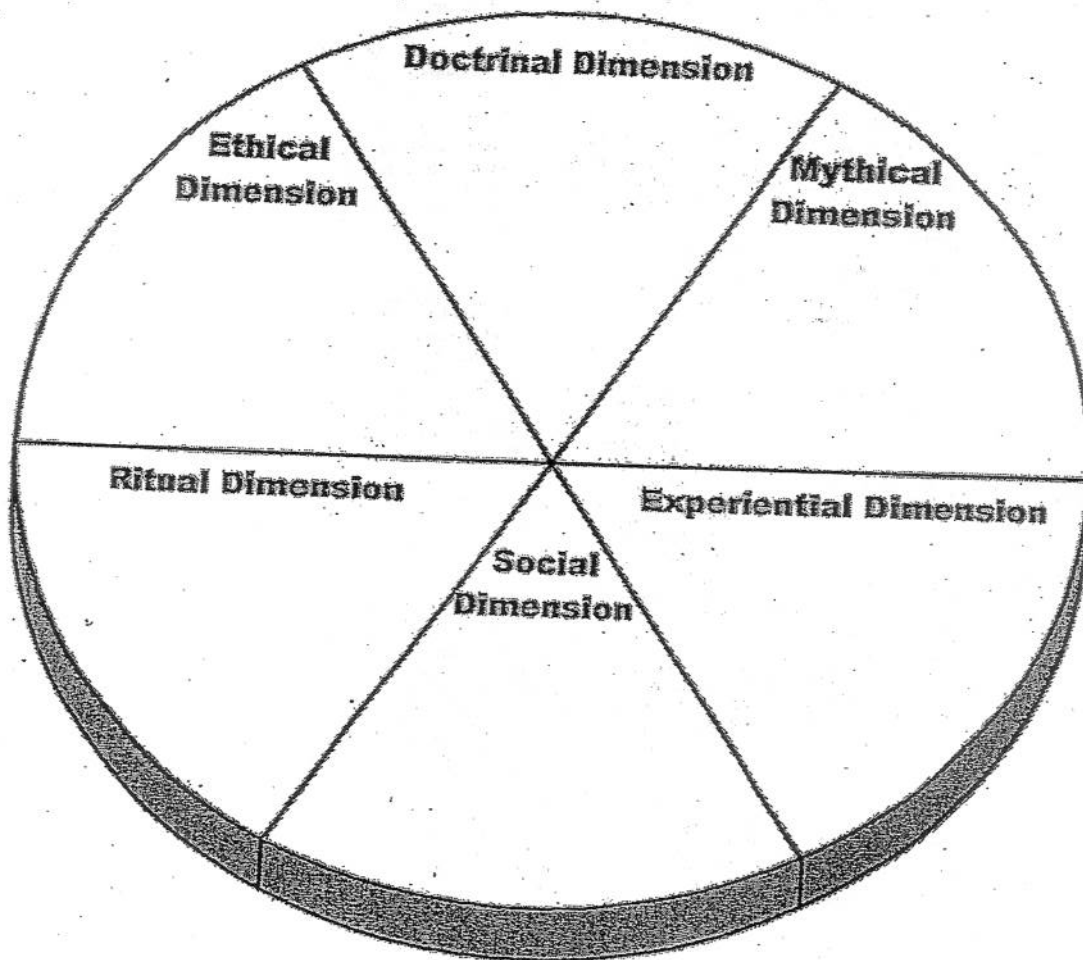


Dimensions of Worldviews

By Ninian Smart



The Abrahamic Faiths: A Comparison

How do Judaism, Christianity, and Islam differ?

RELIGIONS PAGE | ABRAHAM QUIZ

	JUDAISM	CHRISTIANITY	ISLAM
God	One god	One god	One god
Central Prophet	Moses	Jesus Christ	Muhammad
Scripture	Torah, Prophets, Writings and the Talmud (oral tradition and commentary)	Bible (Old and New Testaments)	Qur'an (God's revelation to Muhammad) and Hadith (Mohammed's sayings)
War	Peace is always preferable, but war in self-defense is considered obligatory.	Just war can be fought as a last resort; tradition of non-violent resistance.	War should be fought only in self-defense, within strict limits.
Divisions	Modern movements include Reform, Conservative, Modern Orthodox and Reconstructionist.	Many theological divisions and schisms: Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, numerous Protestant churches.	Sunni-Shiite schism based on disagreement over Mohammed's successors; broad debate over Islam's role in modern society; little theological debate.
Fundamentalism	Ultra-Orthodox Jews reject the secular world and live in strict communities.	Debate over literal meaning of the Bible; efforts to bring religion into daily life.	Return to "pure" Islam; rejection of secular culture; efforts to bring religion into daily life and create an Islamic state.
Holy City	Jerusalem	Jerusalem	Mecca
Jesus	A historical figure; not the Messiah.	The Son of God.	Highly respected as the second-last prophet before Mohammed.
Hierarchy	No hierarchy; rabbis are considered teachers.	Catholics and Orthodox have extensive hierarchy; some Protestant branches have almost none.	No hierarchy; prayers are led by imams (teachers) who have studied the Qur'an.
Idols & Images	Images and statues forbidden.	Images and statues allowed in some denominations; but not worshiped.	Images and statues forbidden.
Charity	Tzedakah: 10 percent of income.	Tithe: 10 percent of income.	Zakat: 2.5 percent of total wealth each year.
Proselytizing	No proselytizing; Jews must turn away would-be converts three times to ensure their commitment.	Conversion considered important in most traditions; Catholic and Protestant churches have missionaries.	Da'wa: Muslims should share their knowledge of Islam without trying to convert. Only God can bring someone to Islam.
Women	Men and women are equal in the eyes of God; traditional Judaism prescribes different roles for men and women. Orthodox men and women worship separately.	Men and women worship together. Some Protestant churches ordain women as priests. More...	Men and women are generally treated the same in the Koran, although women are oppressed in many Muslim cultures today. Men and women worship separately.
House of Worship	Synagogue	Church	Mosque
Main Day of Worship	Saturday	Sunday	Friday
Diet	Must keep "kosher": no pork or certain seafood; other meat to be killed by kosher method; separation of meat and dairy.	No dietary restrictions.	No pork; other meat should be prepared by the halal method. No alcohol.
Life After Death	No immediate life after death; life in the "world to come" after the coming of the Messiah.	Day of Judgment, followed by Heaven or Hell.	Day of Judgment, followed by Heaven or Hell.
Mysticism	Kabbalah	Numerous mystical traditions	Sufism