

The Christian Arsenal

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Christianity, Cults and World Religion Definitions

The following choices below will give you a basic outline of some of the key doctrines of Christianity and what other cults and sects believe about them. If you are interested in a cult or religion that is not listed below, please [email us](#).

Select Religion from list:

Taoism

[Founder/Leader](#) | [Foundational Documents](#) | [God is...](#) | [Jesus is...](#) | [The Holy Spirit is...](#)
[Method of Salvation](#) | [Death and Beyond](#) | [Other Beliefs](#)

Religion:	Taoism
Category:	World Religion
All quotes attributed as In their own words: are from the Taoist web site wrt.org .	
Founder/Leader:	
The founder of Taoism is believed by many to be Lao-Tse (604-531 BC), a contemporary of Confucius. He was searching for a way that would avoid the constant feudal warfare and other conflicts that disrupted society during his lifetime. The result was his book: <i>Tao-te-Ching (or the Daodejing)</i> . Others believe that he is a mythical character.	
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Foundational Documents:	
<i>Tao-te-Ching</i> ("The Way of Power," or "The Book of the Way") is believed to have been written by Lao-Tse. It describes the nature of life, the way to peace and how a ruler should lead his life and <i>Chuang-tzu</i> (named after its author) contains additional teachings Each period of Chinese history had its own Canon. The very first to collect Taoist scriptures in a single corpus, following the example of the Buddhist Canon, was Liu Xiuqing (406-477 AD), but the current one was printed no earlier than 1445, under the Ming dynasty. The latter contains 1487 texts, nowadays usually divided into 30 to 60 volumes.	
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God is...	
(It is interesting to note that before the time of Confucius and of Lao-Tse that God was spoken of as a personal being known as Ti or Shang-ti . The Chinese knew the concept of a personal God over 2500 years ago. The religious teachers and philosophers have redefined God as an unknowable and indefinable force.)	
Taoists see God as too big to be represented by one manifestation or one definition. The Tao is the first-cause of the universe. It is a force that flows through all life. The Dao (Tao -- way, or path) as the origin of all creation and the force is unknowable in its essence but observable in its manifestations and lies behind the workings and changes of the natural world. The concept of a personal God is a foreign concept to a Taoist.	
To Taoists, nature is synonymous with the Tao — which makes up the entire universe; it is elusive, hidden, and mysterious. The Tao, in turn, is divided into two forces called <i>yin</i> and <i>yang</i> . <i>Yin</i> and <i>yang</i> represent the negative and positive aspects of the universe, each flowing into one another in a continuous cycle of change. Yin is characterized as the negative force of darkness,	

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coldness, and emptiness. Yang stands for the positive energy that produces light, warmth, and fullness. These alternating forces are indestructible and inexhaustible. They contradict as well as complement each other.

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Jesus is...

Jesus is not part of this belief system.

In their own words: "Western Reform Taoism is non-theistic and non-messianic. In other words, we do not believe in any type of personified god, nor do we believe in a "messiah" (an intermediary, messenger from the Tao, etc.) between the Tao and ourselves. We believe the Tao is all, and that all life and all things are part of the Tao."

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The Holy Spirit is...

The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief system.

In their own words: "We believe in the formless and eternal Tao, and we recognize all personified deities as being mere human constructs. We reject hatred, intolerance, and unnecessary violence, and embrace harmony, love and learning, as we are taught by Nature. We place our trust and our lives in the Tao, that we may live in peace and balance with the Universe, both in this mortal life and beyond."

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Method of Salvation:

Since Taoists believe that all problems are caused one not being aligned with the Tao, salvation comes through one's own efforts in aligning them self with the Tao through "wu-wei" which is "purposeful inactivity" in order to go with the flow of the Tao.

In their own words: "The yin-yang model teaches that all complimentary forces flow into each other. This is but the first step, though, to enlightenment on the Nature of the Way. The spiritual goal of a Taoist is to reach a level of enlightenment at which he or she can perceive complimentary forces as not simply flowing into each other, but in fact as one unified system. At a certain level of spiritual enlightenment, the distinction between complimentary forces falls away, and we are left with the harmony and unity of opposites, the true Way."

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Death and Beyond...

The person's individual consciousness ceases to exist, however the life force of that individual is recycled into another. Being remembered by your family and others is what makes one immortal.

In their own words: "Taoists believe that mortal life is just one of the infinite number of experiences we will have throughout our journey along the Path. It is an opportunity to get our feet wet in a very hands-on way, as we learn to feel love, hate, pain, and pleasure; as we come to understand the world and the Universe around us. And then, when the body can no longer function, it dies, and the soul is free. We must learn to overcome the human instinct to view mortal death as the "ultimate end". So, will we be reunited with our loved ones after mortal death? There is no way to know. We rest comfortably knowing, however, that what happens to our souls after the same laws of the Universe, which govern our mortal life, determine mortal death. Therefore, if we learn to live in harmony with the Tao during our mortal lives, we will be in harmony with the Tao after our mortal death. If we can manage that, then everything else will fall into place; that is Nature's way."

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Other Beliefs:

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The priesthood views the many gods as manifestations of the one Dao, "which could not be represented as an image or a particular thing." The concept of a personified deity is foreign to them, as is the concept of the creation of the universe. Thus, they do not pray as Christians do; there is no God to hear the prayers or to act upon them. They seek answers to life's problems through inner meditation and outer observation.

In contrast with the beliefs and practices of the priesthood, most of the laity have "believed that spirits pervaded nature...The gods in heaven acted like and were treated like the officials in the world of men; worshipping the gods was a kind of rehearsal of attitudes toward secular authorities. On the other hand, the demons and ghosts of hell acted like and were treated like the bullies, outlaws, and threatening strangers in the real world; they were bribed by the people and were ritually arrested by the martial forces of the spirit officials.

Taoists are also involved in Tai-Chi for health and spiritual reasons.

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