

# J E S U S & B U D D H A

## Week 1: Jesus & Buddha Basics

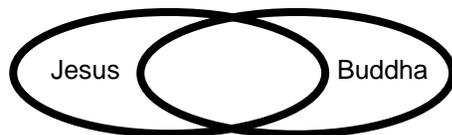
Week 2: *Digging Deeper into Dharma*

Week 3: *Ask a Buddhist (with special guest Peter Timmerman)*

Week 4: *Meditation & Mindfulness*

### APPETIZER: Charitable Comparison

“Comparison is the mother of all clarity.”  
~ Os Guinness,  
Christian Philosopher



Acts 14:15-17; 17:16-34

### DINE IN: Buddha Boot Camp (Part 1)

#### SOURCES...

- Pali Canon, Sri Lanka, written 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (400-500 years after Buddha's death); Oldest fragment dates to the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century AD (500 years later)
- New Testament, written *decades* after Jesus' life; earliest fragment (P52) dates early second century (decades after original writing).

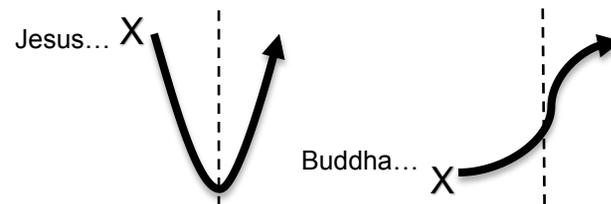
#### LIVES...

- Siddhartha Gautama → Buddha (Awakened One)
- India, about 500 BC VS 4 BC
- Born into a privileged life.
- Married with one son.
- Left all to seek enlightenment.

Before Abraham was born, I am!"  
~ Jesus (John 8:58)

Philippians 2:5-11

“Why exalt Jesus above Buddha, or anyone else?”



X = Start

#### DEATHS...

- Jesus died violently around 30, forgiving his killers.
- Buddha died around 80, peacefully, and slipped into nirvana.

#### TEACHINGS...

THE WAY: **Buddha** claimed to walk the “middle way” of compassion.

THE WAY: **Jesus** claimed to *be* the way (Ultimate Reality in human form), and modeled a life of active love for all.

THE UNIVERSE: **Buddha** taught that the universe consists of six different realms... 1) gods, 2) demi-gods (titans), 3) humans, 4) animals, 5) ghosts, 6) demons (hell beings), but no one God at the heart of it all.

THE UNIVERSE: **Jesus** taught that God, who is ever-relating love, created all, sustains all, and invites us back into God's own love life.

THE GOAL: **Buddhist** practice in this life aims to achieve either:

- 1) gaining greater merit so as to be reborn in a better form or realm.
- 2) attaining enlightenment, so as to escape reincarnation completely and enter nirvana.

THE GOAL: **Jesus'** goal is to wake us up to how loving and forgiving God is toward us and to trust him enough to come home and receive salvation as a gift of grace to be celebrated and shared.

John 1:1-3, 9, 14, 18; 8:12; 14:6-7

*Jesus is the heart of God revealed to us.*

### TAKE OUT: Getting Married VS An “Open” Relationship

“Can't I just believe both?”

NEXT WEEK: *Digging Deeper Into Dharma*

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## Home Church Questions

### HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic – in one Large Group]

1. What are you most/least looking forward to in this series?
2. What is your “gut level” emotional response to Buddha? To Jesus? To the religions that have been built in their names?
3. Review Sunday’s sermon and talk about what most interested you and/or lingering questions that remain.

### HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture – in Discussion Groups]

4. Read **Philippians 2:5-11**. For Jesus followers, salvation is not just a ticket to heaven, but the gift of transformation into Christ-likeness here and now. This transformation happens in loving partnership between us and God’s Spirit.
  - a. What verse or idea stands out to you the most? Why?
  - b. Describe in practical terms (time, money, emotional energy, etc) what having “the same mindset as Jesus” looks like today. Brainstorm specific examples from your life, times when you have benefitted from others having this mindset or when you have experienced having it yourself.
  - c. Verse 8 refers to Jesus’ death as an act of obedience. What plan or person was Jesus being “obedient” to? What was the point? Can you think of other Bible texts that explain why Jesus died?
  - d. What is the value of thinking of Jesus’ ascension as God exalting Jesus (verse 9) rather than Jesus taking back what was rightfully his? How is the Trinity a model for our relationships?
  - e. Compare verses 9-11 with **Isaiah 45:22-24**. What made the New Testament church so bold that they would allude to a verse about “Yahweh” but insert “Jesus” instead?
  - f. Verses 9-11 make an exclusive truth claim about Jesus. How is that good news? How would you respond to someone who objected that “Christianity is too exclusive”? Get into pairs and practice your response.

### HUDDLE [Making It Personal and Praying Together – in Huddles]

5. Use your Huddle Questions and pray for one another.