

# Bahai doctrine compared with Christian

DOCTRINE	CHRISTIAN POSITION	BAHAI POSITION
<b>GOD</b>	one God eternally existent in 3 persons (Matt 28:18,19); holy, transcendent (beyond His creation - 1 Kings 8:27), yet immanent (at work within the creation; perhaps better, the creation is within Him (Jer. 23:23,24; Acts 17:27,28); immutable (unchanging - Mal. 3:6), Spirit, immaterial (John 4:24)	inherit the Muslim view of God, and like Judaism rejects the Trinity; also rejects the Christian doctrine of the <b>Incar nation</b> , that God can and did (in Jesus) become human for our sake; God, as in Islam, is merciful, and will overlook our sins if we try to please Him with conformity to His revealed will -- principally the writings of Baha'U'llah ( <i>Glory of God</i> , 1817-92) and his son Abdu'l Baha (1844-1921)
<b>CHRIST</b>	eternal Son of God, Creator of all (Col. 1:15-19), incarnate in Jesus; sinless and holy even as a man (Heb 2:17, 4:15)	while rejecting the unique Sonship of Christ, Bahai teaches that Jesus was one of NINE manifestations (prophets or revelators) of God -- others being Moses, Buddha, Zoroaster, Confucius, Muhammad, Hare Krishna, Bab and Baha' U'llah
<b>HOLY SPIRIT</b>	the eternal 3rd person of the Trinity, everywhere present in the universe He created (Gen. 1:2; Psalm 139:7,8; Isaiah 63:9-14)	parallel to Islam, Bahai teaches that Baha' U'llah is the <i>Comforter</i> predicted by Christ in John 14; thus Bab ( <i>the Gate</i> ), Baha' U'llah, and Abdu'l Baha, the 3 first leaders of Bahai, stand in the relative positions of John the Baptist, Jesus and the Holy Spirit in Scripture
<b>MAN</b>	body/soul/spirit, made in the image of God (not to be God - Gen. 2:7; 1 Thess. 5:23)	man is an immortal soul, and can, with God's help, save himself by stages
<b>SIN</b>	all are lost in sin, which is nothing less than rebellion against our Creator; every aspect of our humanity is affected by the fall -- our intellects and wills as well as spiritual and moral ability (Rom. 7:14-23)	no atonement for sin is necessary; men are not perfect, but by effort, sacrifice and conformity to Baha' U'llah's teaching they will reach salvation
<b>SALVATION</b>	by grace, through faith alone (Eph 2:8,9); all the saved inherit eternal life even in this life, and will reign with Christ	though granting that all religions contain some truth, Bahai insists its proponents must follow the teachings of Baha' U'llah; though Bahai has no clergy or sacraments, members are expected to observe 19 fast days and other holy days, pray daily, abstain from alcohol and substance abuse, and make at least one pilgrimage to Haifa, Israel
<b>CHURCH</b>	all believers in Christ, identified by relationship to Him -- not by relation to religious bodies, denominations (John 10:27)	5 million people espouse Bahai faith in over 200 countries. Baha'is meet in 'spiritual assemblies' in most of the world's major cities, 24,000 altogether
<b>HOPE</b>	all Christians will be with God forever, in immortal, glorified bodies (1 Cor. 15:35-54)	Bahai's established goals include: a world confederacy of nations, universal language, and freedom and equality of races and genders; personal resurrection to paradise is the destiny of individuals
<b>UNBELIEVERS</b>	those who reject the free offer of pardon in Christ, standing on their own merit or choosing to live independent of God, will receive the only fate left for eternal spirit beings, eternal separation from God and Christ in hell (the biblical definition of death (Ephesians 2:5,12)	rejects the doctrine of eternal punishment, though men will suffer remedial judgment; as with Islam, there is no certainty of salvation even for faithful followers of the tenets of Bahai
<b>AUTHORITY</b>	the Bible, interpreted for the church by the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:15-17; John 16:13) Christ has given gifts to the church in teachers, but they do not claim apostolic or prophetic office (Eph 4:11)	the defining books for followers of Bahai are the 100+ works of Mirza Husayn Ali, <b>Baha' U'llah</b> , who succeeded Mirza Ali Muhammad, <b>Bab</b> (1819-50), who was martyred while trying to reform Islam. Baha' U'llah presented himself as the prophet Bab had foretold. The works of <b>Abdu'l Baha</b> , son of Baha' U'llah, are also sacred, those of his successor <b>Shoghi Effendi</b> infallible

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:** Mather, Nichols *Dictionary of Cults, Sects, Religions and the Occult* pp.32,33; Martin *Kingdom of the Cults*; Melton, *Encyclopedia of American Religions* Vol.3 pp.182-86