

What's the Difference: Judaism

Hebrews 8:6-9, 9:14-15

1. Do you know of anyone who follows the Jewish Faith? If so, what is that person like? Does this person observe the traditional Jewish holidays?
2. Pastor Mark explains why Christians and Jews celebrate Sabbath on different days. Jews celebrate on Saturdays because it is in keeping with the Creation Story in Genesis (God rested on the 7th day). Christians worship on Sunday because Jesus rose from the dead on a Sunday and it is the first day of the new creation. How important is a weekly Sabbath to you? What sort of activities should a person engage in on the Sabbath? Are there any activities a person should avoid doing on the Sabbath?
3. Pastor Mark points out that Christianity began as a Jewish religious movement. Jesus and all twelve disciples were Jewish. The writers of the New Testament were all Jewish. Christians are really a separate branch of Judaism. How does this view impact your understanding of the relationship between Christians and Jews?
4. Why do you think Jews have been persecuted throughout history?
5. Pastor Mark explains that the defining event for the Jews is Exodus, and their Covenant Meal to celebrate freedom is the Passover meal. The defining event for Christians is the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, and the Covenant Meal we use to celebrate our freedom is Holy Communion. How are these two meals related?
6. Why is repentance from sin important for both Jews and Christians?
7. Read Hebrews 9:14-16 and 9:22. How does this help explain that the blood of Jesus is superior to the blood of animals used in ancient sacrifice for atonement of sin?
8. How do Jews and Christians differ in their understanding of the role of "good works" as part of our Covenant with God?

9. Pastor Mark points out that while Christians consider the New Covenant established by Jesus to be superior to the Old Covenant, we should always show great respect toward the Jewish people. Why is that important?