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Buddhism

Everyone has had a teacher to help guide them through the ropes of life and help that individual learn and grow as a person. One of the most popular teachers is know as Buddha Shakyamuni, otherwise known as the founder of Buddhism, taught in India thousands of years ago about his spiritual awakening. Ever since then, many people became interested in his teachings. Whatever religion or beliefs one may have, it is important to practice and carry on those beliefs. The followers of Buddha continue to carry on his teachings and way of life through meditation and different traditions in the Buddhist community.

The history of Buddhism dates back to about 460-380 BCE. During this time period lived a prince by the name of Shakyamuni, otherwise known as the original Buddha. Shakyamuni lived as a prince of a “minor Indian kingdom in what is now Nepal” (SGI). With the luxurious lifestyle Shakyamuni lived as a prince, it may seem surprising on just how humble he was. Living in the walls of his palace things seemed picture perfect. His father wanted his son to be successful and eventually take over the title of being King of Shakyas. Shakyamuni was provided with the best education. “Buddha was fully educated and mastered the arts and sciences of his day, including even the art of war and other trainings, displaying a sharp intellect and the strength and power of a great physique” (Karmapa). Despite the success of Shakyamuni, he was very humble and was still very aware of sufferings through all peoples lives. Beyond the palace walls is where he “encountered the human experience of aging, sickness and death” (SGI). These encounters left a significant imprint on such a young and sensitive prince. Upon his witness to the outside world, the birth of the four noble truths were on it’s way.

The first teachings ever given by Buddha is known as the “Four Noble Truths.” These truths are broken down as, “the truth of suffering, the truth of the cause of s suffering, the truth of the end of suffering, and the truth of the path that leads to the end of suffering” (PBS). These truths can be explained as the fundamental concept that the Buddhist culture follows. It teaches the lesson on how to deal with sufferings. The main realization that these truths are supposed to reveal is that although there will be hard times throughout ones life, it will always come to an end at some point. Buddha is trying to get across that besides aging, sickness, and death every other suffering is temporary and avoidable. Once Buddhist grasp this concept they become closer to achieving pure happiness or “nirvana” per say.

Another popular teaching given by Buddhist followers is the idea of karma. “Karma refers to good or bad actions a person takes during her lifetime” (PBS). Buddhist believe that good actions such as generosity, meditation, and any other absence of bad actions will lead them to pure happiness in the long run. Bad actions include lying, stealing, greed, etc. is led to believe that the individual will suffer. The point of this is to show that what an individual gives out to the world they will too receive, what goes around comes around. However, in order for the good karma to be effective, one must perform these actions repeatedly with no regret, frequently, and with a strong intentional drive.

Every religion is unique in their own way. Buddhism or any other religion can be classified as a subculture of people grouped together sharing and practicing their own beliefs with one another.