Other Religions

Many of the world religions believe in a God of love and eventual reconciliation with God. What makes them different from Christianity? The following is not saying what you should believe. It's just saying what you could believe.

First, a quick look at other God-loving religions compared to Christianity:

Tradition	**The Primary Nature of the Divine**	**The Human Obstacle**	**The Final Resolution**
Christianity	Triune Creator whose essence is self-giving love (*Agape*); personal, relational, and seeking communion.	The fallen will, self-centered pride, and alienation from the life of God.	**Communion & Resurrection:** Deification (*theosis*), eternal relationship, and the reconciliation of all things through Christ.
Hinduism *(Advaita / Bhakti)*	Infinite uncreated reality (*Brahman*), accessible as personal love (*Ishvara / Bhagavan*); ultimate bliss and consciousness.	The illusion of separateness (*maya*), ignorance (*avidya*), and karmic attachment.	**Liberation (*Moksha*):** Realizing non-duality (*Atman* is *Brahman*) or eternal loving union with the Divine Beloved.
Sufism *(Mystical Islam)*	The Beloved whose essence is infinite, passionate love (*ishq*); the hidden treasure seeking to be known.	The self-absorbed, grasping lower ego (*nafs*).	**Annihilation & Abiding:** Dissolving the illusion of self into the Beloved (*fana*) to live in divine presence (*baqa*).
Bahá'í Faith	An unknowable, loving Creator who progressively educates and unifies humanity across the ages.	Spiritual ignorance, prejudice, and clinging to material limitations.	**Eternal Ascent:** Endless spiritual journey through divine realms closer to the light of God.

Sikhism	The all-pervading, timeless Source (*Ik Onkar*); the Beloved without hatred or enmity (*Nirvair*).	False egoism and arrogant self-reliance (*haumai*).	**Liberation (*Mukti*):** Dissolving the ego boundary to merge back into the Source like water into water.
Jewish Kabbalah	The Infinite Source (*Ein Sof*) creating through boundless loving-kindness (*Chesed*).	The shattered vessels: sparks of divine light hidden and fragmented in material exile.	**Universal Restoration (*Tikkun*):** Elevating all sparks to achieve total cosmic harmony and reunion with the Infinite.
Pure Land Buddhism	Boundless light and unconditioned compassion embodied in Amitābha Buddha.	Inability to escape delusion and suffering through mere self-effort (*jiriki*).	**Universal Awakening:** Rebirth in the Pure Land through trusting grace (*tariki*), leading to complete enlightenment.

Across all seven frameworks, two central patterns hold:

1. *The Divine Never Abandons: Whether conceived as a personal Father, the Beloved, an uncreated Ocean of Being, or Boundless Light, the ultimate reality is characterized by an active desire to draw creation out of distress and back into wholeness.*
2. *Reunion Demands the Letting Go of the Small Self: Whether framed as repentance, fana, shedding haumai, overcoming maya, or humility, the barrier to union is always the protective, isolated ego trying to run reality on its own terms.*

The concept of a loving God and reconciliation with that God is not unique to Christianity. Why should one choose Christianity over the others?

Many make their choice based on how people of a faith live their lives. I'm sure you can find loving and caring folks regardless of religion. You will also find religious leaders and followers preaching and setting bad examples. And you will often find those attending church or temple showing no evidence of their beliefs other than being religious. Bottom line, you cannot depend on human examples to sway your religion choices. Unless… you had a perfect human example.

Christianity is the only world religion whose God came in human form (Jesus) to be the perfect example of his love: living, dying and resurrecting. No other world religion has a resurrected human as proof that he is the true God, and validating the book containing

his story (the Bible). Before you discount Christianity, make sure you understand, not just know, who Jesus is. (See *Why Believe?*)

Jesus says he is the way to truth and life (reunification with God) and whoever believes (trusts) in him will have that life eternally. That's it! It's not complicated. Plus, you can have it now! (See *A Way Out Now*.) Then, as you truly follow Jesus, your faith and life become an example to others – a way for them to understand God's love and how to respond to that.

Still, God wants you, "dead or alive." Even if you choose otherwise, eventually *everyone in heaven, on earth, and under the earth will kneel and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.* Philippians 2:10-11 – understood by early theologians not as forced submission at gunpoint, but as voluntary, joyful worship.

Why it's possible or how it's possible can be explained by different interpretations (doctrines) of the Bible. You can read and research for yourself, but here are summaries of some views I've come across from selected scholars:

1. Why are there many views of God?	Aquinas, Palamas, Shankara, Vedanta
2. How do doctrines differ from core beliefs?	Merton, Lewis
3. Why is there pain in the world?	Lewis
4. Is the resurrection a doctrine?	Merton, Lewis
5. Why did Jesus die on a cross?	Lewis, Hart
6. What is eternal life?	Lewis, Hart
7. What is hell?	Lewis, Hart
8. Does Jesus save everyone?	Origen, Gregory, Hart, Balthasar, Talbott
9. Is Jesus the only way?	Universalists, Hart

Just believe in Jesus.
Can you imagine someone knowing that they could start that reunification process now with the loving God that created them and simply turn down the offer? It's like a parent offering a child what's truly best for them, but from the child's viewpoint, they don't understand. However, a parent is not going to punish a child forever simply because they do not understand, and neither is God. His love never ends. He is intent on restoring all of his creation from its decaying state. No matter what you believe, it's possible that everyone will eventually understand and realize Jesus Christ is the way to reconnect with the God who created them. But why wait for an unknown path to that new life when you can have the sure thing right now?

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