



World Kids

Fun for kids! true stories!









PAL Project Number 13 - June 2009

Jesus told us, as Christians, to "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel" - the good news that Jesus is the Son of God and through Him we can be forgiven of our sins and saved, receiving eternal life in Heaven. In this way, Christianity has spread all over the world over the past two thousand years, and now Christianity is the religion with the largest number of followers. But still not EVERYONE has heard the Gospel - in fact a recent study shows that about 30% of the world's population (that's about 1.6 billion in 38 different nations) has never heard of Jesus Christ. Of course many people around the world follow other religions and have very different beliefs and ideas of God. DO YOU KNOW THE NAMES OF ANY OTHER RELIGIONS? (Remember that there are many different Christian groups, such as Baptist, Pentecostal, Lutheran, Church of Christ, Roman Catholic, Russian Orthodox... but they all still follow the Bible and Jesus).

Here is an interesting picture that shows the symbols of 14 of the world's largest religions. Can you recognize any?



Can you join each of the following religions with the correct symbol?

1. CHRISTIANITY	A) 	B) 	C) 
2. ISLAM			
3. JUDAISM			
4. BUDDHISM			
5. HINDUISM	D) 	E) 	F) 
6. TAOISM			

Of course there are also many people (even some in every country) who do not believe in God at all. They either have been so badly hurt in their lifetime that they feel that there cannot be a God, since He didn't prevent their suffering; or they believe that the world and mankind developed "by chance" over millions of years and somehow kept improving and becoming more complex! These people say that religion was just created by Man as a way to explain life, and they are known as **Atheists**. Karl Marx was the first to spread this teaching in the 1800s and from it developed **Communism**, now found mostly in China, North Korea, Laos and Vietnam, and Cuba.

There are also a lot of other people all around the world who are still wondering and don't know if they believe there is a God or not! They are known as **Agnostics**. Even among people of the same religion, often there are differences in the way individuals believe, and so it is difficult to say exactly how many different religions there are now in the world and how many people follow each one. Also some people say they are of a certain religion yet they do not really follow and obey the teachings of that religion.

In recent years, with satellite television and the Internet spreading information all around the world, certain practices or teachings of some religions have become fashionable in other places even in Europe and America, and people have adopted them without realizing that they are part of another religion. Here are some interesting examples:



Yoga is practiced by many people in the West and is considered to be a good form of exercise - but did you know that it refers to traditional physical and mental disciplines associated with Hinduism and Buddhism? The main Hindu holy book, the Bhagavad Gita, teaches yoga in detail and this photo shows the Hindu god Shiva in a yoga pose.

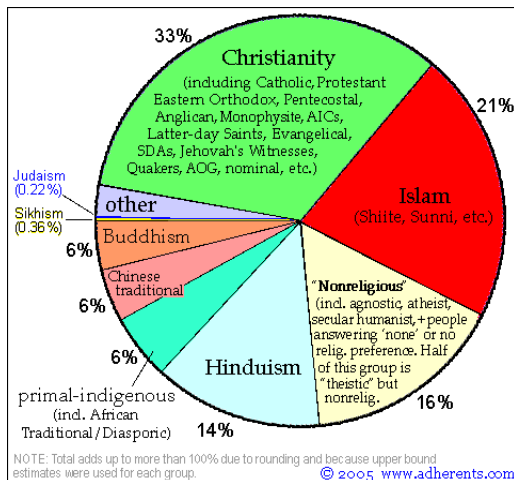


Tai Chi is a technique of exercise using slow deliberate movements thought to balance the flow of energy or "chi" within the body. Maybe you have seen this symbol, called Yin Yang, which supposedly represents the light/dark, good/bad sides of life. Yet this is a major part of the religion of Taoism (pronounced "Dowism") which is similar to Zen and Buddhism.



Reading horoscopes and consulting the stars is sometimes considered something fun to do by many young people, but these are all part of **Astrology** - the belief that the positions of the stars in the night sky can provide information about someone's personality, human affairs, or future events. It is a part of Hindu beliefs in India and also of several traditional Chinese religions.

Ouija boards, tarot cards, mediums and séances are used by many especially in Europe and the West to try to contact dead ancestors or friends for guidance or to know the future; but such beliefs are the basis of **Spiritualism**. Some people believe they can tell the future by looking into a crystal ball or the palm of your hand; and in many parts of the world witchdoctors or shamans similarly try to get direction by looking at bones or the intestines of an animal! These are all methods of believing in the occult and have been practised for thousands of years in traditional native religions, where superstitions, rituals and witchcraft keep people in fear of making the "gods" angry. Such people are called **Animists**, and can be found all over the world, especially in remote, uncivilized areas. However it is sad that some of their practices are also taking hold in the West again, such as through **Voodoo**, **Wiccan** and popular TV shows!



This "pie" diagram gives us an idea of the number of people who follow the different world religions. After **Christians**, the largest group is **Muslims**, who follow Islam and the Prophet Mohammed. Most Muslims are found in the Middle East, Africa and Indonesia, although Islam is spreading quickly in Europe and America. Muslims pray to Allah (their God) 5 times each day and follow the Koran, which gives them rules to live by, although they cannot be sure of going to Heaven unless they die fighting in a Jihad or Holy War.

Hinduism is found mostly in India, and Hindus worship millions of gods and consider many animals sacred, especially cows. They believe in reincarnation - that after death, they will return again as another person, or possibly even as an animal or insect, depending on how they lived their previous life. They have many different social classes

(castes) which are determined by birth and greatly limit what they can do or accomplish in life.

Buddhism is an offshoot of Hinduism that follows the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, also known as Buddha. He taught that the goal of life is to attain "Nirvana" - a state of life where there is no more desire and therefore no more suffering, since he believed that desire leads to suffering. Many Buddhist men spend years as monks wandering the countryside in orange robes and visiting temples, consulting prayer wheels, seeking "enlightenment" and following the Eightfold Path of right thoughts and right words.

If you would like to learn more about the different main world religions, check out our website at <http://www.imofinc.org/Download.html> where we have a fascinating new teaching with lots of pictures and info, entitled "World Religions Teaching". And if you would like to help us share the Gospel with children in India and Africa who have never heard about Jesus, contact us for ways to be a blessing!



What does the Bible say about which religion is best? Read John 3:18

Change the vowels to read the message!
 "Whiovar baloavis en ham as nit candumnad, bat whiovar dies nut baloavis stinds candumnad elroudye boceiso ha hus nut baloavod un tho nimo if Gad's ina end enly San - JESUS!"

'Til next time,

Your friend, Shirley

Facts from: Operation World (21st Century edition) and www.religioustolerance.org www.adherents.com

Answers: 1-E; 2-C; 3-A; 4-D; 5-F; 6-B

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