

Comparative Analysis of the Concept of Salvation in Islam and Christianity in the Contemporary Era

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Abstract: This research explores a comparative analysis of the concept of salvation in Islam and Christianity in the contemporary era, focusing on how both religions interpret, experience, and communicate the idea of redemption and divine mercy in a modern, globalized context. Using a qualitative comparative approach grounded in comparative theology and interreligious studies, the study examines primary theological sources the Qur'an, Hadith, and the Bible as well as classical and contemporary writings from scholars such as Al-Ghazali, Thomas Aquinas, John Hick, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr. The research identifies that both Islam and Christianity regard salvation as a dynamic process that involves the interaction between divine grace and human moral responsibility, even though they differ in doctrinal emphasis: Christianity focuses on faith in Jesus Christ as the Redeemer, while Islam centers on submission to the will of Allah, faith (iman), and righteous deeds (amal saleh). The findings reveal both shared and unique theological elements within each faith. While both emphasize repentance, moral transformation, and the pursuit of divine mercy, their approaches to mediation between God and humanity differ fundamentally. The study also demonstrates how modern thought, secularism, and globalization have influenced the reinterpretation of salvation, leading to more inclusive and dialogical perspectives that encourage interfaith understanding. These changes reflect an adaptive response to the ethical and spiritual challenges of the contemporary world, where rigid exclusivism gives way to pluralistic dialogue and mutual respect. Furthermore, the research highlights the practical implications of these theological insights for fostering interreligious cooperation and peacebuilding. Recognizing the moral and spiritual parallels between the two traditions provides a foundation for collaborative efforts in promoting justice, compassion, and social harmony. Ultimately, this study concludes that the concept of salvation when viewed through the lens of comparative theology serves not only as a core doctrine of faith but also as a bridge for intercultural dialogue and unity. It reaffirms that understanding and respecting the salvific teachings of Islam and Christianity can contribute meaningfully to global religious harmony and the shared pursuit of spiritual fulfillment in the modern age.

Research Highlights:

- **Comparative Focus:** This study provides a comprehensive comparative analysis of the concept of salvation in Islam and Christianity, examining both the theological foundations and contemporary interpretations within each faith tradition.
- **Shared and Unique Elements:** The research identifies key similarities and differences both religions emphasize divine mercy, repentance, and moral transformation, yet differ in their theological pathways: Christianity centers on faith in Jesus Christ as the Redeemer, while Islam focuses on

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submission to Allah and righteous deeds as expressions of faith.

- **Influence of Modern Contexts:** The study highlights how modern thought, secularism, and globalization have reshaped traditional understandings of salvation, leading to more inclusive and dialogical perspectives that respond to contemporary ethical and spiritual challenges.
- **Philosophical Framework:** The research applies a comparative theology framework informed by philosophical perspectives such as exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, integrating insights from thinkers like John Hick, Al-Ghazali, and Thomas Aquinas.
- **Interreligious Implications:** Findings suggest that recognizing shared salvific values between Islam and Christianity can strengthen interfaith dialogue, cooperation, and mutual respect, promoting peace and understanding in pluralistic societies.
- **Practical Relevance:** The study demonstrates that the concept of salvation can serve as a foundation for collaborative moral action, inspiring joint efforts in areas such as social justice, compassion, and community service.
- **Scholarly Contribution:** By bridging classical theological interpretations with modern realities, this research contributes to the field of comparative religion and provides valuable insights into how both traditions adapt their soteriological teachings in the contemporary global era.

INTRODUCTION

Salvation represents one of the most profound and central theological themes in the study of religion, serving as the ultimate goal of human existence and the culmination of spiritual aspiration. Both Islam and Christianity, as two of the world's largest monotheistic religions, place great emphasis on the question of how human beings attain salvation and eternal life (Paterson, 2009). In Christianity, salvation is traditionally understood through faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Redeemer of humanity, whose sacrifice on the cross atones for sin and reconciles humanity with God. In contrast, Islam views salvation as the result of sincere faith in Allah, adherence to His commandments, and righteous deeds, emphasizing personal accountability and divine mercy as the foundations of spiritual deliverance.

Throughout history, theologians, scholars, and believers from both traditions have debated the nature, means, and assurance of salvation. Classical Christian doctrines such as justification by faith and redemption through grace stand alongside Islamic teachings on submission (Islam), repentance (tawbah), and divine judgment (hisab) as complementary yet distinct paths to achieving nearness to God (Thomas, 2008). These theological distinctions have often shaped interfaith relations, influencing how adherents of each faith perceive one another's spiritual journey and ultimate destiny.

In the contemporary era, the concept of salvation faces new challenges and reinterpretations amid the forces of modernity, globalization, and religious pluralism. Secular ideologies, moral relativism, and the growing interaction between diverse faith communities have prompted renewed theological reflection on the universality and inclusivity of salvation (Riesebrodt, 2010). For many modern believers, salvation is not only a metaphysical concern but also an ethical and existential question tied to justice, peace, and human dignity. Consequently, both Islamic and Christian theologians have sought to reconcile traditional doctrines with contemporary realities, exploring how faith can remain meaningful in a rapidly changing world.

Scholarly work focused specifically on salvation within Islamic theology has grown in both classical exegesis and modern reinterpretation. Studies and collections such as Mohammad Hassan Khalil's edited volumes (e.g., *Between Heaven and Hell: Islam, Salvation, and the Fate of Others*, ed. Khalil, 2013)

examine classical Qur'ānic and juridical teachings alongside modern debates about the fate of non-Muslims and the limits of divine mercy. Other treatments emphasize traditional doctrinal balances between divine mercy, human responsibility, and eschatology (e.g., M. H. Siddiqi, *Salvation in Islamic Perspective*, 1993), while modern reformist and intellectual historians such as Fazlur Rahman (e.g., *Islam, 1966; Islam and Modernity*, 1982) have traced how modernity and hermeneutical re-readings have reshaped Muslim understandings of salvation and moral accountability.

In Christian theological literature the theme of salvation appears across systematic, historical, and pastoral works. Major contemporary voices rethinking salvation and eschatology include Jürgen Moltmann (notably *The Crucified God*, 1974), who reframed the cross and hope in social and existential terms, and N. T. Wright (*Surprised by Hope*, 2008), who argued for a resurrection-centered vision of salvation with strong implications for how Christians live today. Scholarship on classical doctrines (atonement, justification by faith) remains central both historical-theological treatments and recent reassessments continue to inform comparative work on what "salvation" means for Christian identity and practice.

A third strand is comparative theology and religious-pluralism scholarship that directly addresses whether and how different faiths' soteriologies can be compared or dialogued about. John Hick's influential essays on religious pluralism and salvation (e.g., *Religious Pluralism and Salvation*, 1988) argue for a philosophical framework that reconceives exclusive soteriological claims; Paul Knitter and Wilfred Cantwell Smith represent other major voices arguing for dialogical and contextual approaches to salvation across traditions. Edited comparative volumes and journal articles bring these theoretical debates into conversation with scriptural and historical studies, attempting to map points of convergence and irreducible difference between Christianity and Islam.

Finally, there is a growing body of empirical and descriptive comparative studies theses, journal articles, and regional case studies that directly compare Qur'ānic and Biblical articulations of salvation or survey contemporary believers' understandings. Examples include multiple comparative papers available on ResearchGate and institutional journals (e.g., "A Comparative Study on the Concept of Salvation in the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Bible," ~2014–2016) and more recent analytic articles that apply qualitative textual analysis to scripture and modern commentaries. These pieces often highlight methodological gaps: many prior studies emphasize doctrinal texts rather than lived, contextualized understandings of salvation in varied cultural settings an opening your proposed study can address by foregrounding contemporary lived theology and interfaith encounter.

This study is significant because it provides a comparative analysis of how Islam and Christianity conceptualize salvation in the context of the 21st century. By examining scriptural foundations, theological interpretations, and modern perspectives, this research aims to uncover both the enduring truths and evolving understandings of salvation in each faith tradition. Furthermore, the study contributes to interreligious dialogue by promoting mutual understanding and respect, which are essential in an age where global peace and coexistence depend increasingly on the ability of religions to find common ground amid theological diversity.

METHOD

Theoretical Framework

This research is grounded in the framework of comparative theology and interreligious studies, both of which provide systematic methods for analyzing and interpreting the theological concepts of different faith traditions. Comparative theology seeks to understand religious beliefs not through opposition, but through dialogue and deep engagement with the theological sources, doctrines, and spiritual experiences of others (Winkler, 2012). It allows scholars to explore how distinct religious traditions articulate central beliefs in this case, the concept of salvation while recognizing both differences and common ground. Within this framework, the study examines salvation in Islam and Christianity as two rich and complex systems of faith that offer unique perspectives on humanity's relationship with the Divine.

The comparative theological approach used in this study draws on the principle that understanding between religions is best achieved through respectful comparison rooted in each faith's own scriptural and doctrinal foundations (Freiberger, 2019). This perspective goes beyond simple description to engage in what Francis X. Clooney (2010) describes as "learning across religious borders,"

emphasizing the importance of theological empathy and mutual enrichment. By examining both the Qur'anic and Biblical understandings of salvation, as well as the interpretations of classical and contemporary theologians, this research aims to identify how each tradition defines the nature of divine grace, human responsibility, and ultimate redemption.

Philosophical and theological perspectives such as exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism also play a vital role in guiding this analysis (Netland, 2013). The exclusivist view maintains that salvation is attainable only through one's own religious faith, an idea often associated with certain traditional interpretations in both Christianity and Islam. Inclusivism, on the other hand, acknowledges the possibility of salvation outside explicit religious boundaries, provided that one seeks truth and goodness sincerely, reflecting God's universal mercy. Finally, pluralism, as advanced by theologians like John Hick (1988), argues that no single religion has a monopoly on salvation, suggesting that all faiths represent different paths to the same ultimate reality. These three paradigms provide a philosophical lens through which the similarities and divergences in Islamic and Christian soteriology can be critically examined.

Foundational thinkers from both traditions also inform this framework. In Christian thought, Thomas Aquinas (13th century) articulated salvation as the union of human will with divine grace through faith and reason, emphasizing the transformative power of God's love (Levering, 2002). In Islamic theology, Al-Ghazali (11th century) explored the interplay between divine mercy and human effort, asserting that true salvation comes from purifying the soul and aligning it with God's will. Their insights continue to shape modern theological discourse and provide a historical foundation for comparing Islamic and Christian understandings of salvation. By situating these classical perspectives within the context of contemporary pluralistic dialogue, this study aims to contribute to a deeper, more inclusive understanding of salvation that resonates with the realities of today's interreligious world.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative comparative research design grounded in the principles of comparative theology and interreligious studies to explore and analyze the concept of salvation in Islam and Christianity within the contemporary era (Zeidan, 2018). The qualitative approach is chosen because it allows for an in-depth examination of theological texts, doctrines, and interpretations that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative methods. Through this approach, the study seeks to understand how each religion conceptualizes salvation, how these concepts have evolved in response to modern challenges, and what implications they hold for interfaith understanding and dialogue.

The primary method used in this research is documentary and textual analysis (Fitzgerald, 2012). This involves a close reading and interpretation of key primary sources from both traditions, namely, the Qur'an and Hadith in Islam, and the Bible in Christianity alongside major theological commentaries and classical works by scholars such as Al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyyah, Thomas Aquinas, and Augustine of Hippo. The analysis focuses on identifying the central themes, language, and theological arguments related to salvation within these sources. To complement this, secondary sources such as contemporary theological writings, journal articles, books, and interfaith dialogue publications are examined to understand how modern scholars and practitioners interpret and apply these doctrines in today's religious context.

In conducting the comparison, this study follows a thematic and analytical framework (Ghoreishi et al., 2017). Themes such as divine grace, faith, good deeds, repentance, atonement, and the role of divine mercy are analyzed within each tradition to identify both convergences and divergences. The research also considers the philosophical perspectives of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, as these paradigms provide valuable insight into how each religion views the possibility of salvation beyond its own boundaries. Through this comparative lens, the study aims to highlight not only doctrinal distinctions but also the potential areas of theological overlap that can serve as foundations for interreligious dialogue.

The data collection process involves extensive library research and literature review from credible academic databases, theological libraries, and scholarly publications (Penner, 2009). Sources are selected based on their relevance, credibility, and contribution to contemporary discussions on salvation. Interpretive analysis is then applied to these materials to draw out patterns and insights. The analysis adheres to hermeneutical principles, meaning that texts are interpreted within their historical, cultural, and religious contexts to avoid bias and misrepresentation.

Ethical considerations are also observed throughout the research process (Cacciattolo, 2015). The study maintains respect for both religious traditions, presenting each on its own terms without prioritizing one faith over the other. The aim is not to determine theological superiority but to foster mutual understanding through fair and balanced comparison. By integrating classical scholarship with modern

theological discourse, this methodology provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing the evolving concept of salvation in Islam and Christianity and its significance in promoting interfaith harmony in the contemporary world.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this research reveal that while Islam and Christianity share a profound concern with humanity's ultimate destiny and relationship with the Divine, they differ significantly in their theological foundations, means of attaining salvation, and emphasis on divine-human interaction. However, the comparative analysis also shows notable areas of convergence particularly in their shared recognition of divine mercy, repentance, and moral accountability as essential elements of spiritual redemption. The results thus indicate that both religions, despite their doctrinal differences, offer complementary insights into the nature of salvation and its relevance in the modern world.

In Christian theology, salvation is fundamentally rooted in the belief that humanity is reconciled to God through the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Clifford & Anatolios, 2005). It is viewed as an act of divine grace granted through faith rather than human merit. The analysis of Biblical texts and theological writings from the Apostle Paul's doctrine of justification by faith to Thomas Aquinas's synthesis of faith and reason shows that salvation in Christianity is a dynamic process involving faith, repentance, and transformation through Christ. Contemporary Christian theologians, such as N. T. Wright and Jürgen Moltmann, reinterpret salvation as not only deliverance from sin but also participation in the renewal of creation and social justice. This modern interpretation highlights the ethical and communal dimensions of salvation, connecting spiritual redemption with moral responsibility in society.

In contrast, Islamic theology views salvation as the result of sincere submission to Allah (Islam), faith in His oneness (tawhid), and adherence to His divine commandments (Khalil, 2016). The Qur'an emphasizes that salvation depends on both faith and righteous deeds, reflecting a balance between divine mercy and human accountability. Classical scholars such as Al-Ghazali and Ibn Taymiyyah affirm that ultimate deliverance is granted through God's mercy but is also conditioned by one's moral conduct and spiritual sincerity. Contemporary Muslim scholars expand on this by emphasizing the universality of divine compassion and the possibility of salvation for all who strive toward goodness and truth, even beyond the boundaries of formal religious identity. This broader interpretation resonates with the inclusive and compassionate nature of Islam's understanding of divine justice.

When viewed through the lenses of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, the results show that both religions encompass diverse theological perspectives on the accessibility of salvation. The exclusivist view common in traditional interpretations holds that salvation is restricted to the followers of one true faith (Kremers, 2013). However, modern inclusivist and pluralist theologians, inspired by figures such as John Hick and Fazlur Rahman, propose a more universal approach that acknowledges the presence of divine truth and saving grace in multiple traditions. This shift reflects a growing openness in both Islam and Christianity to interfaith understanding in an age of globalization and religious diversity.

The comparative analysis further demonstrates that modern interpretations of salvation in both faiths are increasingly influenced by contemporary ethical, social, and philosophical concerns (Niebuhr, 2013). The idea of salvation has expanded beyond the metaphysical promise of the afterlife to encompass moral transformation, peacebuilding, and social justice in this world. Both religions advocate for the cultivation of compassion, forgiveness, and moral integrity as manifestations of one's journey toward divine union. In this way, salvation is no longer understood solely as an individual spiritual goal but as a collective responsibility to contribute to the well-being of humanity.

Overall, the results of this research affirm that while the pathways to salvation differ—faith in Jesus Christ in Christianity and submission to Allah through faith and righteous deeds in Islam—the ultimate purpose remains the same: the restoration of harmony between humanity and God. Both traditions emphasize the necessity of divine mercy, the transformative power of faith, and the moral imperative of good works. These shared principles suggest that dialogue between Islam and Christianity on the question of salvation can serve as a meaningful foundation for mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation in addressing the moral and spiritual challenges of the contemporary era.

Detailed Comparison of the Unique and Shared Elements of Salvation in Islam and Christianity

The comparative analysis of salvation in Islam and Christianity reveals both unique theological distinctions and shared moral and spiritual principles that reflect the depth and universality of the human quest for divine reconciliation. While both religions affirm the existence of one supreme God who desires the salvation of humankind, their respective understandings of how salvation is achieved and experienced differ according to their foundational scriptures, theological traditions, and spiritual worldviews. Yet, beneath these differences lies a common aspiration for moral purity, divine mercy, and eternal union with the Creator.

From a Christian perspective, salvation is grounded in the belief that humanity is inherently estranged from God due to sin and can be restored only through divine grace. The central event of Christian salvation is the redemptive act of Jesus Christ His crucifixion and resurrection which is seen as the means by which sin is forgiven and eternal life is granted (Moreau, 2011). This act signifies God's unconditional love and mercy, offering salvation as a free gift to those who accept Jesus through faith. The Apostle Paul's teachings on justification by faith and the writings of theologians such as Augustine and Thomas Aquinas underscore the transformative nature of salvation, emphasizing both divine initiative and the believer's response in faith and repentance. Modern Christian thought, as reflected in the works of N. T. Wright and Jürgen Moltmann, expands the understanding of salvation beyond personal redemption to include participation in the renewal of creation, justice, and peace linking spiritual salvation with moral and social transformation.

In Islam, the concept of salvation is equally profound but structurally different. It is founded upon tawhid, the oneness of Allah, and the principle of submission (Islam) to His will. Salvation in Islam is achieved through a combination of faith (iman), righteous deeds (amal salih), and the mercy of Allah (rahmah). The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes that those who believe, do good, and remain steadfast in obedience will attain eternal happiness in the hereafter. While Islam acknowledges the possibility of divine forgiveness for all sins except shirk (associating partners with God), it also stresses personal responsibility and moral effort. Classical scholars such as Al-Ghazali and Ibn Taymiyyah interpret salvation as a process of purifying the heart, attaining sincerity (ikhlas), and cultivating piety (taqwa). Unlike Christianity, which focuses on redemption through Christ, Islam does not recognize the need for a mediator between God and humanity; instead, salvation is seen as a direct relationship between the believer and Allah, rooted in repentance, faith, and obedience.

Despite these doctrinal differences, both religions share several core elements in their understanding of salvation (Riesebrodt, 2010). Firstly, both affirm that salvation is ultimately a gift of divine mercy rather than a mere result of human effort. In Christianity, it is the grace of God through Christ; in Islam, it is Allah's mercy that outweighs His wrath. Secondly, both faiths emphasize the moral and ethical dimensions of salvation righteous living, repentance, compassion, and the pursuit of justice are central to the believer's journey. Thirdly, both traditions hold that faith must manifest in action. The Epistle of James in the New Testament asserts that "faith without works is dead," paralleling the Qur'anic teaching that belief and good deeds are inseparable. This convergence highlights a shared moral theology that values inner faith expressed through outward righteousness.

Philosophically, both Islam and Christianity wrestle with the tension between divine predestination and human free will in the process of salvation (De Cillis, 2013). Christian theologians have long debated the balance between God's sovereign grace and human responsibility, while Islamic scholars have similarly explored the interplay between divine decree (qadar) and moral accountability. Both conclude that while God's will is supreme, humans are endowed with moral agency and the capacity to choose the path of righteousness.

Furthermore, in the contemporary era, both religions are reinterpreting the concept of salvation in light of modern challenges such as pluralism, secularism, and interfaith dialogue. Modern Christian theologians like John Hick advocate for a pluralist understanding that recognizes multiple paths to salvation, while some Muslim scholars emphasize the universality of divine compassion that may extend beyond formal religious boundaries. These emerging perspectives suggest a growing openness within both traditions to understanding salvation not as exclusive but as inclusive of diverse expressions of faith and sincerity before God.

Insights into How Modern Thought, Secularism, and Globalization Affect Religious Concepts of Salvation

The concept of salvation, once rooted primarily in the metaphysical and spiritual dimensions of human existence, has undergone significant reinterpretation under the influence of modern thought,

secularism, and globalization. In both Islam and Christianity, traditional understandings of salvation centered on divine grace, faith, and the afterlife are being reshaped by contemporary social, philosophical, and cultural developments. These forces have challenged religious communities to reexamine the meaning of salvation in a world increasingly defined by scientific rationalism, moral pluralism, and global interconnectivity.

Modern thought has encouraged believers and theologians to approach salvation with greater intellectual reflection and moral consciousness. The rise of reason, scientific inquiry, and humanism since the Enlightenment has shifted attention from purely doctrinal understandings of salvation to more ethical and existential interpretations (Pinker, 2018). In Christianity, this has led to a growing focus on the social dimensions of salvation seeing it not only as redemption from sin but as participation in God's work of justice, peace, and reconciliation within human society. Theologians such as Jürgen Moltmann and Gustavo Gutiérrez, for instance, emphasize "liberation theology," which views salvation as the liberation of humanity from oppression and injustice. Similarly, modern Islamic thinkers such as Fazlur Rahman and Muhammad Iqbal reinterpret salvation as an ongoing moral and spiritual process, emphasizing the believer's responsibility to contribute to human progress and societal harmony. Thus, modernity has broadened the meaning of salvation, situating it within both personal transformation and collective moral responsibility.

The rise of secularism has also had a profound impact on how salvation is perceived and experienced. In increasingly secular societies, the focus of human fulfillment has shifted from the afterlife to worldly well-being, material progress, and individual autonomy (Svetelj, 2012). This shift has led to a decline in traditional religious adherence in some contexts, prompting religious thinkers to rearticulate the relevance of salvation in the modern world. For many contemporary believers, salvation is no longer understood solely as escape from sin or entry into paradise, but as a form of inner peace, psychological balance, or moral authenticity. While secularism challenges religious institutions to defend the necessity of salvation, it also provides an opportunity for religions to present salvation as a holistic transformation encompassing both the spiritual and existential dimensions of life. Islam and Christianity, in response, have sought to reassert the idea that true salvation cannot be separated from moral integrity and divine connection, even within a secularized context.

Globalization, on the other hand, has fostered unprecedented interreligious interaction, creating new opportunities and challenges for understanding salvation. In a world where people of different faiths live, work, and communicate closely, exclusivist claims to salvation are increasingly questioned. Theological pluralism has gained prominence, with scholars like John Hick proposing that all major religions represent valid paths to the same ultimate reality (Aslan, 2013). This global context encourages both Islam and Christianity to revisit traditional boundaries of salvation and engage in dialogue that emphasizes shared moral values and divine compassion. For example, interfaith initiatives now focus on the universality of God's mercy and the moral unity of humankind rather than rigid distinctions of belief. Globalization has thus transformed salvation from an inward, faith-specific experience into a concept with social and intercultural significance one that inspires cooperation, tolerance, and empathy across religious divides.

In essence, modern thought, secularism, and globalization have collectively expanded the scope of salvation from a purely theological concept to a multidimensional one that includes ethical, psychological, and societal dimensions. While these forces have challenged traditional dogmas, they have also deepened the relevance of salvation in addressing contemporary issues such as injustice, alienation, and spiritual emptiness. Both Islam and Christianity, when viewed through this modern lens, continue to affirm that salvation is not only about life after death but also about living meaningfully, compassionately, and responsibly in the present world. Thus, in the age of modernity and globalization, salvation emerges as both a divine promise and a human calling to seek truth, practice justice, and embody mercy in an increasingly interconnected and complex world.

Practical Implications for Interreligious Cooperation and Respect

The comparative understanding of salvation in Islam and Christianity carries significant practical implications for fostering interreligious cooperation and mutual respect in the contemporary era. As both religions share a deep concern for human moral and spiritual welfare, their dialogue on salvation can serve as a bridge for peacebuilding, tolerance, and social harmony in increasingly pluralistic societies. Moving beyond theological rivalry toward shared ethical and humanitarian goals can transform religious diversity from a source of division into a foundation for collaboration.

One of the most profound implications lies in promoting empathy and mutual understanding between followers of Islam and Christianity. Recognizing that both traditions emphasize divine mercy, repentance, and righteous living allows adherents to see salvation not as a competition for truth, but as a shared journey toward moral and spiritual growth (Riesebrodt, 2010). This perspective encourages dialogue that highlights similarities rather than differences, fostering a sense of common purpose rooted in the worship of one God, compassion for others, and service to humanity. Educational institutions, religious organizations, and interfaith forums can play a vital role in nurturing such understanding through joint discussions, seminars, and community programs centered on shared moral teachings.

Another practical dimension is the encouragement of collaborative social action inspired by the moral imperatives of both faiths. Islam's emphasis on *amal saleh* (righteous deeds) and Christianity's focus on *agape* (selfless love) both call believers to serve others as an expression of faith. This shared moral foundation can inspire cooperative initiatives in areas such as poverty alleviation, education, environmental protection, and humanitarian aid. For instance, joint Muslim-Christian projects addressing social injustice or disaster relief efforts not only fulfill religious duties but also demonstrate that faith-based compassion transcends doctrinal boundaries. In this way, shared commitment to the ethical dimension of salvation becomes a practical instrument for social transformation and unity.

Furthermore, interreligious dialogue on salvation can promote theological humility and respect for diversity. Both Islam and Christianity acknowledge human limitations in fully understanding the divine will, which opens space for recognizing the sincerity of faith in others (Nasr, 2009). When believers accept that salvation ultimately lies in God's judgment and mercy, they are more likely to engage others with respect rather than hostility. This humility fosters a more inclusive and peaceful coexistence, reducing religious prejudice and promoting coexistence in multicultural societies. It also helps counter extremist interpretations that claim exclusivity over divine truth and salvation.

In addition, the contemporary world demands that religious communities work together to address global ethical challenges such as moral relativism, consumerism, climate change, and social inequality that threaten human dignity. By grounding their cooperation in the shared concept of salvation as moral and spiritual renewal, Islam and Christianity can contribute to a more ethically guided globalization. Such collaboration can be institutionalized through interfaith councils, peace committees, and academic partnerships that integrate theological reflection with concrete social initiatives (Bouta et al., 2005). The joint witness of faith communities in promoting justice, compassion, and human dignity can stand as a powerful counterbalance to the divisive forces of secular materialism and religious intolerance.

Ultimately, the practical implications of this comparative study point toward a renewed vision of interreligious solidarity one that honors doctrinal distinctiveness while celebrating shared values. Understanding salvation as a dynamic process involving both divine grace and human action encourages cooperation, dialogue, and mutual care. By embracing this perspective, Islam and Christianity can jointly affirm that the path to salvation, though understood differently, leads humanity toward the same ultimate goals: peace, compassion, and communion with the Divine. In this spirit, interreligious cooperation becomes not merely a social necessity but a sacred expression of faith in action embodying the very essence of what salvation seeks to achieve in both traditions.

Comparison of the Results of the Current Research with Previous Research

Comparison of the Results of the Current Research with Previous Research

The findings of this research align with and extend the conclusions of previous studies that have explored the theological dimensions of salvation in Islam and Christianity. Earlier works, such as those by John Hick (1989) and Hans Küng (1991), emphasized the possibility of theological pluralism, arguing that salvation is accessible across different faith traditions through sincere devotion and moral integrity. Similar to these perspectives, the present study recognizes that both Islam and Christianity share a moral and spiritual foundation rooted in divine mercy and human righteousness. However, this research contributes further by situating these theological insights within the contemporary context of globalization and secularism, revealing how modern challenges have prompted both faiths to reinterpret their doctrines of salvation to remain relevant in a pluralistic world.

In comparison with Al-Ghazali's classical Islamic perspective and Thomas Aquinas's Christian theology, this research confirms that both scholars viewed salvation as a process involving divine grace and human effort. Al-Ghazali emphasized repentance (*taubah*), faith (*iman*), and righteous deeds (*amal saleh*) as the means to attain divine mercy, while Aquinas underscored faith, grace, and the sacraments as essential channels of salvation (Abd Rahman, 2014). The current study builds on these foundations by

examining how contemporary scholars reinterpret such classical doctrines in light of interfaith dialogue, ethical universalism, and the modern human condition. For example, recent Islamic thinkers such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr (2002) and Christian theologians like Miroslav Volf (2011) argue that salvation should not only be understood as an individual's journey toward God but also as a collective moral responsibility to uphold justice and compassion in society – a notion strongly supported by this research.

While previous comparative studies, such as Ahmad and McGrath (2017), focused primarily on doctrinal analysis, the current research integrates a broader socio-cultural dimension. It explores how secularism, globalization, and modern ethics have influenced believers' understanding of salvation, showing a shift from rigid exclusivist interpretations toward more inclusivists and pluralist perspectives (Kremers, 2013). This contrasts with earlier works that treated salvation as a fixed theological concept detached from contemporary realities. The present research thus adds depth by illustrating that both Islam and Christianity are dynamic traditions capable of theological adaptation without compromising their core tenets. It highlights how modern believers increasingly view salvation through the lens of ethical action, social justice, and interreligious solidarity.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the concept of salvation in Islam and Christianity, while rooted in distinct theological traditions, shares profound moral and spiritual commonalities that can serve as a basis for interreligious understanding and cooperation. Both religions affirm that salvation is a divine gift intertwined with human responsibility requiring faith, repentance, and righteous action. In Christianity, salvation is primarily understood through faith in Jesus Christ, whose sacrifice redeems humanity from sin, while in Islam, salvation is attained through submission to the will of Allah, adherence to divine commandments, and reliance on God's mercy. Despite their differing doctrinal frameworks, both faiths emphasize divine grace, moral transformation, and the ultimate goal of attaining closeness to God. The findings reveal that the modern era, characterized by secularism, globalization, and pluralism, has significantly influenced contemporary interpretations of salvation. As religious communities navigate complex cultural and moral landscapes, many scholars and believers have moved toward more inclusive and dialogical understandings of salvation. Instead of viewing salvation in exclusivist or competitive terms, there is an emerging recognition that faithfulness, compassion, and ethical conduct are shared pathways toward divine fulfillment. This evolution reflects an adaptive theological response to modern realities, where interfaith interaction and global ethical challenges demand a renewed sense of spiritual solidarity. Furthermore, the comparative analysis underscores that both traditions possess complementary insights into the human condition and divine justice. Christianity's focus on redemption through grace and Islam's emphasis on moral accountability together illustrate a holistic vision of salvation that integrates belief, action, and divine mercy. This synthesis enriches theological discourse and challenges adherents of both faiths to appreciate the depth and diversity of God's relationship with humanity. It also highlights that salvation is not merely an individual pursuit but a collective moral endeavor involving service, compassion, and social justice. In practical terms, this study demonstrates that understanding salvation through a comparative theological lens can promote interreligious cooperation, peacebuilding, and mutual respect. By acknowledging doctrinal differences while celebrating shared ethical foundations, Islam and Christianity can work together to address common challenges such as moral decay, inequality, and spiritual alienation in modern societies. The dialogue between these traditions thus becomes not only a theological exercise but a means of fostering unity amid diversity, affirming that faith can be a force for reconciliation rather than division. Ultimately, this research concludes that the concept of salvation when viewed through the prism of comparative theology offers a profound opportunity for spiritual and social transformation. It invites both Muslims and Christians to deepen their understanding of divine mercy, to act justly in the world, and to embrace interfaith engagement as an expression of shared humanity. In an era where religious misunderstandings often lead to conflict, this study reaffirms that genuine dialogue grounded in respect, empathy, and theological openness can illuminate a path toward harmony, where the pursuit of salvation becomes a shared journey toward peace and the divine truth that unites all.

AUTHORS' DECLARATION

Authors' Contributions and Responsibilities

The author of this research was responsible for the entire process of conceptualizing, designing, and conducting the study.

Competing Interests

The author declares that there are no competing interests or conflicts of interest related to the conduct, analysis, or publication of this research.

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