

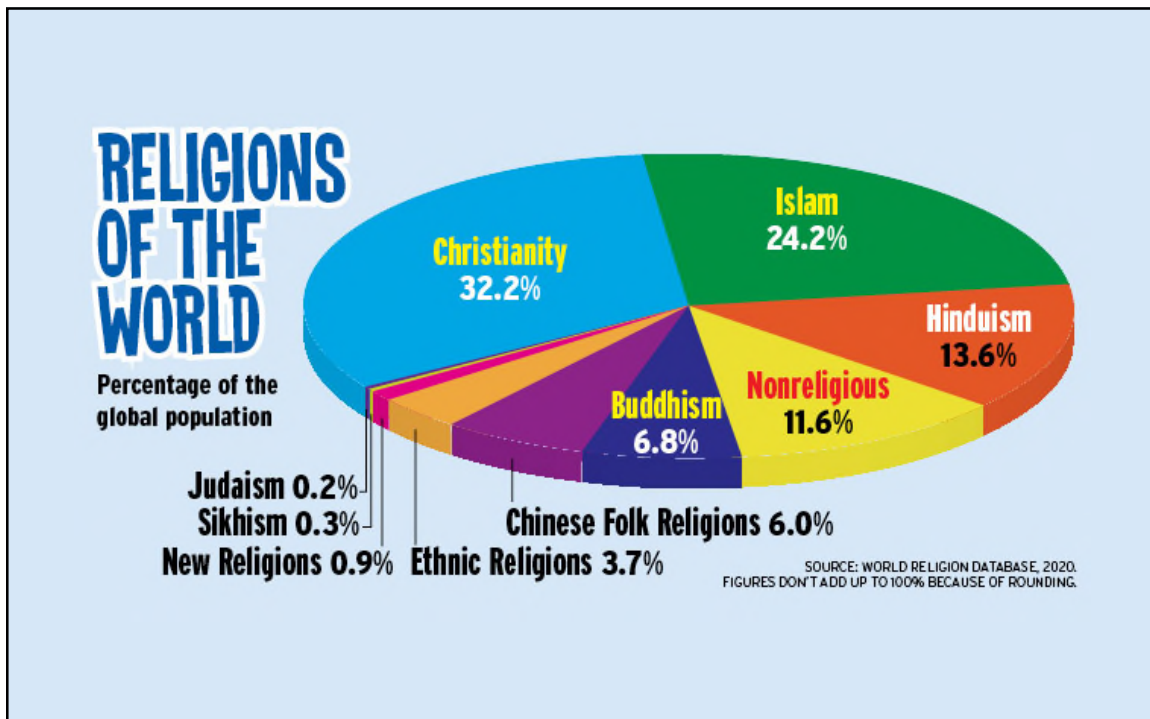
Examining Buddhism

Christian Faith vs. Buddhism
(Ecclesiastes 11:8-12:1)



Buddhism 佛教

- Atheistic in origin
- “Buddha” = “Enlightened One” 悟者
- Buddhists = Believers of Buddhism
- Buddhism has many different branches (subgroups)
- #4 in world religions



- Originated in India
- Founder: Siddhartha Gautama 悉達多喬達摩 (~600BC)
 - Prince with a wife and a son
 - Prophecy at birth ... great king or great monk
 - Age 30: chariot ride, four visions
(an old person, a ill person, a funeral procession, a monk in walking meditation)
 - Renunciation, then 7 years of self-mortification
 - Sat under a tree, reached enlightenment >> became the Buddha
 - Formed his order and teaching
 - Died at 80, passed into nirvana
- Buddhism kept spreading and changing

Buddhism's Major Belief

- Each human being is caught in a potentially never-ending cycle of reincarnations — people will return after death as various forms of living beings.
- The goal is to escape from this cycle of reincarnations (suffering).
- To escape, live by the "four noble truths" 四聖諦:
 1. *To live is to suffer.*
 2. *Suffering is caused by attachment to this life.*
 3. *The way to end suffering is by ending attachment to this life.*
 4. *We can end attachment to this life by following the "noble eightfold path."* 八正道
(Yet, the eightfold path can only be achieved by a monk or nun.)

- ***Traditional Buddhism** — **monks** who observe all the principles and achieves enlightenment will upon death enter the state of **nirvana** 涅槃.
 - “nirvana” means “blowing out” or “extinction” — the person loses his individual identity and thereby is liberated from the cycle of suffering.
- **Laypersons will not attain nirvana,**
 - but by accumulating merit through a righteous life and good deeds, they will be reborn into more favorable circumstances in their next lifetime.
- **Many Buddhas** before and after Gautama.
- **Bodhisattvas** 菩薩 — beings who are close to become Buddhas.

- **Symbols:**

- Eightfold path 八正道



- Swastikas 萬字符



- **Two major divisions of Buddhism**

- **Theravada** (Hinayana) 小乘佛教 (conservative)
 - = “the little vehicle”
 - focuses on the yellow-robed monks
 - laypersons cannot reach nirvana
- **Mahayana** 大乘佛教 (liberal)
 - = “the big vehicle”
 - more inclusive; salvation is not limited to monks
 - **Tibetan Buddhism** — lamas 喇嘛, Dalai Lama 達賴喇嘛
 - **Zen** 禪 (more popular in the West)



Practices of Buddhism (many variations)

- Following the teaching of Buddha
- Worshipping Buddha — yes, no, maybe
- Meditation & chanting
- Caring for temples and monks
- Statue of the Buddha at home
- Ancestor veneration (worship)
- Vegetarian diet (not obligated for all Buddhists)

In what major way is the Christian faith distinct from Buddhism?

***We believe that God exists, therefore we live fully & fully with Him.**

**1. God exists, and He gave us our lives — purposeful, valuable.
(Eccl 11:9; 12:1; Gen 1)**

vs. Buddhism doesn't have God; life is a baggage of suffering.

Eccl 11:8-12:2

⁸ Indeed, if someone lives many years, let him rejoice in them all, and let him remember the days of darkness, since they will be many.

All that comes is futile.

⁹ Rejoice, young person, while you are young,
and let your heart be glad in the days of your youth.

And walk in the ways of your heart and in the desire of your eyes;
but know that for all of these things God will bring you to judgment.

¹⁰ Remove sorrow from your heart, and put away pain from your flesh,
because youth and the prime of life are fleeting.

^{12:1} So remember your Creator in the days of your youth:

Before the days of adversity come and the years approach when you will say, "I have no delight in them";

1. God exists, and He gave us our lives — purposeful, valuable.

(Eccl 11:9; 12:1; Gen 1)

vs. Buddhism doesn't have God; life is a baggage of suffering.

2. God wants us to embrace and enjoy life — all aspects.

(Eccl 11:9-12:1)

vs. Buddhism wants to escape from life & suffering.

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vs. Buddhism doesn't have God; life is a baggage of suffering.
2. God wants us to embrace and enjoy life — all aspects.
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vs. Buddhism wants to escape from life and suffering.
- 3. God wants us to be accountable to Him — God focused. (Eccl 12:1)**
vs. Buddhism wants to escape from life and suffering — self focused.

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God created all lives and said, "Very good!"
Let's us live our lives fully and fully for His glory!