

Youth Group 2/24/21 - Judaism

- Review 4 things that make Christianity distinct

Judaism - (talking about modern, non-Christian Judaism)

Facts -

- There are _____ people worldwide who identify as Jewish.
 - There are more in _____ than any other continent
 - There are more in _____ than any other city in the world
- Many of the greatest minds and cultural influencers in history were Jewish: Albert Einstein, Karl Marx, George Gershwin, Leo Strauss, Sigmund Freud, Robert Oppenheimer, etc.
- The twin pillars of Judaism in the first century were _____ and _____ (first 5 books of the Bible, OT Law)
 - The temple was run by the Sadducees, and the Torah was interpreted by the Pharisees.
 - After the temple was destroyed in 70AD (by the Romans), it was the Pharisaical form of Judaism (which focused on interpretation of Scripture) that became dominant in what is called "Rabbinic Judaism." Jews met in synagogues to focus on the study of the Torah, and they formed a new type of Judaism without sacrifices or rituals related to the temple.

Scripture

- Sacred writings - Hebrew Bible (Our Old Testament), _____ (Jewish civil and ceremonial law written by Jewish teachers [Rabbis])
- Talmud contains the Mishnah and the Gemara
 - Mishnah - Oral tradition that had been written down
 - Gemara - Rabbi commentary and analysis of the Mishnah

Beliefs

- _____ - There is one (and only one God) who exists and who alone deserves worship.
- _____ - Since it is Abraham and his descendants to whom the promises are made, it is important to try to remain ethnically Jewish.
 - A Gentile may convert to Judaism, but endogamy (marriage within one's own people group) is encouraged.
 - Rabbis have decided that, to be ethnically Jewish, your mom has to be Jewish.
- Mosaic law - Following the commands and practices described in the Torah.
 - Judaism is more about practice than doctrine. You are Jewish based on what you do rather than what you believe. (Contrast Christianity)

- For example, the Sadducees who deny resurrection/existence of angels/many writings of the OT are still Jewish just by their ethnicity and following the Mosaic Law.

Branches of Judaism

- "Orthodox" (Hassidic Jews would fall under this category) - The most conservative branch. Practice the Torah meticulously.

- "Conservative" - The moderate branch of Judaism. More liberal in beliefs but conservative in practice. Try to meld tradition and change together. Do not believe in a coming Messiah but that we can eventually achieve an age of peace.

- "Reformed" - The most liberal branch. Don't believe the Bible is inspired. Don't believe in a coming Messiah as above. Don't believe in resurrection. This is the kind of Judaism you find in Hollywood.

Are Jews who do not believe that Jesus is the Messiah saved?

No. (Acts 4:11-12, John 3:18, John 3:36, John 14:6, etc.)

This is despite the many benefits of being Jewish > Romans 9:4-5 "They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen."

The Main Problem

- They do not accept Jesus as the Messiah
 - It helps to build a bridge with them that they believe the OT but they must know that Jesus is the promised Messiah.
- They are still waiting for a Messiah.

- Brainstorm: why wouldn't Jewish people accept Jesus as the Messiah?

How should Christians engage with those who are Jewish?

1. We should be kind, loving, and compassionate toward Jews (keeping in mind the persecution they have received throughout history and that God chose them as the nation through which to save the world).
2. We should rejoice that they are already familiar with the Old Testament.
3. We should show them how we have all fallen short of God's commands and, therefore, need someone to make atonement for us (God demands perfection, not just general conformity, to his Law).
4. We should seek to show them that Jesus is the Messiah and God himself.

(14 million), (North America), (New York City), (Temple, Torah), (Talmud), (Monotheism),
(Ethnocentrism)