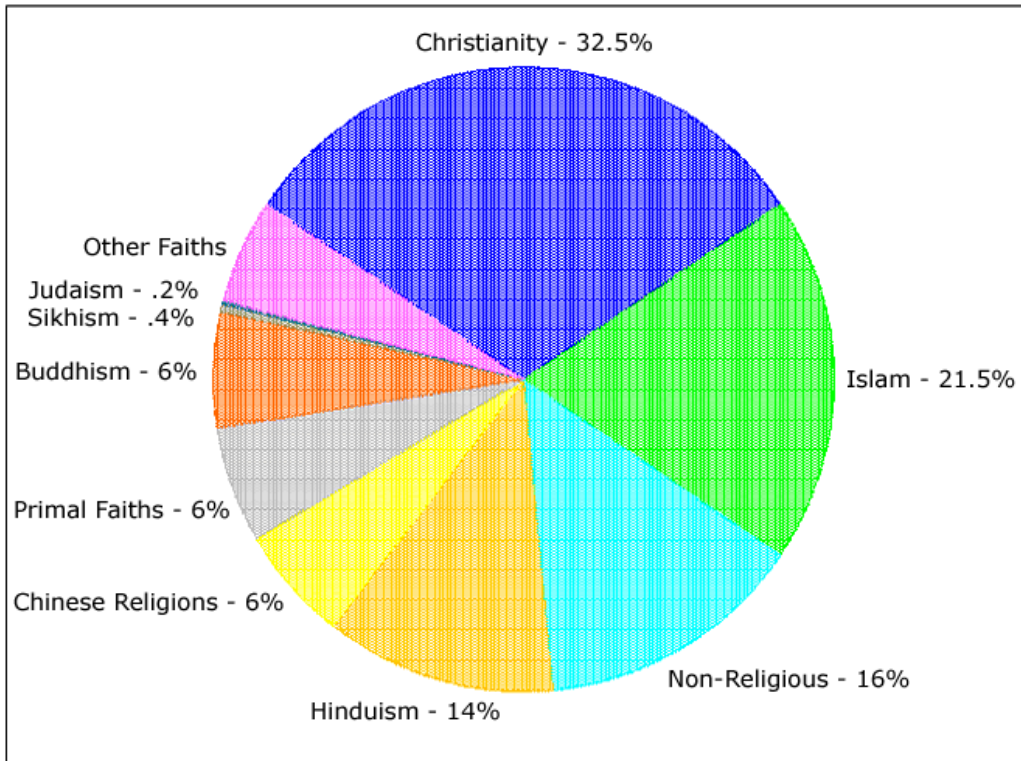


# INTERFAITH WITNESS

## Buddhism



### What is Buddhism?

**The belief system of those who follow the Buddha (the Enlightened One) a title given to its founder, Siddhartha Gautama (563-483 B.C.)**

**Buddhism was founded as a form of atheism that rejected more ancient beliefs in a permanent, personal, creator God who controlled the eternal destiny of human souls.**

**Guru Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha) rejected a belief in God because of difficulty in reconciling the reality of suffering, judgment, and evil with the belief in the existence of a good and holy God.**

**Buddhism is an impersonal religion of self-perfection, the end of which is death (extinction) – not life.**

### **Three Main Schools**

- 1. Theravada (Southern Buddhism) Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam**
- 2. Mahayana (Eastern Buddhism) China, Korea, Japan**
- 3. Vajrayana (Northern Buddhism) Tibet, Mongolia, Nepal**

**Buddhists regard the United States as a prime mission field (in need of enlightenment). The number of Buddhists in this country is growing rapidly as a results of surges in Asian immigration, endorsement by celebrities, and the rapid growth of New Age thought.**

### **Four “Nobel Truths” of Buddhism**

- 1. Life is full of suffering**
- 2. Suffering is caused by craving**
- 3. Suffering will cease only when cravings cease**
- 4. Cravings cease through the process of following the Nobel Eightfold Path.**
  - 1. Right Views**
  - 2. Right Aspirations**
  - 3. Right Speech**
  - 4. Right Conduct**
  - 5. Right Livelihood**
  - 6. Right Effort**

**7. Right Mindfulness**

**8. Right Contemplation**

### **Key Doctrines of Buddhism**

- 1. Nothing is life is permanent**
- 2. Individual selves do not truly exist**
- 3. All is determined by an impersonal law of moral causation**
- 4. Reincarnation is an endless cycle of continuous suffering**
- 5. The goal of life is to break out of this cycle by finally extinguishing the flame of life and entering a permanent state of pure nonexistence.**

### **Witnessing to Buddhists**

- 1. Be courteous and loving**
- 2. Reflect interest in their beliefs.**
- 3. Be acquainted with their basic beliefs.**
- 4. Stick to the primary doctrines of the Christian faith.**
- 5. Avoid terms such as “new birth”, “born again” or “rebirth”. Rather talk about the “gift of salvation” and “eternal, abundant life”.**
- 6. Emphasize the uniqueness of Christ.**
- 7. Share your own testimony, especially your freedom from guilt, assurance of heaven (without suffering) and personal relationship with Christ.**
- 8. Pray for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Trust Him to provide wisdom and grace.**

**9. Be willing to become a friend and personal witness to the Hindus.**