

3. The Uniqueness of Jesus

Source: Edwin M. Yamauchi, Jesus, Zoroaster, Buddha, Socrates, Muhammad (InterVarsity, 1972). Dr. Yamauchi is an evangelical Christian and Professor of History at Miami University in Ohio.

The five famous founders of world religions listed in the title are compared in five areas:

1. Historical sources available to learn about them
2. Birth and family background
3. Life and teachings
4. Death of each
5. Claimed relationship to deity

Certain similarities are found among the five:

1. Each preached against the corruption of contemporary religion.
2. Each perceived keenly the needs of fellowmen.
3. Each was so gripped by personal convictions that he tried to transmit to others what he believed to be true, even though this often aroused opposition and led to suffering.
4. Each man's deeds and words have attracted admirers and followers who have extended his impact over many continents and through many centuries.

Yet the uniqueness of Jesus shows up very clearly in several very significant points:

1. Only Jesus came out of a culture which was already monotheistic.
2. His death by crucifixion is unique.
3. Excluding later legendary and apologetic accounts, we find that early accounts attribute miracles to Jesus only.
4. Only Jesus spoke on his own unquestioned authority.
5. Only Jesus predicted he would be resurrected after his death, and only his followers rest their faith on such an event.
6. Only Jesus claimed equality with a sole, supreme deity.

4. Fulfillment of Prophecy in Jesus

See also:

Peter W. Stoner & Robert C. Newman, Science Speaks, 4th ed. (Moody, 1976), chap 3;
Newman, Evidence of Prophecy, chs 9-11