

BUDDHISM IS AN EDUCATION, NOT A RELIGION OR A PHILOSOPHY.

Buddhism is *Not* a Religion

According to the Webster's Dictionary, the definition of religion is as follows, "*An organized system of beliefs, rites, and celebrations centered on a supernatural being power; belief pursued with devotion.*" Buddhism is not a religion because: First, the Buddha is not a 'supernatural being power'. The Buddha is simply a person who has reached Complete Understanding of the reality of life and the universe. Life refers to ourselves, and universe refers to our living environment. The Buddha taught that all beings possess the same ability to reach Complete Understanding of themselves and their environment, and relieve themselves from all sufferings to attain utmost happiness. All beings can become Buddhas, and all beings and the Buddha are equal by nature. The Buddha is not a God, but a teacher, who teach us the way to restore Wisdom and Understanding by conquering the greed, hatred, and ignorance which blind us at the present moment. The word 'Buddha' is a Sanskrit word, when translated it means, "Wisdom, Awareness/Understanding". We call the founder of Buddhism Shakyamuni Buddha because He has attained Complete Understanding and Wisdom of life and the universe. Buddhism is His education to us, it is His teaching which shine the way to Buddhahood.

Buddhism is not a religion because: Second, the 'belief' in the Buddha's teachings is not blind belief, or blind faith. Shakyamuni Buddha taught us not to blindly believe what he tells us, he wants us to try the teachings and prove them for ourselves. The Buddha wants us to **know**, not merely believe. The Buddha's teachings flow from his own experience and understanding of the truth, and shows us a path of our own to taste the truth for ourselves. The Buddha uses a perfectly scientific way of showing us reality in its true form.

Third, Buddhism is not a religion because all the 'rites and celebrations' are not centered on a supernatural being, but rather the people attending the assemblies. The ceremonies and celebrations in Buddhism all serve an educational purpose, a reminder of the Buddha's teachings and encouragement to all students who practice it. The point of the ceremonies is to help others awaken from delusion and return to Wisdom and Understanding.

Finally, Buddhism is not a religion because the 'devotion' used in Buddhism is not one based on emotion, but one based on reason. Students of the Buddha are devoted to their practice of maintaining Purity of Mind because this practice brings true happiness. We are devoted to helping both ourselves and others attain Complete Understanding and Wisdom. Our devotion is to become Buddha.