

Aim of lesson

To enable the young people to understand a little of others beliefs about immortality and human nature, so that they can appreciate the importance, and distinctiveness, of our faith and be better able to explain it to others.

Bible background

Galatians 5:5-6, Hebrews 9:26-27

Preparation required

Read through the text in the students' notes and be able to explain or summarise for them.

Suggested outline of lesson

Read through the information about Hinduism a section at a time with the young people, bearing in mind the questions in their notes. Help them to work out their answers at each stage and fill in a brief summary.

The following points may help:

Creation and the Caste System

God created men and women equal (Galatians 3:26-28) though different from the animals (Genesis 1:26-27). We are his workmanship (Ephesians 2:10). This affects our treatment of strangers, poor, etc. Because men are made in God's image we have a responsibility for all men (James 3:9,10)

Karma

The teachers of the law believed in justification by works which was impossible to achieve. The Law of Karma does not allow the principle of salvation by God's grace.

Nirvana

Our tendency is to lecture and discuss rather than sit quietly and think, but there are several references to meditation in the Psalms e.g. Psalm 1:2; 46:10; 119:148; 143:5. It is instructive to look at Joshua 1:8 and reflect that at the start of a military campaign the one command to Joshua was that he should meditate on the law.

Faith which is not expressed in actions is not faith at all. James 2:26; Galatians 5:6

Relevance to our lives

Our young people will learn of other religions at school and need to be clear about their own views and how to support them.

Prayer

Thank you, O Lord, for showing us your wonderful purpose with mankind in the Bible. Grant us, conviction in what we believe and understanding towards others. Amen.

Other suggestions for activities

1. Write a letter to an imaginary (or real, if they know one) Hindu to explain gently why a faith based on the Bible is the only real hope.
2. Some people think that it is wrong to practice yoga because it allows evil spirits to act on the mind. You could discuss this, and the broader issues associated with yoga and meditation.