

Health Behavior: Theory, Research, and Practice (Jossey-Bass Public Health)

What do Christians believe? Answering this question is no simple matter. Christianity in general encompasses a wide range of denominations and faith groups. Thus, within the broad umbrella of Christianity as a religion, Christian beliefs vary widely as each denomination subscribes to its own set of doctrines and practices.

Definition of Doctrine Doctrine is something that is taught; a principle or creed of principles presented for acceptance or belief; a system of beliefs. In Scripture, doctrine takes on a broader meaning. In the Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology this explanation of doctrine is given: "Christianity is a religion founded on a message of good news rooted in the significance of the life of Jesus Christ. In Scripture, then, doctrine refers to the entire body of essential theological truths that define and describe that message ... The message includes historical facts, such as those regarding the events of the life of Jesus Christ ... But it is deeper than biographical facts alone... Doctrine, then, is scriptural teaching on theological truths."

Christian Creeds

The three major Christian creeds, the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed, together constitute a fairly comprehensive summary of traditional Christian doctrine, expressing the fundamental beliefs of a wide range of Christian churches. However, many churches reject the practice of professing creeds, even though they may agree with the content of the creeds. They refuse to accept or acknowledge the creeds in a desire to follow no text except that which is written in the Bible.

First Council of Nicaea with church fathers holding the Nicene Creed. Public Domain

Major Christian Beliefs

While many theological differences exist among Christians, most hold a set of beliefs in common. C.S. Lewis explores this common core of Christian beliefs in his book *Mere Christianity*. These positions deal with how God reveals himself and relates to humans; the character of God; God's plan of salvation; God's design for the church; and end times events.

The following beliefs are central to almost all Christian faith groups. They are presented here as the core beliefs of Christianity. A small number of faith groups that consider themselves to be within the framework of Christianity do not accept some of these beliefs. It should also be understood that slight variances, exceptions, and additions to these doctrines exist within certain faith groups that fall under the broad umbrella of Christianity.

God the Father

There is only one God (Isaiah 43:10; 44:6, 8; John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:5-6; Galatians 4:8-9).

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God is omniscient, meaning he "knows all things" (Acts 15:18; 1 John 3:20).

God is omnipotent, meaning he is "all-powerful" (Psalm 115:3; Revelation 19:6).

God is omnipresent, meaning he is "present everywhere" (Jeremiah 23:23, 24; Psalm 139).

God is sovereign (Zechariah 9:14; 1 Timothy 6:15-16).

God is holy (1 Peter 1:15).

God is just or "righteous" (Psalm 19:9, 116:5, 145:17; Jeremiah 12:1).

God is love (1 John 4:8).

God is true (Romans 3:4; John 14:6).

God is the creator of everything that exists (Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 44:24).

God is infinite and eternal. He has always been and will ever be God (Psalm 90:2; Genesis 21:33; Acts 17:24).

God is immutable. He does not change (James 1:17; Malachi 3:6; Isaiah 46:9-10).

The Trinity

God is three in one or a Trinity; God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:16-17, 28:19; John 14:16-17; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Acts 2:32-33, John 10:30,17:11, 21; 1 Peter 1:2).

Jesus Christ the Son

Jesus Christ is God (John 1:1, 14, 10:30-33, 20:28; Colossians 2:9; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 1:8).

Jesus was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:26-35).

Jesus Christ became a man (Philippians 2:1-11).

Jesus is fully God and fully man (Colossians 2:9; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 4:15; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

Jesus Christ is perfect and sinless (1 Peter 2:22; Hebrews 4:15).

Jesus is the only way to God the Father (John 14:6; Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22).

The Holy Spirit

God is Spirit (John 4:24).

The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 2:11-12; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

The Bible: The Word of God

The Bible is the "inspired" or "God-breathed," Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

The Bible in its original manuscripts is without error (John 10:35; John 17:17; Hebrews 4:12).

God's Plan of Salvation

Humans were created by God and in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27).

All people have sinned (Romans 3:23, 5:12).

Death came into the world through Adam's sin (Romans 5:12-15).

Sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2).

Jesus Christ died for the sins of each and every person in the world (1 John 2:2; 2 Corinthians 5:14; 1 Peter 2:24).

The death of Jesus Christ was a substitutionary sacrifice. He died and paid the price for our sins so that we might live forever with him. (1 Peter 2:24; Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45).

Jesus Christ resurrected from the dead in physical form (John 2:19-21).

Salvation is a free gift of God (Romans 4:5, 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 John 1:8-10).

Believers are saved by grace; Salvation cannot be earned by human efforts or good works (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Those who reject Jesus Christ will go to hell forever after they die (Revelation 20:11-15, 21:8).

Those who accept Jesus Christ will live for eternity with him after they die (John 11:25, 26; 2 Corinthians 5:6).

Hell Is Real

Hell is a real place of punishment (Matthew 25:41, 46; Revelation 19:20).

Hell is eternal (Matthew 25:46).

End Times

There will be a rapture of the church (Matthew 24:30-36, 40-41; John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12).

Jesus Christ will return to the earth (Acts 1:11).

Christians will be raised from the dead when the Lord returns (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17).

There will be a final judgment (Hebrews 9:27; 2 Peter 3:7).

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Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10).

God will create a new heaven and a new earth (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1).

Sources

Reference

[Conducting Your Literature Review \(Concise Guides to Conducting Behavioral, Health, and Social Science Research\)](#)

[Writing Empirical Research Reports: A Basic Guide for Students of the Social and Behavioral Sciences](#)