

Buddhism



Buddhism... believes
no god or gods exist

From [Connecting with the Divine](#) by Marilyn Adamson

Buddhists do not worship any gods or God. People outside of Buddhism often think that Buddhists worship the Buddha. However, the Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama) never claimed to be divine, but rather he is viewed by Buddhists as having attained what they are also striving to attain, which is spiritual enlightenment and, with it, freedom from the continuous cycle of life and death. Most Buddhists believe a person has countless rebirths, which inevitably include suffering. A Buddhist seeks to end these rebirths. Buddhists believe it is a person's cravings, aversion and delusion that cause these rebirths. Therefore, the goal of a Buddhist is to purify one's heart and to let go of all yearnings toward sensual desires and the attachment to oneself.

Buddhists follow a list of religious principles and very dedicated meditation. When a Buddhist meditates it is not the same as praying or focusing on a god, it is more of a self-discipline. Through practiced meditation a person may reach Nirvana -- "the blowing out" of the flame of desire.

Buddhism provides something that is true of most major religions: disciplines, values and directives that a person may want to live by.

From [Buddhism For Dummies, 2nd Edition](#) by Jonathan Landaw, Stephan Bodian, Gudrun Bühnemann

Buddhism is the fourth-largest religion in the world; it encompasses several branches (or schools), including Theravada, Tibetan, and Mahayana. In addition to fundamental teachings on the nature of reality, Buddhism offers a systematic approach involving techniques and practices that enable its followers to experience a deeper level of reality directly for themselves.

Buddhism is at heart an extremely practical religion. Buddha has often been called the Great Physician for good reason: He always avoided abstract speculation and made identifying the cause of human suffering and providing ways to eliminate it his chief concern. Likewise, the teachings (known as the *dharma*) he shared are known as powerful medicine to cure the deeper dissatisfaction that afflicts us all. Buddha's first and best-known teaching, the *Four Noble Truths* (suffering; cause of suffering; cessation of suffering; the path that leads to the cessation of suffering), outlines the cause of suffering and the means for eliminating it. All subsequent teachings merely expand and elaborate upon these fundamental truths.

At the core of all genuine dharma teachings is the understanding that suffering and dissatisfaction originate in the way your mind responds and reacts to life's circumstances — not in the raw facts of life. In particular, Buddhism teaches that your mind causes you suffering by attaching to permanence and constructing a separate self where in fact neither exists.

Happiness, Buddha once said, is actually quite simple: The secret is to want what you have and not want what you don't have. Simple though it may be, it's definitely not easy. Have you ever tried to rein in your restless and unruly mind, even for a moment? Have you ever tried to tame your anger or your jealousy, control your fear, or remain calm and undisturbed in the middle of life's inevitable ups and downs? If you have, you've no doubt discovered how difficult even the simplest self-control or self-awareness can be. To benefit from the medicine Buddha prescribed, you have to take it — which means, you have to put it into practice for yourself.