

Identity: Islam

Foundation:

- Islam means 'submission' and Muslim means 'one who submits to God'
- Muhammad was born around 570AD
- Muhammad said that Gabriel came to him several times telling him to read even though he could not read.
- He taught monotheism to his polytheistic town, was vilified and headed to Christian Ethiopia.
- He then has says one night he traveled from Mecca to Jerusalem then ascended into heaven where he talked with previous prophets and God himself. This established his place as the prophet among muslims.
- In 622 he helps two tribes reach peace and the first Muslim community started as well as the Muslim dating system, in place of using Christ's birth.
- Early on Muhammad welcomed Judaism because of its shared history. However, the Jews rejected him as a prophet and the Qu'ran as being scripture, at that point Islam diverted from Judaism.
- By 624 Muslims became offensively minded and attacked Jews and other non-Muslims taking their goods for themselves. If a victim of Muslim attack accepted Islam the attacks were supposed to stop.
- Khalifah means 'representative' and the first one after Muhammad's death was Abu Bakr who was the Khalifat rasul Allah 'successor of the messenger of God'.
- Imam is 'chief religious leader'.
- God speaks to the world through prophets. All the prophets of the bible, including Jesus. Not all prophets are messengers though. Messengers make universally binding sacred law known as Shari'ah. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad are the big five messengers.
- Qur'an took 22 years for Muhammad to compile as Gabriel gave it to him. When he died there were various versions written in fragment form, but not one collection. The third caliph made the collection official 20 years after Muhammad died in 632AD
- Islam's god has many of the same attributes as the Father of the Trinity. No Spirit, no Jesus as the Son, no Trinity.
- The goal of Islam is to submit to god's law as laid out in the Qur'an in order to be seen as righteous on the Day of Judgement and Resurrection.
- Shi'ism and Sunni split in Islam shortly after Muhammad's death his cousin claimed to be successor. Shi'ia follow a designated line of succession while Sunni do not since Muhammad did not specifically name any.
- Sufism is the mystical sect of Islam.
- As Islam spread its religio-political control it had to decide what to do with other religious followers. In the beginning, Jewish, Christian and other faiths were protected as long as the adherents submitted to Islamic political Shari'ah law. Over time and through reforms of the religion the treatment of other faiths (and women too) has morphed into a wide spectrum from tolerance to complete domination and control.

- Five Pillars: These are the basic practices for a Muslim.
 - Bare witness
 - Worship regularly (prayer)
 - Alms
 - Ramadan (fast)
 - Mecca pilgrimage

Worldviews for Islam

- There is one god and the world must submit to him.
- Muhammad is the last 'messenger of god' and the world must submit to god as Muhammad lays out.
- All other biblical prophets are prophets, but each messenger prophet supersedes the last, so Muhammad supersedes Jesus.
- Jesus is only man.
- Islam is to take over political power of the world.

Understanding Islam as Christians

Islam is theologically and philosophically in many ways a mash-up of Christian and Jewish theology and philosophy. However, in order for it to work and gain power, Muhammad must supersede Jesus, and in turn Jesus cannot be the Son of God or the promise of God revealed. Take Jesus as the promise out of Christianity, and forgiveness and grace leave too, leaving a works-based monotheism. Islam probably would have been another sect of Judaism if the Jews hadn't (rightly) rejected Muhammad. These few scripture references for "Jesus as God and Man" remind us of who Jesus is.

John 5

Letting Jesus speak for himself, John 5 quite explicitly lays out Jesus' divinity as God's Son who is sent to carry out the will of the Father so that all who believe in him being the promise are forgiven and have a place with God forever.

Galatians 4:4-5

In verses 1-7 of Galatians 4 it can be difficult to understand what Paul is saying since he appears to be mixing metaphors. In other words, he is using similar words from two different examples in order to make his point. While the wording of the whole section can be confusing, his point is quite clear, that is, because Jesus came to set us free (redeem) from the law and sin we can become adopted sons and daughters of God. Which means we get to live in (inherit) the Kingdom of God. As Paul makes his point in this section he says two very important things for our topic. It comes in verses 4-5 where Paul writes that Jesus is the Son of God, which makes Jesus God, and that Jesus was born of a woman, which makes Jesus human too. So he is God and man. Paul also tells us why Jesus, the Son of God, becomes a human too. Jesus does so in order to free (redeem) us from the law and sin so we can be part of God's family too.

Romans 9:1-5

In this section Paul is writing about how he is sad that so many Jewish people rejected Jesus as being the fulfillment of the promises God made to the Israelites (Jewish people) since Paul is Jewish himself. In verse 5 he states that Jesus is an Israelite (Jewish) by being born from their family line. So Jesus is a Jewish human. Paul also states that Jesus is God over all in the same sentence.

Matthew 4:2 and John 19:28

These two verses show that Jesus got both hungry and thirsty, showing his humanness.

1 John 5:20

This verse clearly states that Jesus is truly God.

Luke 22:39-42

In this section Jesus prays to the Father that he might not experience the crucifixion. A very human concern. But Jesus also prays that his will not be done but the will of the Father. Jesus submits to the Father's will at every turn, therefore making him sinless and the perfect human. This is only possible though because he is also truly God. This gives us an idea as to why Jesus is human and God at the same time. He perfects humanity, and then pays the price for sin (sin is going against the will of the Father) by dying on the cross and being forsaken by the Father. Him being God as well leads to his resurrection from the dead.