

# Beliefs and practices of zen buddhism essay examples

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



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Zen Buddhism refers to a religious practice that largely incorporates meditation as the key pillar that supports its existence. It is further defined as a means that is used to obtain enlightenment through application of thoughts. Zen Buddhism is often considered as an offshoot of Pure land Buddhism. This paper seeks to explore the beliefs and practices of Zen Buddhism. Consequently, it seeks to explore the similarities and any differences between Zen Buddhism and Pure land Buddhism. In addition, it will also explore the difference between Zen Buddhism and other religions. The character and the nature of Buddhism are taught in the context of Zen Buddhism. In the study of a Buddhists culture that embraces the Zen type, it is clear that it does not support devotional practices. In this case, it does not recognize practices that assume a religious basis as it is the case for other religious practices. It rejects the study of scriptures as part of the religion. It entirely depends upon rationality that culminates to meditation.

Consequently, it is vital to highlight the ancestry of this religion. It was developed in China. Religious practices that are practiced by the Chinese

assume this category. In this well esteemed instance, it was responsible for all the activities that the Chinese people engaged. Arts and other forms of technical practices were guided by these propagating factors enshrined and parceled in Buddhism as a religion (Kozak).

Zen involves teaching that takes place in Mantras. At this place, it is the responsibility of a disciple to enlighten new members of what is expected of them. Similarly, the teachings of this religion incorporate slaps and beatings that are purposed to incite and psyche students. In this context, to have a better appreciation and understanding of the issues at hand, vigilance should be enhanced . Imaginations are, therefore, used for proper functioning and achievement of expected demands by the religion. In most cases, the teachings are conducted by individuals who are mostly referred to as masters. Zen's practice involves observing the mind and the breath. It is significant that the mind of a person impacts to the life a person will lead. On the other hand, breaths were to be regulated, and the required standard maintained. A mediator is expected to watch his stream of thoughts and at the same time regulate and count his breath in the event he or she is faced with a crisis that assumes a religious backing.

In the practice of Zen Buddhism, group meditation is a feature that cannot be overlooked. The heads of this religion, for example, masters are expected to meet at designated places for a specified period with a basic reason of coming to a position that strengthens their minds under the direct impact of meditation.

Zen also involves studying and analyzing Koan practice. Interviews are conducted by masters who dwell on ensuring that youths who undergo the

process are well faceted in community matters. Bodhisattvas are individuals who have focused their lives into serving people in regard to all matters that entail their lives. That is from birth, death and any other activities that call for due regarding (Wood).

Doctrines in Mahayana Buddhism apply in the case with Zen Buddhism.

Similarly, Zen Buddhism relies upon literature in all its practices. They do believe that Buddha came into place as a result of insights as opposed to the proposition that he came into play as a result of meditation. Recorded sayings by masters and their conversations are used as reference points of practices that concern Zen Buddhism.

Teachings of Zen dictate that, human beings conclusively have opportunities of being perfect from the fact that they can equally meditate upon issues and come up with rather informed and rational ideas. In this case, ignorance is strongly frowned upon by the proponents and those who practice this religion because rationality of the mind is the basis principle that guides the affairs of these individuals. It states that, Buddha aspects are inherited by everyone hence all human beings are equal and only need to employ principles that sharpen up their minds. The concept that thrives in most religion on the aspects of omnipotent does not receive an ear in this religion. Strictness is in the meditation capacities of people. Soto and Rinzai are sets that are responsible for furthering in the proliferation and diversifying observance of all instances that concern the Buddhist society. Bodhidharma is a teaching that minimizes liabilities and expectations that one needs to read religious books, observe all applicable doctrines and place them to exercise so as to adequately benefit from and respect religion.

The practice of Zen Buddhism can be traced from the fact that various quotes and sayings proposed by the advocates of the same profounding significantly illustrate and show value to its existence. At one instance, it was held that, man suffers because he takes too serious what the gods put in place. In this regard, it does not recognize the existence of gods as it is the case for many religions (Wright).

## **Pure Land Buddhism**

It is a segment of Mahayana Buddhism that is mostly practiced in East Asia. Teachings that entail it are oriented along the provisions of Amitabha Buddha. It incorporates instances of meditating upon Mahayana and making recitations of his name as the practice of the religion. The sole purpose looked forward to by Buddhists is to get to a point whereby Buddhahood is well attained. In this regard, a condition that must be reached upon is that along the emblems of the focuses on Bodhi mind that directs and motivates meditation zones. Enlightenment is the most cherished and purpose driving aspect that is regarded and appreciated by a majority of the proponents of this practice. At the commencement of the religion, in the teachings that were incorporated in Pure land Buddhism, it is plausible that measures were squarely regarded into phase because people at this time and age had different levels of educations and were not equal in terms of their attitude towards religion. They, therefore, had varying inclinations to what they were being introduced to.

Pure land Buddhism has aspects that prompted communal life, meditation practices, fables, teachings and philosophies. The ultimate fundamental

reason that the proponents of this religion in their ardent fight for it is because they look forward to reaching a land of Amitabha's while still pure and without undue aspects. In the proactive of this religion, religious vows and recitations are focused towards the absolute recognition of Amitābha. Vows are held so high that the resultant feature in the context of daily obligations that the mere fact that a person has mastered and made adequate vows overshadowed the obligations (Tam). It matters not that you are worried about a duty that you are expected to perform, be it as a result of social obligation. All that matters that have an impact are on the scales of the dedications given to the religiously recognized beings to the latter. Proponents of this practice believe that, all Buddha's assume the same form which is referred to as Dharmakaya in as far as their context is concerned. Dharmakaya is formless in nature, all pervading, omnipresent, infinite and indescribable. As a result of this feature, the trend holds that people cannot come into direct physical contacts with their Buddha because he exists in abstract and assumes characteristics that come along features of these phenomena. In this class of religion, there is a belief in salvation by those who abide by what it provides for as the rules and regulations that determine the course of the religion. It emphasizes on equality between people in matters that associate with the position, class and regard by the society. Benefits are guaranteed in equal measures.

People of Japan, who keenly perpetuate the practice, believe in the redemption and salvation because pure land Buddhism dwells upon hope, trust, faith and that inclination force that entitles them to the opportunity of once reaching the pure land. The religion is not based on a communal

context, what is mostly relied upon is the existence of a personal relationship with Buddha in as far as it revolves and center stages the religion. Amitabha is referred to as the savior of these followers. It further follows that, he is not a god who punished his people. Patience, forgiveness, understanding and regard to the beneficial approaches of human beings and life are what the believers in this take of religion dwell upon in strict observations and regard. Nembutsu that is a practice that entails the recitation of the name of Buddha is conducted in an open, but well regarded place. It is by command and order that it is recited in a loud manner. In this case, believers of this religion believe that, it is a way of showing respect and undivided inclination to Amitabha. Scriptures such as Infinite Life Sutra are read and principles that guide the readings applied by these individuals. There is no reliance on yourself so as to receive redemption. What is the most needed and based on the aspect is the societal appreciation on the issues at hand. Individualistic instances are along narrow notches in the event that they find a scope in realizing their targeting appetites (Porchue).

In the context of pure land terminologies, it is evidence that, we have classes of people assorted for the promised pure land. People under this regard include those who observe goals that bind what Buddhism propagates. In this regard, those that assume a traditional specification are most considered. Values and virtues recognized by this religion include meditation, wisdom, forbearance, energetic progress and discipline. However, the position held by this proposition does not conclusively hold. Other people are not barred from accessing the pure land . In the event that they were under the strong back trailers of sinful commissions and

embraces, these individuals can get renaissance from their sins by simply calling on the name of Buddha, and their troubles will not be subjects to worry.

Pure land literature is highly regarded by those who embrace this religion. Pure land literature gives insights of what the pure land assumes in a way that gives people a mental picture of what to expect, look forward and target in their future objectives. The literature also has elements of the religions history and respective instances that stood as a hallmark to the events that mattered the most in as far as religion is concerned. Pure land Buddhists inclined religion base along the enhancement of interactions of its religious aspects as it regards its members. In this case, organizations have been formed so as to facilitate the envisioned end points of the religion.

### **Similarities between Zen and Pure land Buddhists**

Both the theories assume a basis that is inclined upon meditation on the fundamental factors that determine its course. It matters not that one appreciates the Buddhist religion of either Zen or Pure Land type; meditation must always be the primary thing under due regard and consideration. In both instances, the proponents of the theories do not believe in a supernatural God's existence as in other religions such as Christianity and Islam.

Teachings about the universe significantly hold place when it comes to both embraces of Buddhists religion. In this regard, it is essential to come to the appreciation that the teachings on the universe as entailed above include both the physical and the spiritual world in notation. In all the religious



doctrines, the theory of cause and effect center stages activities that are focused in the circumstances of the Buddhist society as a whole. In this case, if one fails to do something, it is plausible that a drastic event will result. Consequences are a daily occurrence . Universal love also features in all the Buddhism cases. Grounds that facilitate partiality are a forgotten tale. At no point is it conventional that the marginalized and the lowly positioned individuals suffer under the pangs of being disadvantaged at the expense of their low positions. The law of independent origination guides activities that come along Zen and Pure land Buddhism. In this case, it follows that the human body has no destiny apart from the holding that it will undergo rotting and decomposition in the long run. However, great concerns and recognition are on the teachings of what the religions entail and immense focus on the two aspects of Buddhist religion. Both religions do not believe in the existence of spirits, in the context of human life. In this regard, traditional chemistry and other related vices are not an expected and acceptable as a realistic phenomenon. In as far as the school of Buddhism is focused. In both cases, the idea of having a god who does not forgive misdeeds and other social misfits is not observed. Similarly, it is true to conclude that the two perceptions of Buddhism religion do not regard the aspect of preaching as it regards most religions. What is the concern of these religious beliefs is the fact individuals are autonomous beings and should be treated equally in a manner that recognizes and appreciates on autonomous principles. In the opinion of this discussion, Zen and pure land Buddhism assume similarities due to the ground that they assume the same ancestry.

## **Differences between Zen and Pure Land Buddhism**

Zen Buddhism does not thrive along the belief that there exists a land that is purposed by all those who prove that they are religiously abiding citizens. In this case, Pure Land Buddhism best fits the description. Pure land Buddhists are characterized by formation groups, and organizations that facilitate interaction among their members. On the other hand, Zen Buddhists just exist at an angle that can best be understood to hold an autonomy point of view. Zen Buddhism is strongly supported and backed up by the existence of a system of schools that focus and purpose to teach their children and youths the ways of the religion. Zen Buddhism entails punishments as part of its practice. Those who fail to appreciate the teachings are slapped and treated in a manner that is thought largely impact in substantive acknowledgement and development of the religion in a context. Pure land Buddhists recite and place appreciation to Buddha. The case does not show its dominance when it comes to Zen. As opposed to Zen's case, pure land's take on Buddhism recognizes the fact that all people are equal. In stances of superiority and inferiority and other related vices are not evident in the case of pure land.

## **Importance of the similarities as opposed to the differences**

In as far as the above discussion other Zen and pure land Buddhists point of views, it is clear that the similarities hold the following;

Similarities make the religion realistic and sensible. In this case, an autonomous position is assumed by principles that bind Buddhism religion together. There is no reasonable ground to regard schisms that engulf the

Buddhist religion. It is worth noting that, a religion is recognized by the inclusivity and oneness principles that entail it. Different takes by Zen and Pure land represent a division that is not necessary as it regards the development and dominance of the religion. In essence, the differences should be revisited. If we have the interests of placing value in the Buddhists religion, the differences should be narrowed down. In the event, the differences between the religions overwhelm principles that hold it together, may the understanding of what Buddhism involves will be a sunken and defaced reality. In the event an amalgamated point of view is regarded in analyzing Buddhism as a whole, it is plausible that a lot of value and respect will be granted to the religion

Differences between the two types of Buddhism religions may lead to a position that culminates to confusions in case people fail to merge up the two regions. Religion is a very sensitive matter in any society. Therefore, these differences impact heavily to the resultant view on the religion at hand. In a nutshell, it is foreseeable that the side backs that hold religions the like of Christianity as hostages of doctrinal schisms will engulf Buddhism . The value of Buddhism is upon appreciation of similarities that exist between the two classes of Buddhism. Divisions are not desired and in case they are further developed, Buddhism will eventually fail in its desires to transform and change the face of the world.

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