



Buddhism

The Basics I

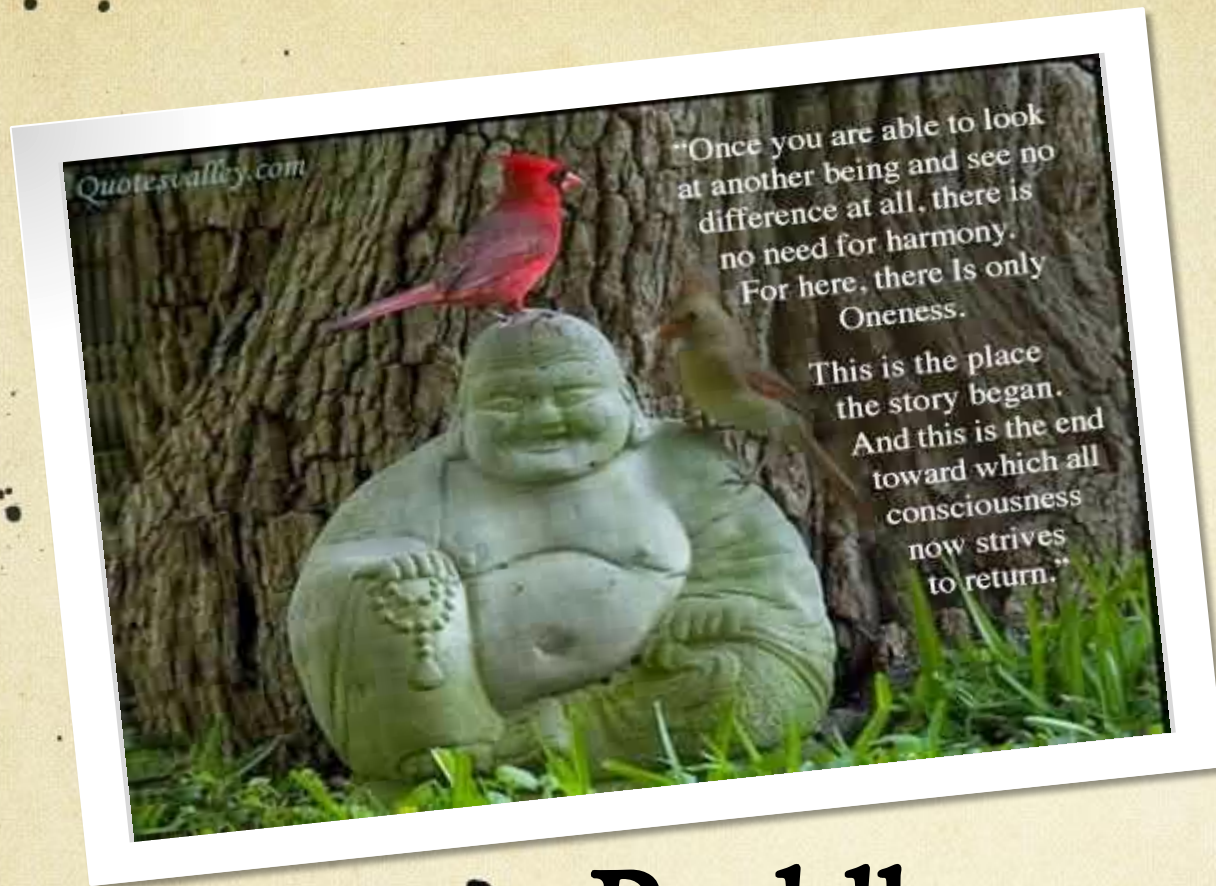
Goals

- Basic Background
- Legend of the Buddha
- Getting a sense of Buddha
- Rejecting the 6 Pillars of Religion
- 7 purposes of Buddhism



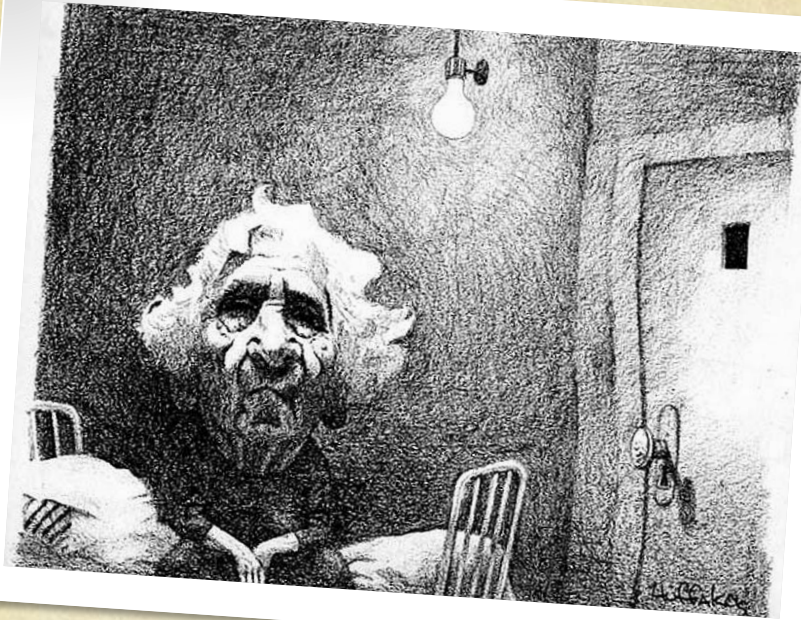
Background

- Around 500 million followers
- Founded around 600-500BC in India
- The philosophy and teachings of Siddhartha Gautama (The Buddha)



Buddha

- Means "Enlightened One"
- Born around 624-563 BC as the son of a king
- Unite India or Enlighten the world?



Impermanence & Disease

- I will grow old one day.
- I will physically decline one day.
- Is there anything more?

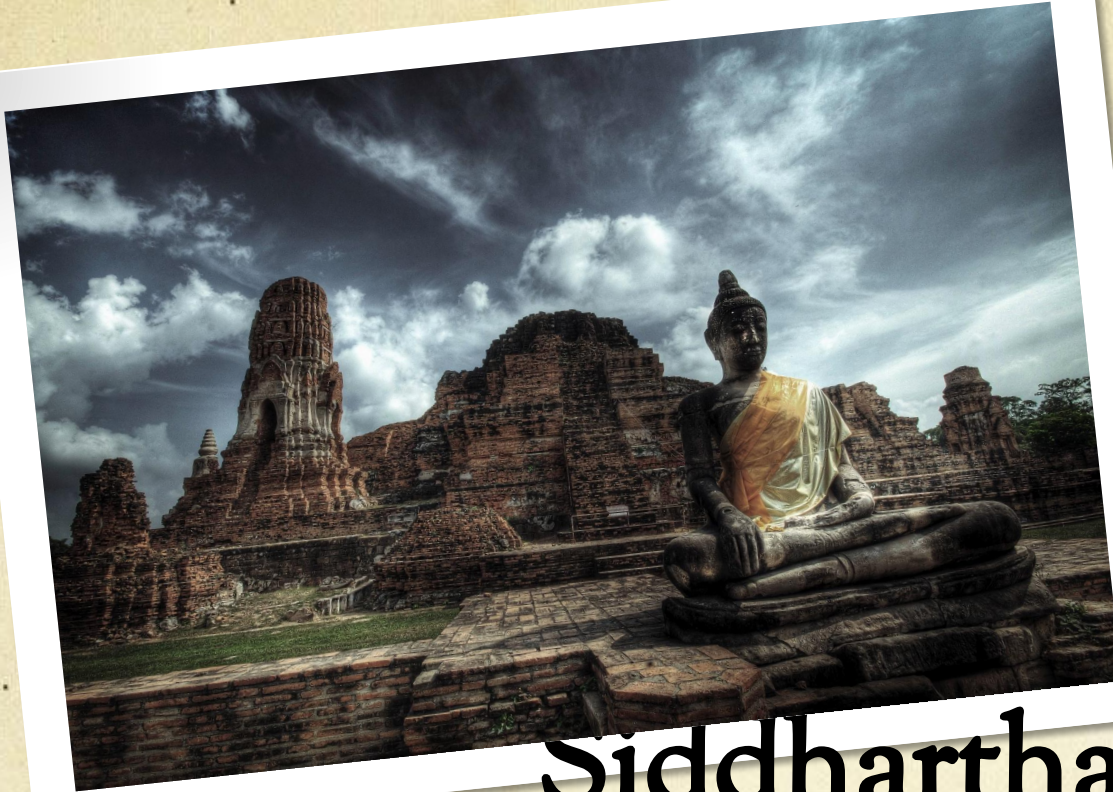




Death and the Monk

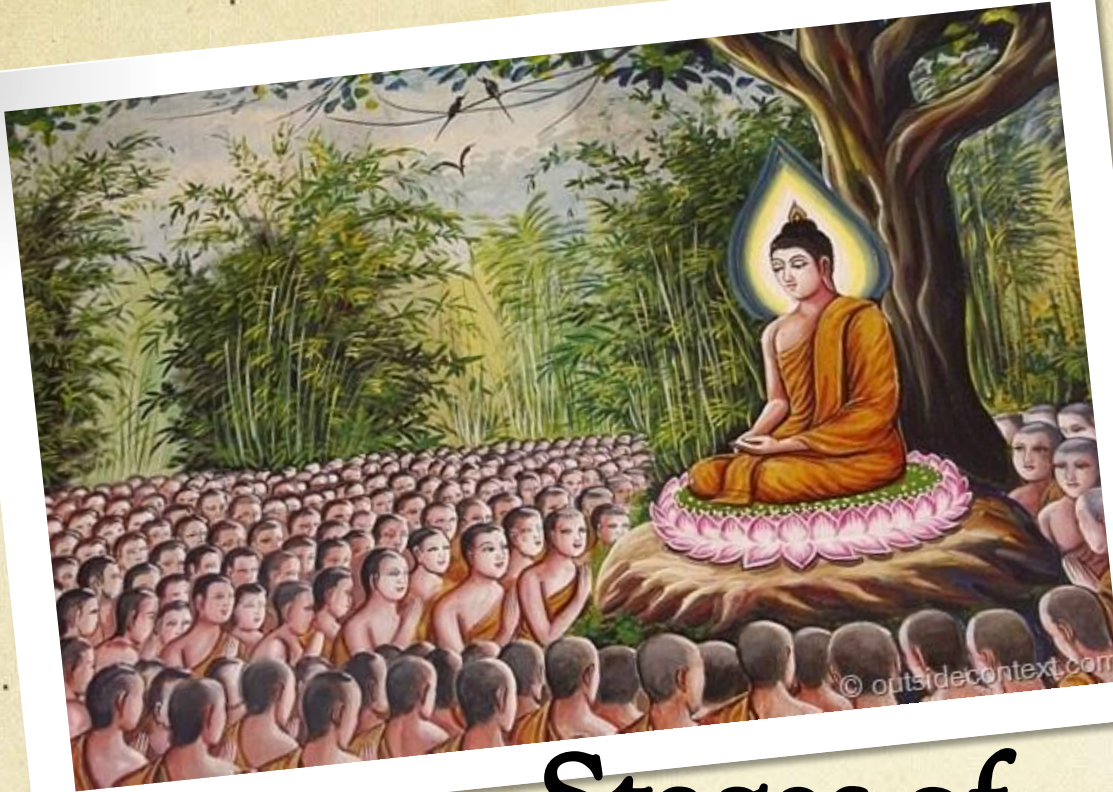
- Everyone faces eventual death.
- There is one who rejects material goods and tries to connect to the spiritual roots.





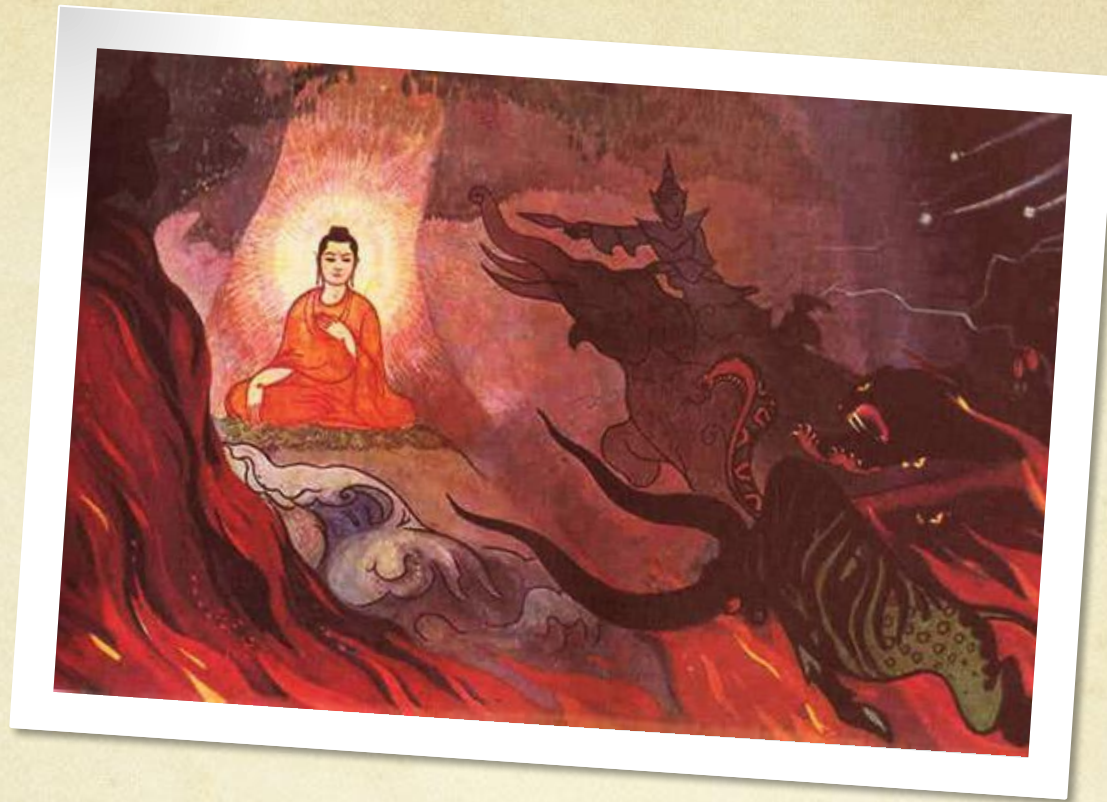
Siddhartha's Response

- The physical world is nothing but suffering and death.
- Is there a plane where suffering doesn't exist?
- Task: To dissolve material pleasures and



Stages of Siddhartha's Journey

- (1) Student: Learns Raj Yoga from Hindu masters.
- (2) Asceticism: Learns the "Middle Way".
- (3) The Bo Tree: Reaches enlightenment



The Final Challenge of Mara

- How can you teach what cannot be taught?
- How can you show what can only be experienced?
- Why deal with ignorant others?
- Buddha's Response: There will be some who understand.



Life as Buddha

- Founded temples, schools of monks and nuns
- Challenged Brahmin society (Priest Class)
- Balance of public/private life
 - 9 months on, 3 months off
 - Daily Meditation
- Buddha's last meal (483BC)

"A tamed mind brings peace and happiness.
As difficult as this is to attain, always inspire
yourself to the practice of taming your mind."

~ The Buddha

When the student is ready,
the teacher will appear.

-Buddhist Proverb



Getting a Sense of Buddha

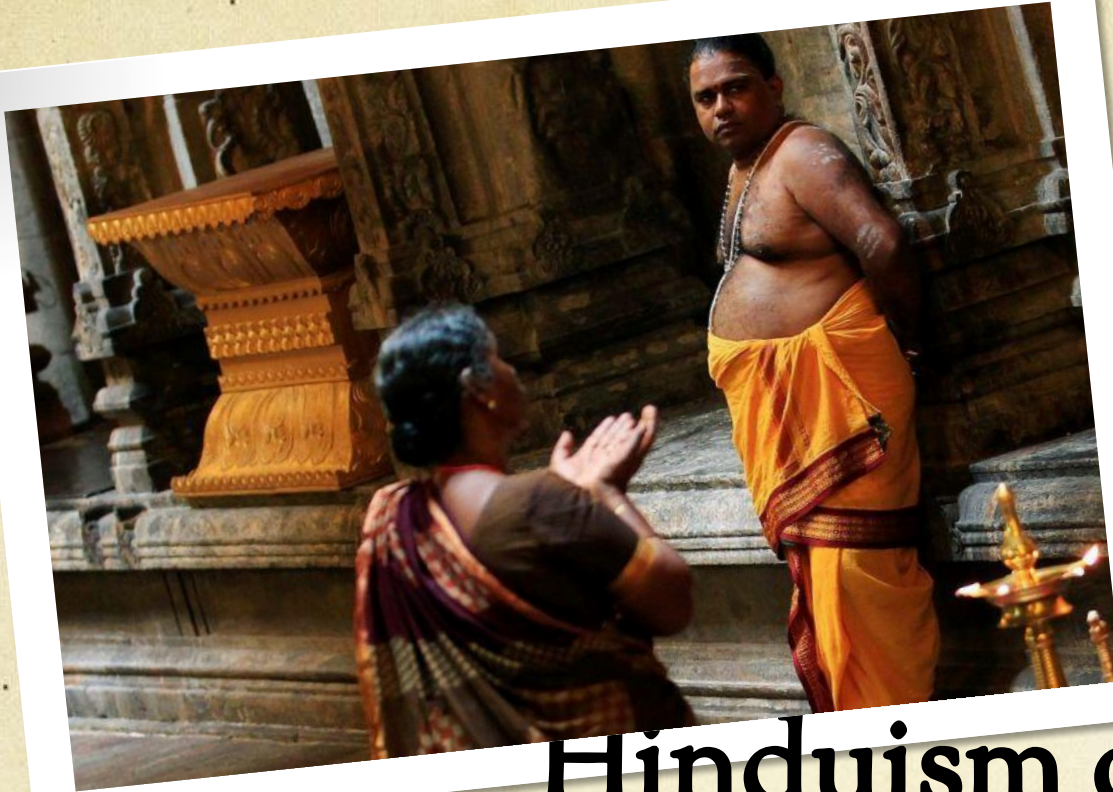
- Cool Head: The Rationalist
- Warm Heart: Compassion and Humility For All.
- Not God: Just here to teach The Path of Enlightenment.

No one saves us but
ourselves. No one can and no
one may. We ourselves must
walk the path. - Buddha



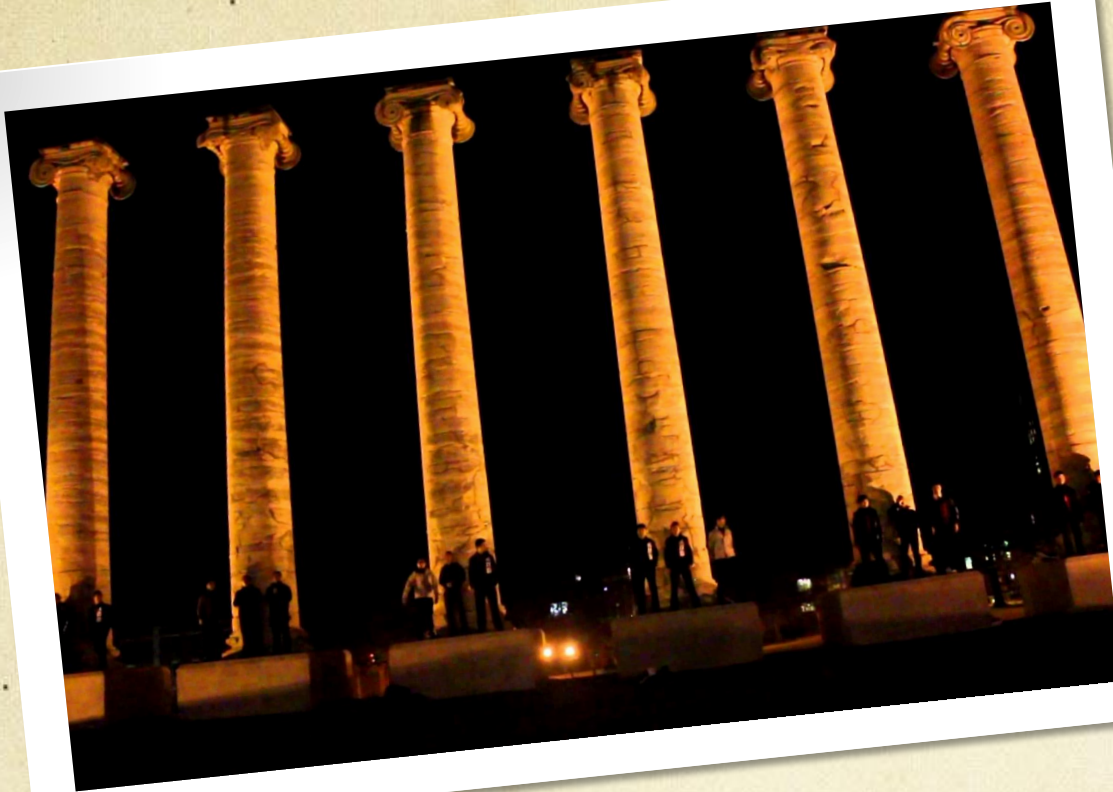
Buddha's Mission

- Humanity has lost its way and needs guidance
- My task: To light the path of enlightenment
- Your task: “Work out your own salvation with diligence”



Hinduism of Buddha's Day

- Brahmins charge high fees to be seen.
- Rituals are practiced without intention.
 - Traditions more important than learning.
- God's grace = Less personal responsibility.
 - Karma = Fatalism.



6 Pillars of Religion

- Authority
- Ritual
- Speculation
- Tradition
- Grace
- Mystery (Supernatural)



Authority

- People follow religious leaders
- Buddha: I do not hold anything back, but be lamps unto yourselves.



Ritual

- All religions need rituals.
- Buddha: No set rituals or doctrine. Just follow the path.



Speculation

- People want answers to big questions.
- Buddha: Resist theorizing on “big questions” of life. This can distract you from the path.



Tradition

- We want to preserve past rituals and beliefs.
- Buddha: If teachings get you lost, find new ones. No use in holding on to the



(Saving) Grace

- We want to feel safe knowing that God will save us when we need it.
- Buddha: One should not rely on others for salvation. We should work out our own salvation with intense self-effort.
- Q: Is there a God in Buddhism?

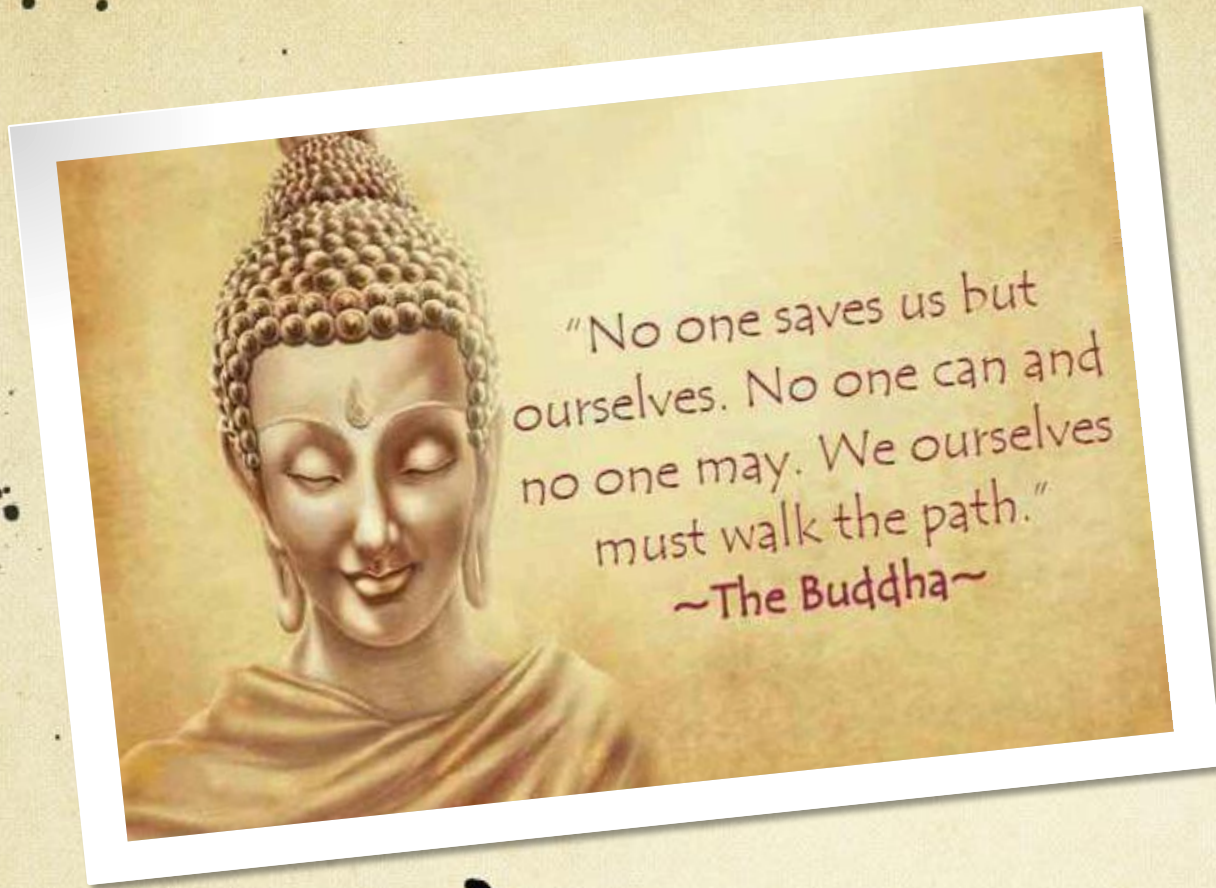




Mystery

- We don't know what happens after death. We must accept mystery.
- Buddha: Don't think of the supernatural as a shortcut to salvation. There is path. We should walk it.





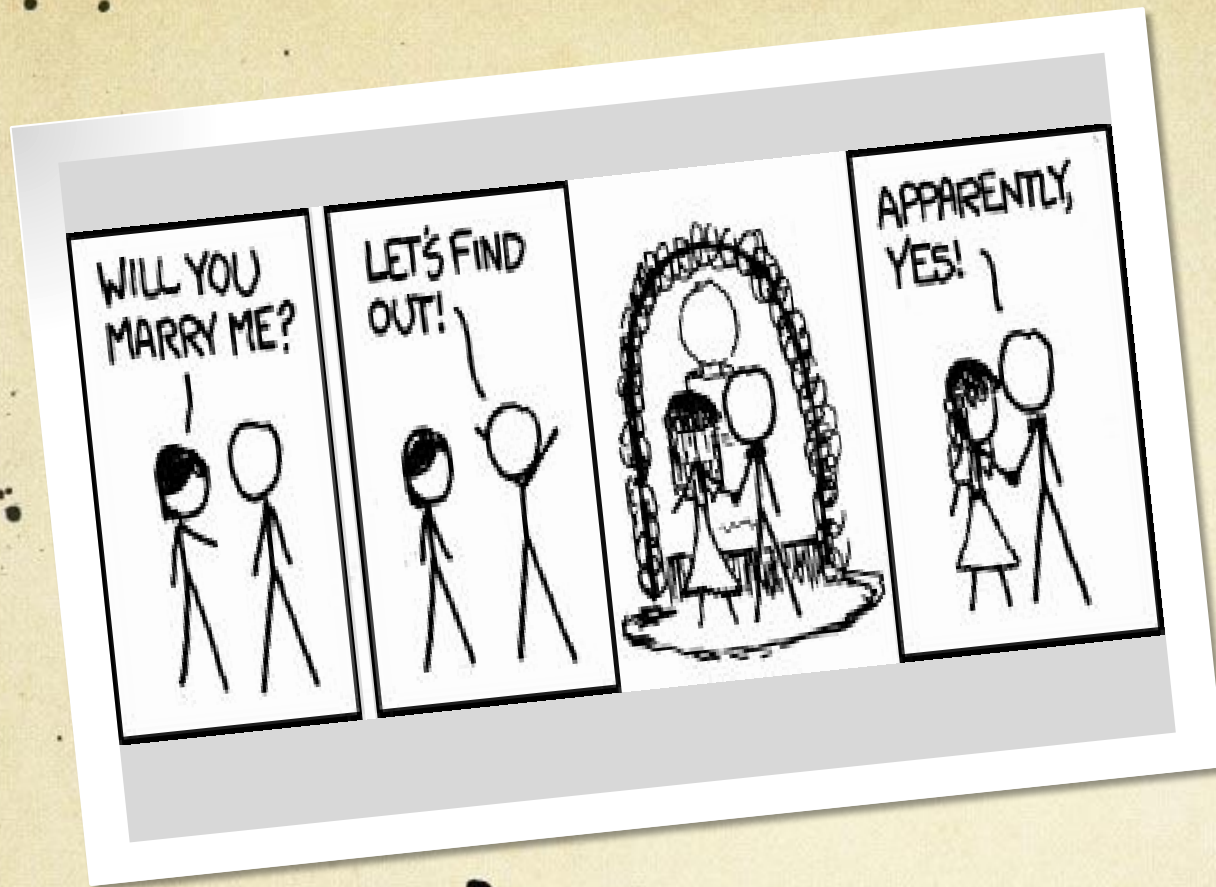
7 Points of Buddhism

- If Buddha rejected the 6 pillars of organized religion, what did he offer instead?



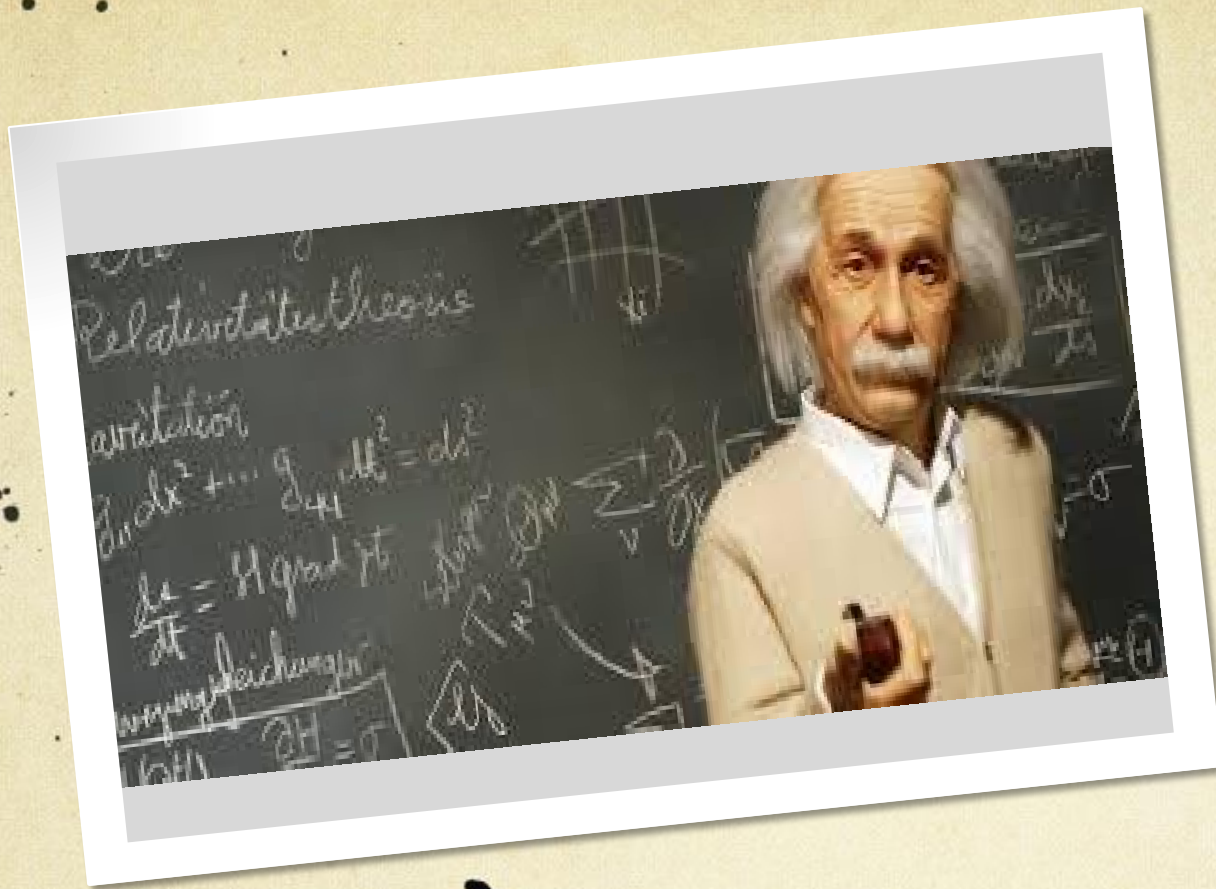
7 Points of Buddhism

- Empirical
- Scientific
- Pragmatic
- Therapeutic
- Psychological, not metaphysical
- Egalitarian (Equal and Fair)
- For Individuals



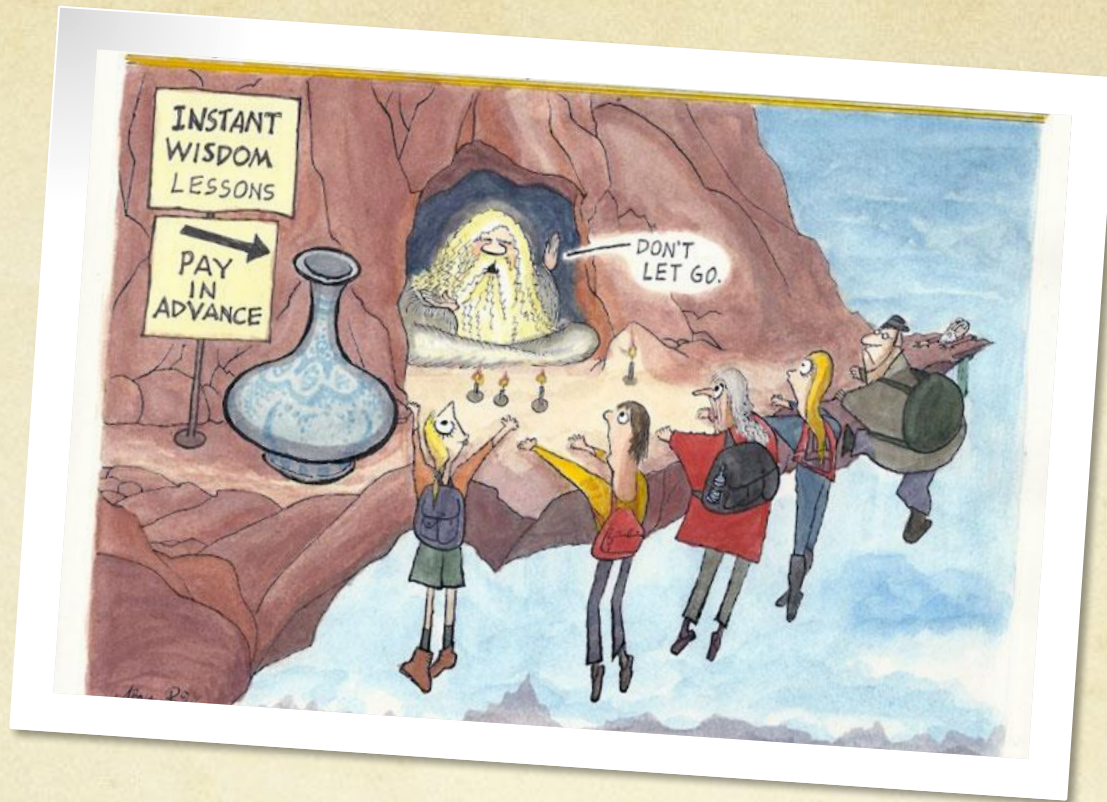
Empirical (World = Truth)

- Test for truth yourself.
- Verify your hypotheses in the world.



Scientific

- Discover the causes and effects of your lived experience.
- The quality of your experience is the final test.



Pragmatic (Practical)

- Everything you do should be focused on enlightenment
- Resist pure speculation and theory.
- Buddha's teachings are like a raft. It takes you to the destination only if you work at it.



Therapeutic

- Focus on suffering = Focusing on the world.
- Focus on ending suffering = Focusing on Nirvana (Enlightenment – for now)



Egalitarian

- Reject inequalities of gender and castes.
- Abilities aren't hereditary.
- Buddha broke his caste:
 - Born a ruler/warrior and temporarily became a Brahmin.



Psychological, not Metaphysical

- No real need to focus on the universe and our place in it.
- Focus on suffering in the world and how to end it.



attachment leads to suffering.
~ Buddha





For Individual Enlightenmen t

- We each have our own obstacles to face:
 - PD? PR?
- So, we should work out our own salvation.



Recap: What are some keys
to Buddhism?





What are some keys to Buddhism?

- Legend of Buddha
 - Motivation
 - Stages of the Journey
 - Bo Tree and Mara's Final Challenge
- Life of Buddha
 - Public Life
 - 9 Months On, 3 Months off
 - Buddha's last meal



What are some keys to Buddhism?

- Cool Head, Warm Heart
- 6 Pillars of Religion
 - What are they? Buddha's Response?
- 7 Points of Buddhism
 - What are they?

End of Buddhism I

