

**Comparative Religion I**  
**World Religions**

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**CONFUCIANISM**



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Confucian Temple in Forbidden City, China

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**CONFUCIANISM**  
**An Introduction**

- A system of ethics or a religion?
- Confucians do not look to the Divine very much
- Goal is to become a Chun Tzu – A superman, a gentleman
- Family is important
- Respect for the aged

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**CONFUCIANISM**  
**An Introduction**

- Tradition is stressed
- “Li” = courtesy - is an important aspect of character
- Emphasis on doing good NOW; not so much concern for the afterlife
- Quite a contrast to Taoism.
- Tremendous impact on the Chinese people

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Confucius (551 – 479 BC) born in Qufu.

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Confucius  
(551 – 479  
BC) in his  
fine robe



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Confucius meet Lao Tze



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**CONFUCIUS**

- Born Ch'iu K'ung (Fu Tze) – anglicized as Confucius – in 551 BC
- Youngest of 12 children
- Mastered 6 major subjects (called “Ju”) in his schooling
- Studied how peaceful and honest government might be
- Loved tradition and showed respect to the aged

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- Married at age 18
- Students came from all over China to study with him. He was remarkable for being able to give the summation of issues
- Became a “one-man” university – had over 3000 students
- Welcomed all – rich or poor – as long as they wanted to learn
- Practiced a balanced way of life and wanted to spread his concepts

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- Visited Lao Tze (47 years older) to try to learn from him – but was not treated well
- An account has been given of his opportunity to institute public reforms
- Became a chief magistrate
- In one year of public service, he had done much good
- Became Justice Minister for an entire province  
Many prisoners were given knowledge and trained

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**Background**

- Remarkably, prisons were emptied and general good prevailed
- He stepped on politicians toes. Told them to stop their corruption
- Politicians plotted to depose him by underhanded means
- Was removed eventually and spent the rest of his life searching for meaningful contributions to society. Was advisor to a Duke 'til his death

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### THEMES IN CONFUCIANISM

1. Li – Courtesy, decorum, good form, harmony
2. Hsiao – Filial piety – devotion of a son or daughter
  - Five relationships: a) Ruler and Subjects b) Father and Son c) Husband and Wife d) Elder and Younger brother e) Friend and Friend
3. Jen – Human heartedness; proper responses to all circumstances in life
4. Shu – the Silver Rule; "Do not do to others what you would not want others to do to you."

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### CONFUCIANISM Themes continued

5. Yi – Duty, obligation, righteousness
6. Chih – Knowledge, learning and practice. Confucius urged students to get rid of: a) A biased mind b) Arbitrary judgments c) Obstinacy d) Ego
7. Cheng Ming – Sincerity – "Say what you mean, mean what you say, do what you say."
8. Chun Tzu – A superior man, incorporating all the previous values

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### CONFUCIANISM General Beliefs

- The basic goodness of human beings
- Family reverence
- Live a balanced way
- Man does not do good because of his environment

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### CONFUCIANISM General Beliefs

- Emphasis on morals and character development
- Stressed the practical side of knowledge
- His sayings collected in THE ANALECTS.
- Many sayings begin with "The Master said..."
- Mainly followed in China and among Chinese communities

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### CONFUCIANISM Conclusion

- In the orient, family and state are very important
- Religious style tends to be more restrained
- A propriety for human and divine relations
- One's methods of integrating in the family and community are important

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### CONFUCIANISM Conclusion

- Today usually Confucian practices are intermixed with some Taoism
- Chinese feel they and their land are inseparable
- Act according to your role in life – fathers, be fathers, etc.
- Confucius was a principled conservative who wanted to bring good order to society

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Conclusion

Confucius left a powerful legacy after his death. For a period of time, the Communist regimes tried to eradicate his influence. Finally, they realized they were battling a lost cause and allowed his influence.

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**CHINESE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT**

Falun Gong Symbol



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Grave and Shrine of Confucius In Qufu.



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**CONFUCIANISM**  
Conclusion

Ellwood leaves us with this quote:  
“Inseparable from ancestorism was the Confucian-based family system, in which loyalty and filial obedience were obligations that gave precedence to no others. Confucianism too underlay the Chinese ‘work ethic,’ the high regard for diligence and productivity for the honor and prosperity of one’s family name.”



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Conclusion

“Without the mental image of the wise and sober sage from the state of Lu, and the words from him and his follower’s pens, China would be very different from what we have known it to be for more than twenty centuries.”



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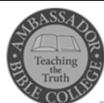
Conclusion

Huston Smith quotes this formula “ If there be righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character. If there be beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home. If there be harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation. If there be order in the nation, there will be peace in the world”



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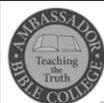
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### CONFUCIANISM What Am I?

1. REVERE THE ANCIENTS, ANCIENT WRITINGS AND TRADITIONS
2. DESIRE TO ACHIEVE THE SUPERIOR MAN
3. THE SILVER RULE
4. NATURAL GOODNESS OF HUMANS
5. EMPHASIS ON FILIAL PIETY

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## Comparative Religion I World Religions

### CONFUCIANISM What Am I?

1. REVERE THE ANCIENTS, ANCIENT WRITINGS AND TRADITIONS  
Leviticus 19:32, Hebrews 12:9 – Show respect for the aged is OK  
II Thes. 3:6 – some traditions are OK, but others not – Mark 7:7-8  
Ephesians 2:20 – OK to base our faith on the past

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### CONFUCIANISM What Am I?

2. DESIRE TO ACHIEVE THE SUPERIOR MAN STATUS  
Matthew 5:48 – Noble to seek perfection  
Hebrews 2:7 – Man now, is lower in status  
Colossians 3:9 – To put off the old and put on the new  
Phil 3:20-21 – God will have to grant us “superior person status”

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### CONFUCIANISM What Am I? (continued)

3. THE SILVER RULE  
Leviticus 19:18 – In Moses day – it was known  
Matthew 7:12 – Golden Rule  
James 2:8 – A royal law

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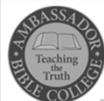
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### CONFUCIANISM What Am I? (continued)

4. NATURAL GOODNESS OF HUMANS  
Matthew 15:18-20 – What comes out of mankind’s hearts  
Jeremiah 17:9 – How the heart is  
Matthew 19:17 – Only One is “good”  
Galatians 5:17-19 – Fruits of the flesh

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### CONFUCIANISM What Am I? (Continued)

5. EMPHASIS ON FILIAL PIETY  
Exodus 20:12 – One of the TEN  
Ephesians 6:1-2 – Obedience and respect  
Proverbs 23:22 – Respect and obedience  
Mark 7:10-11 – Don’t say “corban” when your family has needs  
Luke 14:26 – One area as a contradiction to piety

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### CONFUCIANISM ESSAY QUESTION

“THE MASTER SAID, IN THE PRESENCE OF A GOOD MAN THINK ALL THE TIME HOW YOU MAY LEARN TO EQUAL HIM. IN THE PRESENCE OF A BAD MAN, TURN YOUR GAZE WITHIN.”

WHAT MEANINGS ARE IN THIS SAYING FROM CONFUCIUS THAT WE MAY FOLLOW?

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### CONFUCIANISM



THE END

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