

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

*Comparison is the mother of all clarity.
~ Os Guinness*

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 (Coming This Fall!)*

APPETIZER: Fat Buddha & The Interim Old Testament

MAITREYA = Sanskrit word meaning “loving-kindness”, or “universal love”. The promised Buddha who would one day come as the full embodiment of love, who would love this world so well he would lead us all on the pathway of pure joy.

John 14:9; 15:9-11



THE “INTERIM OLD TESTAMENT” (Don Richardson):

All world religions function like the Old Testament of the Bible in search of the New Testament. Jesus, and only Jesus, brings the New Covenant of grace for the Jewish religion and all religion. And God has left clues that lead to Jesus everywhere.

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

THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

Right Belief, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Occupation, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness (Contemplation), & Right Meditation (Concentration)

THE FIVE PRECEPTS

1. Never harm living things.
2. Never take what is not given.
3. Celibacy outside of marriage.
4. Never lie or gossip.
5. Never take intoxicating substances (eg drugs or drink).

THE FOUR NOBLE SIMILARITIES...

1. Vibe. (Fruit of the Spirit)
2. Peace and Non-violence (Enemy love / Compassion)
3. “Irreligious” Reformation (Judaism / Hinduism)
4. Community Emphasis (Church / Sangha)

THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD DIFFERENCES...

<u>JESUS</u>	<u>BUDDHA</u>
1. Know God	No God
2. Grace (gift)	Karma (cause & effect)
3. Rebirth (once now)	Rebirth (at death, repeatedly)
4. New self	No self (an-atman)
5. Kingdom of God / Heaven	Nirvana (blowing out)
6. Emphasis on prayer	Emphasis on meditation
7. Priesthood of all	Laity VS Monks & Nuns
8. “Follow Me”	“Follow the teaching”

John 5:24; 14:20, 23; 17:26; Colossians 3:1-3; Galatians 2:20

Galatians 2:19-21

DINE IN: Buddha Boot Camp (Part 2)

- THERAVADA BUDDHISM: The earliest forms (minority)
- MAHAYANA BUDDHISM: Later developments (majority)

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

1. Life is suffering (*dukkha*, dissatisfaction).
2. The origin of this suffering is desire.
3. The way out of suffering is to extinguish desire.
4. Desire can be extinguished through the noble eightfold path.

TAKE OUT: Being True “Christ-followers”

Follow me, and I will make you into fishers of people.

~ Jesus (Matthew 4:19 // Mark 1:17)

NEXT WEEK: Ask a Buddhist Sunday

Home Church Questions

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

1. 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]

2. Read **Galatians 2:19-3:14**.
 - a. What verse or idea stands out to you the most? Why?
 - b. Using the ideas in **2:19-21**, how would you explain the gospel to a spiritual seeker?
 - c. Remember that when you see the word "law" Paul is talking about the way of religion, the way of attempting to attain salvation through merit, rituals, routines, and specific spiritual practises, and the way of suffering the consequences for failing to live up to those standards. Using verses from this passage, take turns trying to explain to each other the key difference between the way of Jesus and the way of Buddha, the way of grace and the way of religion.
 - d. Paul says that the way of "law" puts someone under a curse because they are doomed to work hard to achieve perfection while suffering the consequences of any imperfection. How did Jesus free us from this curse?
 - e. Paul is writing to Christians who think that they need to add some specific religious practices to their lives to help themselves achieve salvation. That is obviously not the way of Jesus, because it refuses to have simple faith in God's grace. But...
 - i. What about practicing various rituals or disciplines simply for spiritual, psychological, or emotional growth?
 - ii. What value is there in things like disciplined daily Bible reading, prayer, and meditation, as well as committed weekly church attendance?
 - iii. Is it alright for a Christian to learn meditation techniques that originated in Buddhism?
 - iv. How about yoga, which originated in Hinduism?
 - v. (How about listening to reggae music, which originated in Rastafarianism? How about celebrating Christmas and Easter, which originated in paganism?)

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

3. Use your Huddle Questions and pray for one another. Remember to focus on what God may be saying to you this week, more than on what any other voices or circumstances are saying to you.