserver, and *Shiva* as the transformer or destroyer.

The human soul desires to be united with the god within us known as *Atman*. We are separated from *Atman* because we are unaware of what the good is that we must do. The goal is to pursue knowledge. This knowledge of what is good will lead us to do the good works—*dharma* (“duty”).

There are 4 paths by which we gain knowledge and are set free from wrongdoing: *yogas*.

Karma—“works” or “deeds.”

Nirvana: We receive salvation (*moksha*) and become one with God.

Differences between Hinduism and Christianity.

Hinduism: God is in everything, and everything is in God.

Christianity: The Creator is distinct from the creation and the creature.

- ¹⁰ For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

God offers a covenant relationship in Christianity rather than an absorption into the essence of God.

Hinduism observes idol worship. Christianity does not (**Exodus 20:4-6**).

In Christianity, we struggle with sin no matter how spiritually and intellectually mature we are. It is not knowledge that we need, but grace. We need forgiveness; we need a Savior.

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

Hinduism: People go through many cycles of life, death, and reincarnation to attain oneness with God.

Christianity does not teach reincarnation, but resurrection.

Closing Prayer: Dear God, we thank you for giving us insight into the variety of beliefs of your people across the earth. We praise you for the distinct revelation you have given us of Yourself through Jesus Christ. We pray that you will help us to see all Your children across the earth through the eyes and the sacrifice of Jesus, in whose Name we pray. Amen.