1. **To What you are saved? *Allah is a Cold, Distant God with whom there is no fellowship***

In Islam, no one ever has personal intimacy with Allah. There is no fellowship with him because he is so infinitely transcendent (*tanzih*). He is supposed to be high and above us. As such, we cannot enter into a personal relationship with this god. You cannot attain to that level.

This manifests itself in the here and now. Muslims serve and worship Allah, but they do not relate to him. There is no intimacy with Allah that one can experience. On the contrary, the Christian has a relationship with God. The Holy Spirit comes to live within us. Christ can be called our friend. He is one who comforts and promises to never leave us nor forsake us.

And this is what makes their view of eternal life quite interesting. Even if you make it to Paradise as a Muslim (and we will talk in a second, and address how questionable that reality really is)—but if by some chance you do make it Paradise, you still don’t have any fellowship with Allah.

Again, Allah is too great. The emphasis is on his transcendence. As a result, he does not dwell with his people in the eternal realm. No. There are two different places for the two different entities: There is heaven and there is Paradise. Allah dwells in heaven. Allah’s people live in Paradise.[[1]](#footnote-1) There is no communion. Allah is completely unapproachable. He is not one with whom you enter into a relationship.

In contrast, Salvation for the Christian leads to a restored relationship with God. Salvation is the opportunity, not just to escape Hell, but it is being made perfect in the full enjoyment of God. Christianity emphasizes reconciliation with the divine. The one we offended is offended no more. And eternal life is the glorious opportunity to be *with* God and enjoy his presence.

I would hope that this is something that should appeal to Islamic people.

1. **By what are you saved? Jesus Christ [Liar, Lunatic, or Lord!]**

It is important to understand that Islam teaches that salvation is by works. Allah will judge you on whether or not your good deeds outweigh your bad.

I’m going to talk about this in a second, in our next point. What I want to talk to you under this heading is Jesus Christ and how Islam punches itself in the face again, by its view of Jesus.

The Quran touts Jesus as a prophet of Allah, and Muslim’s typically do not deny the fact that Christ played a special role as Allah’s messenger.

But I want you to understand that you cannot do that. If you call him a good teacher, you have to affirm the things he said. And what did he say? He said that he was God incarnate. He prophesied his crucifixion and resurrection and how he takes the punishment due to us for our sin. Now, if he is a good teacher and a prophet, you have to believe what he said about himself.

The only other way you can take Jesus is to say that he is a liar or a lunatic. Either Jesus lied about being the Son of God or he is absolutely nuts (a lunatic). He cannot be a good teacher or a holy prophet and claim what he claimed.

So here’s the dilemma: Either you reject the Quran and what it says about Jesus or believe the Quran and take Jesus as a holy prophet of Allah. Either way, you have to reject Islam. If you reject the Quran and what it says about Jesus, then you have disavowed Islam. If you believe the Quran and what it says about Jesus, you must reject Islam because Jesus claims to be the Son of God who came to take away sin.

Jesus is either a liar, a lunatic, or he is Lord. You cannot have it any other way.

Jesus is either the only way of salvation or he is not.

Now, let’s talk about the idea of good works. And this I want to address under the heading of The assurance of salvation.

1. **Can you be Sure you are Saved?**

In Islam, no Muslim can have assurance of his salvation. Even Muhammad didn’t even have assurance of his salvation.

And there is good reason for this! One reasons is because your salvation is based upon your good works. The Quran says in Sura 23:102-103 that at the end of your life Allah will put your good and bad deeds in a balance. Whichever way the scale tips will determine your eternal destination.

The Quran also says that every person has 2 angels: one who is recording your good works, one who is recording your bad ones. And at the end of your life, these works are going to be calculated and will determine whether you go to heaven or hell.

Now, you see how this makes the Muslim rather mystified about his eternal destination. There is no way we can be sure that our good works outweighed our bad.

This is where Christianity provides great solace. In Christianity you can have assurance of salvation. That’s because of the atonement of Christ. Jesus Christ provides us with a sure way of salvation because he acts as a federal head and substitute. What I mean by that is that Jesus Christ lived a perfect life. He came down to fulfill all righteousness. And then he took the penalty that a sinner deserves by giving himself as a sacrifice on the cross.

We can have salvation because through faith in Christ we stand perfectly justified. All his good works are given to us. All our bad deeds are put upon Christ. God’s wrath falls upon him; God’s mercy falls to us.

This also brings up an interesting point about Allah. He is not a just god. If he does forgive, he just completely overlooks the bad things that people do. As long as you have more good works than bad, you will enter heaven. He will completely overlook your bad deeds.

But you’ll notice that he does not deal with them. Justice is never served.

The Christian God is a holy and just God. He cannot stand for one sin to go unpunished. Every sin is a violation of his righteousness and an offense against God that provokes him to anger. So he has to punish every sin. That’s what makes the mediation of Christ so important.

Allah doesn’t provide atonement like that though. He just overlooks the bad things.

1. The Prophet said, "Whoever believes in Allah and His Apostle offers prayers perfectly and fasts (the month of) Ramadan then it is incumbent upon Allah to admit him into Paradise, whether he emigrates for Allah's cause or stays in the land where he was born." They (the companions of the Prophet) said, "O Allah's Apostle! Should we not inform the people of that?" He said, "There are one-hundred degrees in Paradise which Allah has prepared for those who carry on Jihad in His Cause. The distance between every two degrees is like the distance between the sky and the Earth, so if you ask Allah for anything, ask Him for the Firdaus, for it is the last part of Paradise and the highest part of Paradise, and AT ITS TOP there is the Throne of Beneficent, and from it gush forth the rivers of Paradise." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 9, Book 93, Number 519) [see more at <http://www.answering-islam.org/Shamoun/allah_location.htm>] [↑](#footnote-ref-1)