**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

The Resurrection Difference

 ***Five Weeks After “The” Resurrection***

***35 Days since the Resurrection***

***40 Days Resurrection Ministry***

***5 Days left to the Ascension***

***1987 years ago***

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The Year of Our Lord

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(All Scripture is from the New American Standard Bible, (NAS) unless otherwise noted.)

 Christians know that the Resurrection is the center piece of God’s salvation plan. Ever since the Fall detailed in Genesis 3, there was an anticipation of when the seed of Eve (God as Jesus, the Messiah) would crush the head of the serpent (Satan). The Cross is where God as Jesus paid the price for the sins of the world. There is not any other person who ever lived that died for the sins of the world. There are eleven classical recognized beliefs outside of Christianity that do not. These are Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Judaism, Baha'i, Confucianism, Jainism, Shintoism, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism. Over 80% of the world’s population is under one of these named, including Christianity.

 One way to look at these numbers is that the vast majority of the world’s population believes in a spiritual life. The oldest of these is Christianity. I know Hindu gurus often tout that theirs is the oldest religion dating back to Hindu writings of the 6th century BC. However, Moses wrote down the first five books of the Tora by 1400 B.C. The Tora contains accounts of Abraham dating back to 2000 BC. The account in Genesis of Adam and Eve goes back to the beginning of the creation. The genealogy list in both the Old and New Testaments are a direct lineage from Christ to Adam and Eve.

The corner into which Christians dig themselves is pinning the beginning of Christianity with Christ, particularly the Cross and Pentecost. We need to be accurate in witnessing God’s Word. Many passages point to the beginning of the creation. Roman 1:18 and following specifically point to the beginning of the creation. John 1 points to the creation by stating that all things were made through Christ. The book of Job points to God and His creative work.

 God is the God of the whole creation and everything in existence. This is why God’s plan of salvation/ justification to Him is the same for everyone who has every lived. The problem is that not all people surrender to God. God tells us through Paul in Romans 1 that people choose to worship the creation and not the Creator. This is what we see in religions like Hinduism when they teach that cows should be worshiped because they are the embodiment of god. They believe this because they see the cow as providing milk (and dung for fertilizer and fuel) to sustain their lives. This is in direct contradiction to Romans 1.

When God came as Jesus, He taught and demonstrated how to live. And above all, He demonstrated His love for us by dying on the Cross for payment of our sins. This one act separates God from these other teachings, like Hinduism. There is not any “karma” to earn your way to a higher “caste” or station in life. God invites us to surrender to Him, thus allowing His Spirit to order our lives. It is not our work in us, it is God at work in us.

**Philippians 2:13** for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

**1 Corinthians 12:6** There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.

**Hebrews 13:21** equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

**1 Corinthians 15:10** But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.

So, we see that by God incarnating Himself as a person to go and die on the Cross for the sins of the world is incredibly unique. We do not have to shed our blood. All of the other beliefs may have some similarities, but it is God who gives the full price for humanity’s entrance into eternal life.

What is at the end of other beliefs noted?

Some of these teach that there is one God, which includes Judaism, Islam, Baha'i and Sikhism. But they all teach a works/merit/Karma-based system as foundational to achieve access to a better afterlife. Many teach reincarnation. None of them teach that God came to pay the price for sins of fallen humanity on the Cross. None of them have a Messiah who proclaimed from the Cross, “It is Finished!”. Meaning that all works to satisfy God had been completed. Again, this is the main distinction and separates Christianity from the others. This is important because the others require the effort of a person to acquire an acceptable status with God or one of their many gods. In Hinduism, works/karma is measured to determine a higher life-status as a humane being in the next life.

So, what meets a person on the other end of life who pursued one of these “isms” noted? A lot of manmade-works that will fall short of gaining eternal life with God. We see God directed Paul to declare that He has revealed His invisible attributes to all people from the beginning of the creation, and they are without excuses. Jesus said a person has to have eyes to see and ears to hear. (Matthew 13:14-16; Luke 10:23-24)

**Romans 1:17-25**

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH." Habakkuk 2:4 "Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.

 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

 24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

 25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

 We do not know how God revealed His attributes.

 TNT **Romans 1:20** So that his invisible thinges: that is to saye his eternall power and godhed are vnderstonde and sene by the workes from the creacion of the worlde. So that they are without excuse

YLT **Romans 1:20** for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world, by the things made being understood, are plainly seen, both His eternal power and Godhead -- to their being inexcusable;

 It is my opinion that all of these other belief systems are Satan’s attempt to alter God’s salvation plan for all humanity. Some of these belief systems have components of the Gospel Message. They speak of love, peace, mercy, grace, prayer and forgiveness. The challenge comes with the implementation of these gifts and attributes. They pursue these in fear of not having enough works/karma to satisfy some god. 1 John 4:8 declares that God is love, and there is not fear in love.

**1 John 4:7-19**

**7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.**

 **8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.**

 **9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.**

 **10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

 **11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.**

 **12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.**

 **13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.**

 **14 We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.**

 **15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.**

 **16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.**

 **17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.**

 **18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.**

 **19 We love, because He first loved us.**

Without God’s Spirit indwelling a person, these spiritual gifts and fruits cannot be fully acquired. They are only partial and not directed by God’s Spirit being in a person’s heart.

The other problem with these other beliefs is that they are inconsistent with Scripture regarding karma and reincarnation. Psalm 32, 40:6, 51:16-17; Ephesians 2:8; Romans 4; Hebrews 10 are explicit that there are not any work(s) that will justify a person to God. Like David’s prayer to the Lord. . .

10 **Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.** 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. (Psalm 51:10-12)

 Peace with God is due to our surrender to Him, not our good works performed to gain a ‘right standing’ with Him. Who creates a clean heart in David? God.

 We are created in the image of God, not an animal. God created people to live in His image, not the image of an animal. Therefore, the teaching of reincarnation in a belief system like Hinduism is a direct contradiction to God and His Word. We live one time and die one time.

**Hebrews 9:27-28**

 27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

 Satan has developed one scheme after another through history to distract people from God. Remember that Satan is the destroyer of life and desires to separate people from God for an eternity.

Before the Cross took place, we also see that Satan made a futile attempt to defeat Jesus after He spent forty days in the wilderness (Matthew 4). This is the epic “three-test” of God as Jesus the Messiah. Satan, “The Tempter/Tester”, attempts to get Jesus off His road to the Cross by “goading” Him into proving that He was the Son of God. “If you are the Son of God then turn this stone into bread and jump off this pinnacle of the Temple. . .” This appeals to the pride of fallen humanity. Satan sounds like he was addressing testosterone-driven teenage boys to prove they were men. But no, this is God as the Messiah. God commanded the earth to be formed and ordered all things. By offering God as Jesus material possessions, miracle-worker status and a world leadership position, Satan proved he did not have any power over God as Jesus the Messiah. This also proves that Believers, who have the living Lord indwelling them, cannot be controlled by Satan (Romans 8:1-9).

 All of Satan’s tests were designed to get Jesus to fall-down and worship him (Satan). The text never said Jesus was tempted. It is Satan who made the attempt to tempt Jesus. Jesus never contemplated Satan’s offer. Jesus kept marching to the Cross. By this defeat of Satan in the wilderness, Jesus reemphasized His will to carry-out the mission of the incarnation and go to the Cross to pay the price for the sins of the world. We receive another teaching of Jesus at the garden of Gethsemane. (Matthew 26:39). We have the same outcome. Jesus shows us to follow the Father’s will in our lives. The result of following God’s will is eternal life.

 From reading the New Testament, we can count at least ten resurrection appearances. All of these eye-witnesses are in the four Gospels, the book of Acts and 1 Corinthians. They include the account of the Twelve Apostles, Paul, the Women, the two on the road to Emmaus and a group of five-hundred.

Matthew 28:1,16,17

Mark 16:1,

Luke 24:10,13-35, 36-43, 49-53

John 20:11-35, 21:1-23, 24:49-53

**Acts 1:3-11**

3 To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

 4 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me;

 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

 6 So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"

 7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;

 8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

 9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

 10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them.

 11 They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

 **1 Corinthians 15:5** and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

 6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep;

 7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles;

 8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

**1 Peter. 3:18-20** (Jesus appeared to fallen angels.)

 18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison,

20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.

