

# Christianity vs. Everybody

## Christianity vs. Confucianism

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### ORIGIN OF CONFUCIANISM

1. During the Chou Dynasty (1122-897 BC), the ancient Chinese people faced the challenge of uniting and harmonizing the various tribes that populated the plains along the Yellow River through a concept called the **Ritual-Music Culture**. This culture was strongly advocated by the well-educated prime minister of the State of Lu named **Confucius**. However by the time of Confucius (551-479 BC), this culture collapsed and Confucius asked himself: does the failure to reconstruct a harmonious cultural order means that the concepts of virtue or goodness are not eternal and transcendent? Confucius found that **moral responsibility** still existed in the consciousness of the individual. He identified this as **Jen**; the term referring to the **ideal goodness** or **good nature** that resides within each individual and is the **source from which all virtues flow**.
2. Confucianism is not a **formal religion** in the conventional sense; it is a belief system that forms the values that are implicit to most Asian people totaling over **one billion** people.

### BELIEFS/PRACTICES OF CONFUCIANISM

1. God is not a personal Being but He is an **Ultimate Reality** that is spoken of in terms of **Tien**, or **heaven**. Heaven, from the Confucianist perspective, is a **creative moral power** and an impersonal principle whom Confucius declared to be **silent**.
2. The central concern of Confucianism is to **affirm humanity's inherent goodness** and look for ways to actualize it through:
  - A) **education**
  - B) **self-reflection**
  - C) **self-cultivation**
  - D) behaving according to the **established norms of culture**

1. Confucianists subscribe to what is called the **mandate from Heaven**; it is the label given to the natural law or moral order of things within nature. If there is to be harmony within a culture, humanity must strive to abide by this moral order.

## **CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO CONFUCIANISM**

1. The Confucianist perspective on God appears to somewhat evolve from being an 'ultimate reality' to a 'silent place' called Heaven that is only there to reinforce our creativity and morality in the earth. **Christianity, however, renders God as a personal Being Who speaks to us by His Word and Holy Spirit while maintaining Heaven as His abode and our eternal residence. What purpose is served in having a god with whom we can not speak to nor hear from?** [Gen 1/His Word/Jn 1:1, 14:26, 16:7-14/Hebrews 1:1-3// Peter 1:19-21]
  
1. Humanity's inherent goodness is actualized through education, self-reflection, self-cultivation, and compliance with established cultural norms. **First, these methods suggests that we are our own solution and subsequently this yields the uselessness of God. Second, to date, there are at least 24,000 cultures known to humankind. This implies that cultures change and vary. Hence complying to established cultural norms would further contribute to the perpetual instability of humanity. Christianity, on the other hand, purports standards and truths that are applicable to every generation because they stem from He is an absolute, unchanging truth in Himself.** [Ps 100:5/Jn 1:14, 14:6, 16:13/Eph 1:7-14/Hebrews 13:8]
  
1. Confucianism contends that humanity is inherently good. Well Christianity does not altogether deny that declaration; in that Christianity teaches that we are *originally* good. **However the reality is that humanity is not only good; we are also bad. While Christianity affirms our original goodness, it also offers a solution to our badness because it is realistic about our badness.**