

Hinduism

No one founder. Began 1800–1000 BC in India.

Main types: Vaishnavism, Shaivism, and Shaktism.



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Many writings, including the Vedas (oldest, about 1000 BC), the Upanishads, and the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

God is “The Absolute,” a universal spirit. Everyone is part of God (Brahman), but most people are not aware of it. People worship manifestations of Brahman (gods and goddesses).

Jesus Christ is a teacher, a guru, or an avatar (an incarnation of Vishnu). He is a son of God as are others. His death does not atone for sins and he did not rise from the dead.

The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.

Release from the cycles of reincarnation. Achieved through yoga and meditation. Can take many lifetimes. Final salvation is absorption or union with Brahman, like a raindrop falling into the ocean.

Reincarnation into a better status (good karma) if a person has behaved well; if badly, a person can be reborn and pay for past sins (bad karma) by suffering.

Many Hindus worship stone and wooden idols in temples, homes. Disciples meditate on a word, phrase, or picture; may wear orange robes and have shaved heads. Many use a mark, called a *tilak*, on the forehead to represent the spiritual “third eye.” Yoga involves meditation, chanting, breathing exercises. Some gurus demand complete obedience. Foundation of New Age, TM.

20-group Comparison chart. <http://is.gd/6kZajf>

Founder

Writings

God

Jesus

Holy Spirit

Salvation

Death

Beliefs/Other