



The World's Great Religions

What billions of people believe, and why it shaped history

Major world religions

Religion	Began	Followers (2020)
Christianity	1st century AD, Jesus of Nazareth	About 2.3 billion
Islam	7th century AD, the Prophet Muhammad	About 2.0 billion
Hinduism	Ancient India, no single founder	About 1.2 billion
Buddhism	~5th century BC, Siddhartha Gautama	About 320 million
Judaism	Ancient Israel, the covenant with Abraham	About 15 million

About 1.9 billion people report no religious affiliation.

Questions every faith addresses



God or the divine

Who or what is ultimate?



Right and wrong

How should we treat others?



Suffering

Why do people suffer, and how do we respond?



Death and beyond

What happens after we die?

Shared and different

Many share

- A version of the Golden Rule
- Prayer or meditation
- Care for the poor

They differ on

- The nature of God
- Sacred texts and prophets
- Salvation, rebirth or enlightenment

Sources: Pew Research Center (2025 report on 2020 data); Encyclopaedia Britannica

Remember

Understanding what others believe, and why, helps explain history and builds respect between neighbors.