

A look at principal beliefs and ethical teachings religion essay



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Principal beliefs and ethical teachings are essential ideas and inspirations depicted and conveyed in a particular religion. Principal beliefs and ethical teachings define and alter the one's decision making and way of life.

Completely understanding, accepting and following the beliefs and teachings of a particular religion would enable an adherent to reach the optimal and ideal stage of obedience and faithfulness to one's religion.

Buddhism and Judaism are examples of some of the world's most known and followed religions. They both have their own Principal Beliefs and Ethical Teachings which in some cases may be conflicting. Both religions have a large population of followers and adherents and their teachings impact greatly on their day to day choices.

Judaism

The principal beliefs and ethical teachings of Judaism play an immense role in the lives of their adherents; they contribute fundamentally to the way of life of these individuals and alter their decision making skills and lifestyles. Abiding by all the ethical teachings and beliefs of a particular religion will inevitably result in a substantial impact and influence on every aspect of one's life.

Jews believe in the oneness of God and that everything revolves around God as he is all knowing and all powerful. He is the Lord the creator who formed the whole universe and all things in it; he is the one and only God and all other Gods are false gods which means that no other Gods are to be worshiped. As an adherent it is an obligation and a duty to pursue with this teaching as it is a source of aid for individuals who are seeking a connection

with the one true God and aiming to gain insight on the Judaist way of life. The God of Judaism demands, that his adherents do good acts in order to achieve happiness in the afterlife and those who are unsuccessful in doing so will be punished. This teaching therefore greatly impacts on the decision making of the followers. It encourages them to contribute to good deeds and to change their negative way of life. In doing good deeds individuals are lead to an eternal life of peace with the one true God as a reward for their humbleness.

To rebel against God, means refusing his goodness and love. When God first formed nature including human kind, he made everything essentially good. By sinning and violating his good nature, adherents and followers are rejecting God and his teachings. Suffering and pain are the main consequence of sin which is the disobedience of God. According to the Jewish faith, the Sabbath day is the most important day, as God ordained it a holy day. It is a tradition that this day is devoted for rest and spiritual refreshment. This belief and tradition greatly influences adherents and followers, in relation to the engagement in any kind of work on that day. This belief impacts immensely on one's schedule, financial well-being however it enables them to set their priorities and consider what is more important in life.

Another important Principal Belief is Judgment day which is followed by an afterlife. It is believed that at the end of earthly life Judgment day occurs and the world including its inhabitants will be judged by God with righteousness, justice and mercy. It is studied by the Jewish religion that the pure and the

bad actions will be tallied accordingly, and those who have done good acts will receive happiness in the afterlife, while the evil go to Gehinnom which is a place full of suffering and torture. Now that being said means that people's actions on earth greatly impact the way they will be judged and what kind of afterlife they will be given. In relation to the Core Ethical Teachings, the role of the Hebrew prophet is to remind adherents on behalf of God to follow all his teachings, their duties and to remind them of the consequences if they fail to abide by these laws.

Death and the soul is another Belief amongst that adherents must follow and understand. When death occurs it is studied that the body returns to earth where it came from and the soul returns to God who gave it to a person. The body will be resurrected by God and reunited with the soul for the whole person to live again through the samsara which is the cycle of birth.

Free will is another Principal Belief which has an enormous impact on the way of life of adherents. God gave people the genuine freedom to do as they wish, however God knows what people will do before they even attempt to do it. All adherents and followers are regarded to having a free choice in life, however as that being said, they are held accountable for their actions and for its consequences. One's ability to interpret their free will in a positive manner will determine pleasant outcomes. However interpreting free will with negativity will result in harsh and unpleasant outcomes weather it is temporarily on earth or later on in the afterlife. In relation to the Core Ethical Teachings, all Jews under the religious laws are obliged to practice charity. It is studied that special concern must be shown to the unprivileged, the sick, the widow, the orphan and the stranger. As they all relate to each other,
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adherents must practice generosity and charity as they can be counted as positive acts which then makes enlightenment easier to achieve.

In relation to the Core Ethical Teachings, family life is very important in the Judaist faith as the children must honour parents and the role of the parents is to guide their children to good behavior.

All Principal Beliefs and Ethical Teachings closely interrelate to each other as they both classify and identify what a person must do in order to remain a religious person, who follows Gods teachings in fulfilling his duties towards his religion. Principal Beliefs assist and educate adherents about their religion and its teachings these beliefs also enable followers to form a strong and nourished relationship with the one true God.

Buddhism:

The Buddhist religion was formed in India by a man named Siddhartha Gautama who was recognized as the enlightened one. Siddhartha was born around 563 BCE at kapilavastu. He believed and was certain that life meant more than suffering and death and was well satisfied with achieving enlightenment. After his enlightenment, he became known as the Buddha sakyamuni. The word Buddha is a word used to describe a person who has reached enlightenment. Siddhartha Gautama is recognized by his adherents as an awakened teacher who put an end to dukkha, achieved nirvana and escaped the cycle of suffering and rebirth.

Buddhists believe in a cycle of birth which means, birth, life, death and rebirth which is also known as the Samsara. This cycle is repeated until they

reach Nirvana which is enlightenment. In order to reach Nirvana adherents must live accordingly to Buddha's teachings. Karma is a major Principal Belief in Buddhism, referring to ' what goes around comes around'.

One of the Buddha's teachings was meditating, which believed that adherents will become better people and are able to reach enlightenment. This was done by clearing any thoughts that are irrelevant in life and focus only on the important things which really matter. Meditating is another guideline which helps a person gain that extra knowledge that is needed for them to reach enlightenment and form a bonding relationship with the Buddha.

The three jewels are: the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. The Buddha was a teacher who showed his way to deliverance to all his followers. He strongly forbids his adherents from treating him and worshiping him as a God, as he was just a normal human being who successfully achieved enlightenment. The Dharma is known as the teachings of the Buddha. The Buddha taught that suffering in the world has a cause and a cure. It is believed by the Buddhist followers that People suffer due to the ignorance of their true nature, that ignorance causes misunderstanding the life experience, and that misunderstanding is the ultimate cause for suffering. Dharma's teachings also highlight how followers must wake up and discover who they really are and what they have always been. The Sangha is basically the monastic order that the Buddha created and the ones who follow his dharma. All three jewels mainly the Buddha play an immense role on his adherent's way of life, as he strengthens their ideal goal which is to reach enlightenment. The role of the Dharma which is the teachings of the Buddha, <https://assignbuster.com/a-look-at-principal-beliefs-and-ethical-teachings-religion-essay/>

affect how an adherent must act and do in life to be a true believer which fully understands and comprehends the Buddha's teachings. The last jewel is the Sangha; the Sangha's role in relation to adherents is that being part of a community allows a person to understand his values, goals and perspective on life, which in return enables him to receive corrective feedback. Also with The Eightfold path educates and guides adherents on how to live life as true believers and reach enlightenment. The first step is right knowledge, this step addresses where one wants to be in the help of the Core Ethical Teachings of the Vinaya's 227 rules by which monks, nuns and adherents must live by. These rules set out the proper way for a person's behavior and actions.

The marks of existence, Dukkha, Anatta and Anicca. Dukkha is known as suffering and dissatisfaction. Dukkha is experienced by all the Buddhist followers as a feeling of unhappiness and unsatisfactory; the reason for it coming upon people is the fact that adherents have not yet reached the plot of life which is enlightenment. The cause of Dukkha is tanha which is desire and cravings. As an adherent their role is to let go of greed, anger and ignorance which would enable them to put an end to desire and by putting an end to their desire will save them from Dukkha.

Anicca means impermanent which is temporarily. It is believed and studied that the world is impermanent because everything is constantly changing. Anatta is the absence of soul. The Buddha teaches that there is no eternal and everlasting soul reborn after the experiential ego dies with the body.

The four noble truths include: Dukkha, Tanha, Nirvana and the Eightfold paths. The first noble truth is the Dukkha which is known as suffering. Dukkha states that suffering is common and is an experience that everyone goes through during their lifetime. Tanha is the second noble truth which is known as the origin of suffering, and suffering occurs because a person's desires and wants are never fully satisfied. The third noble truth is nirvana, which means that there is an end to suffering and pain and this can be done by letting go of any desires or cravings. The fourth and most important truth guides adherents on how to reach enlightenment. All Buddhist followers must follow the Eightfold path as they educate them on how to live life as a true believer and follower. The four noble truths educate and teach adherents that falling into temptations is the leading cause of sin and suffering. Suffering is bad as it can influence a person internally which can damage his well being, for this reason they must avoid sin and suffering by letting go of any desires or cravings and just live life according to the Buddha's teachings.

life. It is extremely important to have the right knowledge as it can help a person reach enlightenment more easily. Right aspiration is to know that reaching enlightenment is required in life, for this reason a person must be affirmative to everything in life. Right speech is a way to reveal a lot about a person; adherents must avoid speaking falsely, unkindly or with a negative attitude. Engaging in good behavior means, not committing acts like killing, stealing and any other harmful doings. Right livelihood is the fifth step. The Buddha states and recommends against being involved in prostitution or any acts of that sort. Having the right effort can help many followers be further

involved in their religion and beliefs. Right mindfulness is completing something in a positive manner without any negative attitudes. Right meditation is the eighth and last step, this step frees and purifies a person's mind from all distractions and by doing this, the adherent can form an ideal relationship with the one Buddha.

The Eightfold Path and the Core ethical teachings closely interrelate to each other, as they both contain the basic ethics of Buddhism which were taught by the Buddha. In relation to the Buddha's teachings, all adherents must have strong faith; speak nothing but the truth, behave in a positive manner and put effort in their spiritual advancement. The five Precepts and the Eightfold Path also relate to each other, as they both set guidelines for developing the correct conduct and to overcome the influence of the three poisons of greed, anger and ignorance. The Buddhist ethics and devotional practice include, abstaining from harming another human being, to abstain from taking what is not freely given, not be involved in any sexual misconduct, to abstain from false speech and stay away from intoxicants and drugs that can harm the mind.

In conclusion, a specific religion's ethical teachings and principal beliefs play a substantial role in an adherent's life. They dictate the way they should live, act, speak and respond to issues in life. Specific teachings and beliefs disable people from doing things that may be seen as a norm in society and may as a result cause some sort of social alienation, however true believers always sacrifice and offer up their actions on earth to be able to reach an ideal relationship with their god. An adherent is recommended to follow the

teachings and beliefs of its religion as it is the only way that will guarantee him eternal happiness and faith satisfaction.