

Who Is A Buddhist?

A Buddhist is being (person, deva, etc.) whose life is dedicated to the teachings of Buddha. This is a life style based on doing good deeds.

Before Buddha understood and elaborated his philosophy, He was a Prince known as Siddhattha Gotama. He grew up experiencing all the pleasures life can offer; He even married and had a son. His life was one many would envy. But soon He became aware that life was more than fun and games; He learned that there was also suffering. He then asked what was the good life? How could a person live this life?

He spent seven years searching for answers to these two questions.. Existing teachers taught Him partial answers, but by Himself alone he came to realize the complete answer. Prince Siddhattha found a psychology that bundled life, pleasure and suffering. At this point He became a Buddha, an Enlightened one.

What does a Buddhist do?

A Buddhist examines very carefully Buddha's conclusions as to what is the ideal life. These conclusions are in his teaching, called the *Dhamma*. This *Dhamma* is a road map for the Buddhists because it shows the route from an ordinary life often full of pain, grief, lamentation, regret, stress, etc. to a life style in which the mind's workings are understood and controlled. In this new life style, pain, grief, lamentation, regret, stress, etc. are diminished. The language of the *Dhamma* (Pali, Chinese, Thai, French, English, etc.) is of no importance—the importance lies in the message. It is a guide for solving life's problems. A Buddhist makes use of this guide.

The *Dhamma* examines the importance of individual thoughts and actions. Buddha emphasized that actions done here and now will have consequences both now and later. His is the law of cause and effect. Simply put, the Buddhist knows a bad act will result in future suffering. A Buddhist, after careful consideration, realizes these results for acts are correct and endeavors to always do wholesome acts.

Buddha was specific as to what is good and what is bad acts. There are countless very good acts, but only five very evil acts. A Buddhist will not intentionally kill any living being; a Buddhist will not take what is not given; a Buddhist will follow accepted sexual mores; a Buddhist will not speak wrongly; a Buddhist avoids intoxicating drugs. A Buddhist at all times tries to avoid these five wrong acts. This way of living ends sufferings and brings about happiness.

A Buddhist then, when faced with challenges, concentrates and chooses actions that do not involve any of the above five negative points. Challenges may be mundane: an ant is walking on your arm, do you smash it or flick it off? Or challenges may be very complicated and solutions take much thinking. The Buddhist knows that the best results come from doing the most wholesome deeds

In summary a Buddhist is a person who does no evil, cultivates the good, and so purifies their mind.

Generously contributed by Brother Harold Johnson.....Sadhu