



“There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”
- Acts 4:12

“Christianity is not one truth among many—it is truth standing in the midst of many claims.”
- Ravi Zacharias

“All religions are man’s search for God; the Gospel is God’s search for man.”
- E. Stanley Jones

“Christianity is the only religion whose founder claimed to be God and proved it.”
- R.C. Sproul

“After a lifetime of studying world religions and listening to their claims, I’ve reached a simple but profound conclusion: every faith ultimately stands or falls on its documents. The real question before us is this — why do we trust the Bible as Holy Scripture and not the others? Every religion lives out its theology based on what it believes to be its true, authoritative writings. Hey, it all boils down to this;
Whose bible is indeed reliable and holy?”
- Pastor Joe

A. What is a Cult?

A **Cult** (Latin: *cultus* meaning “adoration”) is a religion regarded as unorthodox and does not conform to established Christian doctrines.

Galatians 1:6-7 (NIV) - ⁶*I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.*

Galatians 1:8, NASB95 - ⁸*But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!*

B. The Mathematical Test

The Mathematical Test

1. Does it **ADD** to God's Word?
2. Does it **SUBTRACT** from the Person of Christ?
3. Does it **MULTIPLY** the salvation requirements?
4. Does it **DIVIDE** the follower's loyalty?

Comparisons of "The Big Five"

(minus **Judaism** which Pastor Joe does not believe is a cult)

1. Does it **ADD** to God's Word?

Revelation 22:18 (NIV) -¹⁸ *I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book.*

Proverbs 30:5-6 (NIV) -⁵ *"Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. ⁶ Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.*

- **Christianity:** No — Scripture alone (sola Scriptura).
Sola Scriptura — Scripture Alone • Sola Fide — Faith Alone • Sola Gratia — Grace Alone
Solus Christus — Christ Alone • Soli Deo Gloria — To the Glory of God Alone
- Five Solas of the Reformation, 16th C, these truths shaped Protestantism
- **Islam:** Yes — Qur'an + Hadith.
- **Mormonism (LDS):** Yes — Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants, Pearl of Great Price.
- **Jehovah's Witnesses:** Yes — New World Translation + Watchtower publications as authoritative.
- **Catholicism:** Yes — Sacred Tradition + Bible with the Apocrypha + Magisterium.

2. Does it **SUBTRACT** from the Person of Christ?

Colossians 1:15-17 (NIV) -¹⁵ *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

- **Christianity:** No — affirms full deity, full humanity, eternal Sonship.
- **Islam:** Yes — denies deity, crucifixion, resurrection; sees Jesus as merely a prophet.
- **Mormonism:** Yes — Jesus is a separate god, spirit-child of Heavenly Father, not eternally God.
- **Jehovah's Witnesses:** Yes — Jesus is a created being (Michael the archangel), not fully God.
- **Catholicism:** No — affirms full deity and humanity; orthodox Christology.

3. Does it **MULTIPLY** the salvation requirements?

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV) -⁸ *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—*⁹ *not by works, so that no one can boast.*

- **Christianity:** No — salvation by grace through faith alone.
- **Islam:** Yes — works-based righteousness, Five Pillars, scales of deeds.
- **Mormonism:** Yes — faith + repentance + ordinances + temple requirements + obedience.
- **Jehovah's Witnesses:** Yes — works, organizational loyalty, door-to-door ministry, adherence to Watchtower teachings.
- **Catholicism:** Yes — faith + sacraments + works + church mediation.

4. Does it **DIVIDE** the follower's loyalty?

Exodus 20:3 (NIV) -³ *"You shall have no other gods before me."*

- **Christianity:** No — loyalty to Christ alone.
- **Islam:** Yes — loyalty to Allah as defined by Qur'an and Islamic law.
- **Mormonism:** Yes — loyalty to Joseph Smith, the LDS Church and all its prophets.
- **Jehovah's Witnesses:** Yes — loyalty to the Watchtower organization.
- **Catholicism:** Yes — loyalty to Christ *and* the authority of the Church/Magisterium.

C. The Doctrinal Test

If it *varies* on one or more points from the accepted beliefs of orthodox Christianity.

Virgin birth of Christ

Matthew 1:23 (NIV) -²³ *"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us."*

- **Christianity (Protestant):** Fully affirms the virgin birth (Matthew 1, Luke 1).
- **Catholicism:** Fully affirms the virgin birth and emphasizes Mary's unique role but believe that his birth was a produce of "The Doctrine of Divine Transportation" (to protect the perpetual virginity of Mary.)
- **Islam:** Affirms the virgin birth of *Isa* (Jesus) — sees it as a miracle from Allah, but Jesus is not divine.
- **Mormonism (LDS):** Affirms Jesus was born of Mary but traditionally teaches God the Father has a physical body; interpretations vary on how the conception occurred.
- **Jehovah's Witnesses:** Affirms the virgin birth — Jesus was created by Jehovah and placed in Mary's womb.

When you meet the friendliest people you have ever known, who introduce you to the most loving group of people you've ever encountered, and you find the leader to be the most inspired, caring, compassionate and understanding person you've ever met, and then you learn that the cause of the group is something you never dared hope could be accomplished, and all of this sounds too good to be true—it probably is too good to be true!

- June Hunt (former follower of cult leader Jim Jones)

Atonement for sin only through Christ's shed blood

Romans 5:8-9 (NIV) -⁸ *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* ⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

- **Christianity:** Jesus' shed blood is the *only* sufficient atonement for sin; salvation by grace alone.
- **Catholicism:** Fully affirms Christ's atoning sacrifice; applied through faith and the sacraments.
- **Islam:** Rejects blood atonement entirely — denies crucifixion; teaches salvation by works and Allah's mercy.
- **Mormonism:** Affirms Christ's atonement, but adds human works, ordinances, and covenants as necessary for exaltation. *"We are saved by graces—once we have done all that we can do."* - BoM
- **Jehovah's Witnesses:** Affirms Jesus' blood atonement, but salvation requires loyalty to the Watchtower organization and obedience.

Resurrection of Christ from the dead

1 Corinthians 15:3-6 (NIV) -³ *For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,* ⁴ *that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,* ⁵ *and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.* ⁶ *After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.*

- **Christianity:** Bodily resurrection — cornerstone of the faith.
- **Catholicism:** Fully affirms bodily resurrection.
- **Islam:** Denies Jesus' death and resurrection; teaches someone else died in His place.
- **Mormonism:** Affirms bodily resurrection; all people will be resurrected, but to different kingdoms of glory.
- **Jehovah's Witnesses:** Jesus was resurrected *spiritually*, not bodily — they deny the physical resurrection.

Incarnation of God becoming man (Jesus IS God!)

John 10:30 (NIV) -³⁰ *I and the Father are one.*"

- **Christianity:** Jesus is fully God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father (Trinity).
- **Catholicism:** Same — fully affirms Jesus as God, second Person of the Trinity.
- **Islam:** Strongly denies Jesus' deity; sees Him as a prophet only.
- **Mormonism:** Jesus is a separate god, spirit-child of Heavenly Father; not eternally God.
- **Jehovah's Witnesses:** Denies Jesus' deity — teaches He is Michael the archangel, a created being.

Eschatology of second coming of Christ

Acts 1:10-11 (NIV) -¹⁰ *They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.* ¹¹ *“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”*

- **Christianity:** Jesus will bodily return to judge the world and establish His kingdom.
- **Catholicism:** Fully affirms the Second Coming; part of the Nicene Creed.
- **Islam:** Jesus will return, but not as God — He will correct Christians, kill the Antichrist, and die a natural death.
- **Mormonism:** Jesus will return, reign from Missouri and Jerusalem, and usher in the Millennium.
- **Jehovah’s Witnesses:** Teach Jesus returned invisibly in 1914; future events will complete His kingdom rule.

Scripture—inspired only by God; its sole authority

2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV) -¹⁶ *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,* ¹⁷ *so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

- **Christianity:** Yes
- **Catholicism:** Yes, but with the Apocrypha and the benefit of the Holy Catholic Church.
- **Islam:** No
- **Mormonism:** No— but only as it is translated accurately, which it isn’t. It’s also incomplete.
- **Jehovah’s Witnesses:** No—because it is translated inaccurately.

Summary Chart of Important Doctrines

Doctrine	Christianity	Catholic	Islam	LDS	JW
Virgin Birth	Yes	Yes, but with the Apocrypha	Yes but by Allah’s Command	Yes?!? but not miraculous	Yes
Blood Atonement	Yes	Yes	No	Yes + Works	Yes = Org. loyalty
Resurrection	Bodily	Bodily	Denied	Bodily	Spiritual Only
Jesus is God	Yes	Yes	No	Separate God	No (created being)
Second Coming	Bodily Return	Bodily Return	Yes (not divine)	Yes – Post Trib. (Millennial)	Invisible Return 1914

Whose bible is indeed reliable and holy? - Pastor Joe