

# River of Life MCC Resources

E: [admin@river-of-life.org.uk](mailto:admin@river-of-life.org.uk)

W: [river-of-life.org.uk](http://river-of-life.org.uk)

T: 01305 898091



## Frequently Asked Questions

FAQ: Why are the main Religions so different (if you believe some of the followers) but so similar?

The largest religions of the world are in reality very similar - because, they were all born out of the same roots. The creator & created concept. In terms of the major Semitic religions Christianity / Judaism / Islam / Hindu - all are rooted in the same 'God'. All have their teachings based in sacred texts, based around a monotheistic (Yes! the Hindu pantheon is a monotheism) understanding of a supreme creator who oversees all of eternity. All are grounded in thousands of years of cultural, religious, political and social history. The major elements of these religions are largely similar - it is often/usually the dogmatic teaching of certain elements which leads to misconceptions and understandings and subsequently erratic, behaviour and actions on the part of some fundamentalists who take things into their own hands.

Unfortunately often the religion is blamed for certain extremist behaviors which are certainly not part of the sacred texts which these religions follow. Often people in a certain religion will stress how different their religion is from someone else's, and how they are right and everyone else is wrong, but the bottom line is that things are very much the same. We all live in the same world, which has had the same evolution, the only differences really are culture based.

Religions have been molded by the culture in which they are based. In all cases, the religions even have 'sects' and 'groups' within themselves which believe and teach different things - not least of which Christianity, is the most diverse! Christians of different denominations/groups can be vehemently opposed to each other - particularly in terms of fundamentalist beliefs around the authority of scripture, which in the first instance has been mis-translated, and secondly, is mis-read, or in some cases, not-read, but passed down from one dogmatic to the next, leading to assumptions and misconceptions, judgments and assertions which in no way reflect the actual words/context or theological meaning of the said texts! This is not to say however that liberalism is 100% right in its approach either - surely humanity should have learnt by now that we are 'each' created differently, uniquely, and solely, by design and for purpose. 'In God's own image' and therefore as such, diversity of humanity is the key to understanding a little more about why religions are so different and yet the same. In such radical issues on the religious table as gender, race, sexuality, and ethics religious people will draw swords for the fight and become abusive and aggressive and indeed in some cases violent, and yet in the next breath be talking about love and light! It seems that humanity has missed the point!

I draw the conclusion that the differences in the main religions are culture/historical/social-psychologically based. Although some dogmatic differences are also obvious - and some religious practices and rituals are very different - these too are cultural differences, not differences in the divine itself. It is therefore to assume that differences in religion are anthropomorphic issues, projected into and onto the divine by well meaning and some not so well meaning religious leaders! It all comes down to 'power' I guess.

*Discussion by Karen*