

EVANGELISM & WORLD RELIGIONS

13 July 2022 | Evangelism & Buddhism | REACH 22

I. INTRODUCTION

There are three main sects of Buddhism:

- **Theravada Sect** - Form of Buddhism practiced in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.
- **Mahayana Sect** - Form of Buddhism practiced in China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam.
- **Vajrayana Sect** (Tibetan Buddhism) - Form of Buddhism practiced in Tibet, Bhutan, Northern India, Nepal, and Mongolia.

Buddhism is an atheist religion that believes there is no God. With a philosophy of believing in human potential, Buddhism says everyone can develop the mind to become a complete and self-reliant human being through perseverance.

Buddhism in Thailand is the Theravada sect which has practices and beliefs that combine Animism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Buddhists admit that Buddha, whose former name was Prince Siddhartha from India, is not God; instead, he was a great, wise human.

Buddhism is essentially philosophies and rules that emphasize individual practical activities and require performing good deeds. Doing good deeds and donating money to Buddhist temples might help one to lead a better present or next life (afterlife).

- **Common Misconceptions:**
 - All Buddhists are _____.
 - All Buddhists do is _____ all the time.
 - All Buddhists wear _____.

II. KEY TERMS

The Buddha, the religious founder, who is seen as a _____.

The Dharma (doctrines, philosophies, laws) was given by Buddha for his disciples to _____ and _____.

The Sangha (monks) have to teach and _____ the Dharma.

- These three things (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha) are called the "Pra Rattana Tri," which means the _____, the noblest articles of Buddhism.

Nirvana - This is the liberation from the cycle of birth and death

"There is a sphere which is neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor air, which is not the sphere of the infinity of space, nor the sphere of the infinity of consciousness, the sphere of perception, or non-perception, which is neither this world, neither sun nor moon, I deny that it is coming or going, enduring, death, or birth. It is only the end of suffering." -Buddha

III. Buddhism Overview

- Over _____ million Buddhists around the world today
 - The average age of Buddhists around the world is _____ years of age.
 - Estimated _____ million Buddhists living in the United States.
- Buddha
 - Siddhartha Gautama founded Buddhism in the sixth century B.C.
 - Siddhartha was born into a _____ family and his father worked hard to shelter him from seeing suffering of any kind.

- One day Siddhartha ventured away from the palace and encountered all four kinds of suffering, and this experience had a tremendous impact on his life
 - After seeing the real world and the suffering that exists, Siddhartha left his family (wife and child) and his life of luxury and committed himself to discovering the source of suffering and how to eliminate it
 - This was a journey that lasted for over ____ years - until one day Siddhartha laid down by a fig tree on the edge of a river and vowed not to rise again until he attained "_____ " and he fell into a deep state of meditation.
 - After a period of time (some say 1 night, others 49 days) Siddhartha attained enlightenment and became the Buddha, which means "enlightened one."
 - Buddha called his path to enlightenment the Middle Way and began traveling around to teach it to others and in the process won thousands of followers.
- **Four Noble Truths...**
 - *Suffering exists:* Life is _____.
 - *There is a cause of suffering.* Suffering is due to _____.
 - *There is an end to suffering.* Suffering ceases with the _____.
 - *In order to end suffering, you must follow the _____.*

- **Eightfold path...**

- 1) Right understanding
- 2) Right thought
- 3) Right _____
- 4) Right conduct
- 5) Right livelihood
- 6) Right _____
- 7) Right mindfulness
- 8) Right concentration

IV. BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY

- **Common Buddhist Objections to the Gospel:**

- 1) "There are many _____ to God."
- 2) "Jesus is not _____, and he cannot _____ the people's sins of the whole world."
- 3) "Christianity is the teaching of _____ nations."

- **What does a Buddhist believe about God?**

Buddhism denies the existence of an eternal _____ who rules over all creatures. They do not believe that there is one God. Instead, they believe that many gods are sacred in nature, such as the sky, mountains, and rivers, which makes Buddhism not clear about the concept of God. As a result, everything that is natural can be a god.

- **What does a Buddhist believe about man?**

The genesis of man is not addressed in Buddhism. Man, according to Buddhist philosophy, already exists. Therefore, there is no clear answer about the origins of human beings. Some Buddhists believe that humans were born to _____ for their past lives—a form of _____. Meanwhile, many others believe that humans were born from monkeys. And many of them believe that humans evolved (from Darwin's theory of evolution).

- **What does a Buddhist believe about sin?**

Buddhism has an ambiguous idea of sin. According to Thai Buddhists, sin (karma) is a major condition that causes man to be _____ and _____. Desires and passions such as greed, anger, and lust are the cause of suffering. The five fundamental precepts that Buddhists strive not to commit are killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, and drunkenness. Sin is personal. They don't believe that sins can be forgiven or that someone can forgive the sins of others.

- **What does a Buddhist believe about salvation?**

There is no concept of salvation in Buddhism and there is no savior. _____, the ultimate aim of Buddhism, is the transcendent condition where there is no suffering, desire, or sense of self and the subject. It is a freedom from the effects of karma (sin) and liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth (reincarnation). It can not be substitutable. Man will reach nirvana through his own efforts, through cycles of death and rebirth. No one can help, even Buddha himself.

- **What does a Buddhist believe about afterlife?**

The fundamental Buddhist thought or belief is the belief in the afterlife. What Buddhists fear the most is going to hell. As a result, they try to do everything to save and _____ themselves from their own sins, so they might be able to go to heaven reach nirvana. Some of these include making merit, doing good deeds, and following the philosophies of Buddha. They might enter nirvana when they _____ of all bad desires and bad deeds.

V. SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH BUDDHISTS

- 1) Be _____
- 2) Build a sincere _____
- 3) Acknowledge that life is full of _____
- 4) Highlight the cause of our suffering (sin & our sinful desires)
- 5) Talk about _____ through Christ suffering
- 6) Following the path of _____ leads to eternal life
- 7) Take a long-term approach
- 8) Avoid _____ with them
- 9) Share your personal _____ and story
- 10) Commit to _____ for them daily

VI. CONCLUSION

One of the critical problems for believers in Buddhism is the inability to understand the truth of God. Their religious beliefs are entrenched and anchored in their minds. Causing them to transfer traditional views, ideas, and teachings is a difficult challenge. Because Buddhists cherish _____ and _____, sharing the gospel with them requires personal relationships to earn their trust, along with patience and active listening to understand their ideas and find opportunities to explain matters of faith. It leads to spiritual conversations that eventually create opportunities to share the gospel of Jesus Christ—trusting in the Holy Spirit's work and waiting patiently for the seeds of Good News to bear fruit in their lives.

EVANGELISM & WORLD RELIGIONS

BUDDHISM

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Castleton Community Church



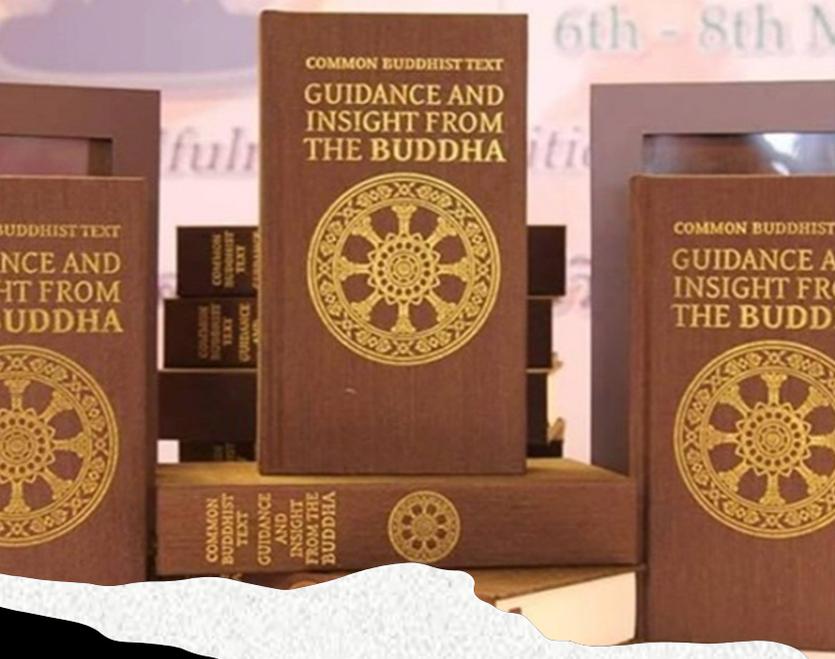


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Common Misconceptions:

- All Buddhists are **vegetarians**.
- All Buddhists do is **sit around and meditate** all the time.
- All Buddhists wear **robes**.



KEY TERMS

- **The Buddha**, the religious founder, who was a great **prophet**.
- **The Dharma** (doctrines, philosophies, laws) was given by Buddha for his disciples to **obey** and **study**.
- **The Sangha** (monks) have to teach and **propagate** the Dharma.
- These three things (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha) are called the "Pra Rattana Tri," which means the **Triple Gems**, the noblest articles of Buddhism.
- **Nirvana** – This is the liberation from the cycle of birth and death

BUDDHISM OVERVIEW

- Over **500** million Buddhists around the world today.
- The average age of Buddhists around the world is **36** years of age.
- Estimated **4** million Buddhists living in the United States.



Buddha:

- Siddhartha Gautama founded Buddhism in the sixth century B.C.
- Prince Siddhartha was born into a **royal** family and his father worked hard to shelter him from seeing suffering of any kind.
- One day Siddhartha ventured away from the palace and encountered all four kinds of suffering, and this experience had a tremendous impact on his life
- After seeing the real world and the suffering that exists, Siddhartha left his family (wife and child) and his life of luxury and committed himself to discovering the source of suffering and how to eliminate it
- This was a journey that lasted for over **6** years - until one day Siddhartha laid down by a fig tree on the edge of a river and vowed not to rise again until he attained "**enlightenment**" and he fell into a deep state of meditation.
- After a period of time (some say 1 night, others 49 days) Siddhartha attained enlightenment and became the Buddha, which means "enlightened one."
- Buddha called his path to enlightenment the Middle Way and began traveling around to teach it to others and in the process won thousands of followers.

Buddhism:

- **Four Noble Truths...**

- 1) Suffering exists: Life is **suffering**.
- 2) There is a cause of suffering. Suffering is due to **attachment**.
- 3) There is an end to suffering. Suffering ceases with the **final liberation of Nirvana**.
- 4) In order to end suffering, *you must follow the* **Eightfold Path**.

- **Eightfold Path...**

- 1) Right understanding
- 2) Right thought
- 3) Right **speech**
- 4) Right conduct
- 5) Right livelihood
- 6) Right **effort**
- 7) Right mindfulness
- 8) Right concentration



Common Buddhist Objections to the Gospel:

- 1) “There are many **paths** to God.”
- 2) “Jesus is not **unique**, and he cannot **redeem** the people's sins of the whole world.”
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BUDDHIS AND CHRISTIANITY

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- The fundamental Buddhist thought or belief is the belief in the afterlife. What Buddhists fear the most is going to hell. As a result, they try to do everything to save and **release** themselves from their own sins, so they might be able to go to heaven reach nirvana. Some of these include making merit, doing good deeds, and following the philosophies of Buddha. They might enter nirvana when they **get rid** of all bad desires and bad deeds.

SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH BUDDHISTS



- 1) Be **patient**
- 2) Build a sincere **relationship**
- 3) Acknowledge that life is full of **suffering**
- 4) Highlight the cause of our suffering (our own desires)
- 5) Talk about **redemption** through Christ suffering
- 6) Following the path of **Jesus** leads to eternal life
- 7) Take a long-term approach
- 8) Avoid **arguing/debating** with them
- 9) Share your personal **testimony** and story
- 10) Commit to **pray** for them daily

- One of the critical problems for believers in Buddhism is the inability to understand the truth of God. Their religious beliefs are entrenched and anchored in their minds. Causing them to transfer traditional views, ideas, and teachings is a difficult challenge. Because Buddhists cherish **interdependence** and **friendships**, sharing the gospel with them requires personal relationships to earn their trust, along with patience and active listening to understand their ideas and find opportunities to explain matters of faith. It leads to spiritual conversations that eventually create opportunities to share the gospel of Jesus Christ—trusting in the Holy Spirit's work and waiting patiently for the seeds of Good News to bear fruit in their lives.



CONCLUSION

THANK YOU!

