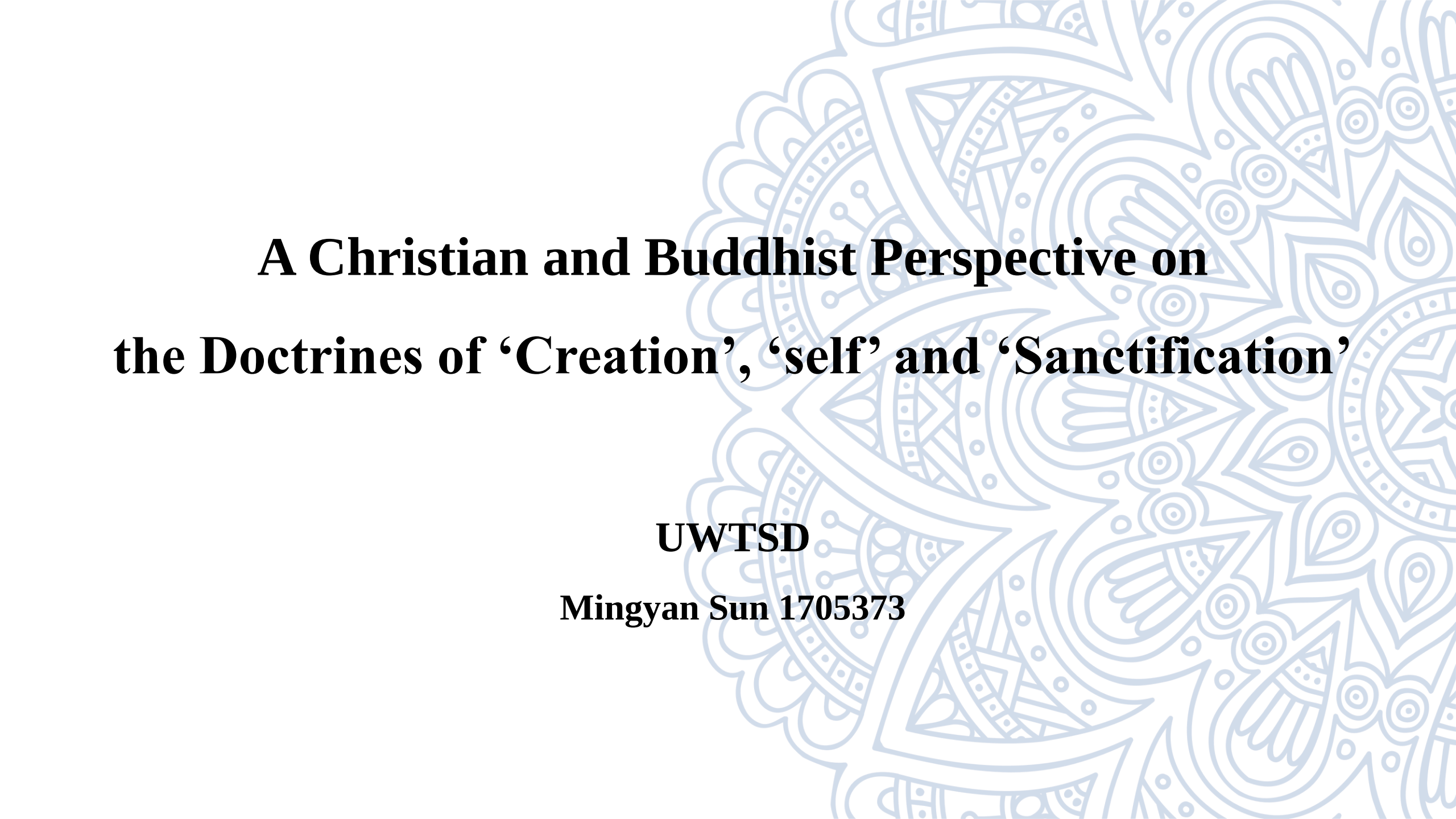




A Christian and Buddhist Perspective on the Doctrines of ‘Creation’, ‘self’ and ‘Sanctification’

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Outline

- ❖ **Introduction**
- ❖ **The Doctrine of 'Creation'**
 - Christian Perspective
 - Buddhist Perspective
- ❖ **The Doctrine of 'Self'**
 - Christian Perspective
 - Buddhist Perspective
- ❖ **The Doctrine of 'Sanctification'**
 - Christian Perspective
 - Buddhist Perspective
- ❖ **Conclusion**



Introduction:

- ❖ **Aim of the Project:** Finding the inherent similarities within Christianity and Buddhism on the doctrines of 'creation', 'self' and 'sanctification' while identifying their fundamental doctrinal difference
- ❖ **Reasons for choosing the three areas:**
 - 'Creation' ➡ origination of all things
 - 'Self' ➡ human's existentialism
 - 'Sanctification' ➡ ultimate destination
- ❖ **Research methodology:** Archival study - focusing on the study and analysis of primary and secondary sources in relation to the three doctrinal subjects. Research methods of information analysis and deductive approach were also utilised.



‘Creation’: A Christian Perspective

- ❖ God: A supreme being, omniscient and omnipotent; the only creator of all things in the universe.
- ❖ Genesis 1: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty ... (Gen. 1:1-2).
 - Central idea is of *creatio ex nihilo*
- ❖ God’s creation is a divine donation. God is independent but all existence participate in God’s existence.
- ❖ A Monotheistic Religion: God is the only **One** to be worshipped.



‘Creation’: A Buddhist Perspective

- ❖ A nontheistic Religion: Does not acknowledge a divine being as the creator.
- ❖ Theory of Creation: ‘Dependent Origination’ — a result of the unceasing interactions and constant connection between dependent conditions from the formula of the twelve links.
- ❖ Twelve links: ignorance, formation, consciousness, mind-and-body, the six senses, sense-contact, feeling, craving, grasping, becoming, birth, old age and death.



‘Creation’: A Buddhist Perspective

- ❖ All phenomena are a manifestation of impermanent and transient nature.

Transience: The arising and perishing of dependent conditions travel at an unimaginable speed. Thus Buddhist sutras describe all conditioned existence as an illusion.

- ❖ Who is being reborn?

‘Rebirth is also condition dependent — Its nature and quality depends on the karma generated from one’s past actions. All deeds act as causal conditions leading to the future fruit of rebirth.



Analysis:

1. Creation in both religions is controlled by a very powerful source.

Christianity: God

Buddhism: the first condition of ignorance

2. The concept of the universe's emptiness

Christianity: the earth was formless and empty before God's creation

Buddhism: the illusory nature of all existence — emptiness



‘Self’: A Christian Perspective

- ❖ Man’s spirit, soul and body need to be preserved in his wholeness for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (Thess. 5:23).
- ❖ *‘nephesh’* — the existence of the material body and the sentience of man
 - ‘psyche’* — man’s vitality, feeling, thought and will
 - ‘ruach’* (spirit) — Man’s direct relationship with God, bestowed and ruled by God
 - ‘pneuma’* — only possessed by human creatures, a life derived from God; fellowship with God
- ❖ Notion of ‘self’: A unity of a man’s body, soul and spirit. It is the salvation of man’s entirety



‘Self’: A Buddhist Perspective

- ❖ The doctrine of ‘non-self’ (*anatta*)
- ❖ The Therevada Panca-kkhandha theory: The five aggregates — matter, sensation or feeling, perception, mental states and activities and consciousness.
- ❖ Reinforcement for the conception of ‘*anatta*’



Analysis:

- ❖ The characteristics of the five aggregates are similar to the properties in the body, soul and spirit of man in Christianity.
- ❖ No ownership of 'self' in its temporary existence. The concept of 'non-self' seems to fit the interpretation of the 'self' in both religions.



‘Sanctification’: A Christian Perspective

- ❖ There is an afterlife, death is not the end. The nature of the afterlife is judged by God.
- ❖ Progressive sanctification: An intermediate state after death until final consummation — Purgatory
- ❖ Purgatory: A process of purification — actualisation of the positive, diminishing of the negative.
- ❖ Begins in this lifetime and moves toward perfection in intermediate state



‘Sanctification’: A Buddhist Perspective

- ❖ Sanctification for Buddhists is the actualisation of Nirvana
- ❖ Departure from ‘craving’; extinction of ‘lust’, ‘hatred’, ‘ignorance’ – ending all forms of suffering
- ❖ Experiences of Nirvana described as: peace and happiness, highest bliss, the harbour of refuge, liberation, the transcendental, the ineffable and many more.



Analysis:

- ❖ Both religions follow a similar path: perfect one's ethics for the purpose of eternal bliss.
- ❖ The ultimate destination is not attained in one lifetime or after death, it's a development of diminishing the negative and actualising the positive.



Conclusion:

- ❖ Religions with the most evident fundamental difference can still possess some inherent similarities.
- ❖ Further exploration of Christianity and Buddhism is possible!



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Thank You

For Your Time!

