

CultureBound  
MAGAZINE

## Culture in Religion

What religions exist around the world?  
How do people view their own religion?

DECEMBER 2021

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 4 **Culture vs. Religion**  
Culture and religion are vital parts of humanity. We explore if they are more alike or different.
- 8 **The Culture of Christianity**  
There are many different expressions of the Christian religion. Do you identify with any of these?
- 12 **The Top Religions of the World**  
Look at this summary of the top 8 religions in the world. How well do their flags represent the beliefs?
- 14 **CultureBound + You**  
CultureBound teaching is based on Christianity. Learn how you can join our classes and learn more!

“

Culture and religion each serve an incredibly important role in humanity. Consider both.



# Culture vs. Religion

## Are they more similar or different?

Culture and religion are arguably the foundations of humanity. Culture can be defined as the life patterns of a group of people. Religion, on the other hand, is a system of faith that forms beliefs.

At first glance, culture and religion seem very similar. They are both significant in how each person chooses to live. They incorporate different actions and patterns. They influence thoughts and structure.

These are broad similarities, however. When you analyze the specifics of culture and religion, you will find that they are each distinct in purpose and practice. Let's take a look at these distinctions.

First, culture is the broader topic. Culture includes art, habits, clothing, colors, timeframes, celebrations, and so much more. Culture also includes religion. Each culture has a majority religion or religious practices that are part of daily life. Cultural celebrations often include religious themes and memorials. Religion is one of the many facets that makes up the cultural umbrella.

Additionally, culture is innate. Culture is taught from birth. Your family and neighbors teach you what is appropriate and inappropriate according to your culture as you grow. Religion, however, is more of a choice. Some families may teach religion from birth, but as a person grows they have to choose how important it is to them. It is much easier to lose religion than to lose engrained cultural habits.

Religion shapes a person's beliefs about life. Most religions involve belief in God or a creator. Religions give rules and doctrines concerning morality. Oppositely, culture focuses on people. Culture isn't primarily about philosophical issues like the meaning of life. It is more concerned with

how to live day-to-day in a way that others around you can understand. Since culture encompasses religion, there are cultural roots and beliefs. The difference is that religion is solely focused on these beliefs whereas they are only one element of culture.

Cultures are much more fluid than religions. Cultural habits change frequently. American culture in 2021 looks very different from American culture in 1920. Some of the foundations stay the same, but many of the expressions of culture have changed. Religions, on the other hand, don't change. There may be minor updates to some practices, but doctrines remain steady. This is because religions are based on what each group believes is truth, and truth doesn't change.

As you can see, culture and religion each serve an incredibly important role in humanity. If either were to cease to exist, it would cause chaos and confusion. When reaching out to other cultures, it is important to consider culture AND religion in your efforts to build relationships.



# The Culture of Christianity

If you are part of the ministry of CultureBound, you know our religious foundation is Christianity. Christianity is the most followed religion in the world. There are many different Christian traditions and patterns all over the world.

The culture of Christianity varies from place to place, from church to church, and from person to person. Let's take a look at different aspects of the Christian religion and the culture around them.





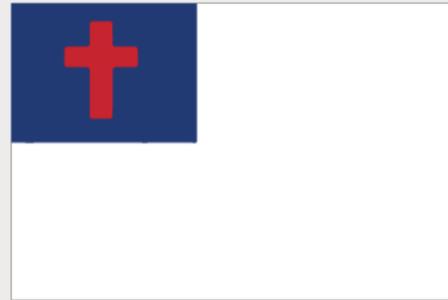
Worship is a huge part of the Christian religion. We believe that we should thank and praise our savior, Jesus Christ. The most common form of worship is through music. The culture of Christian worship has certainly changed over time. In the past, the majority of worship songs were hymns. These meaningful ballads are still well-known in churches all over the world. As the popularity of upbeat music has progressed, Christian worship has adapted to this trend. In a typical American Christian church, you will probably find a larger band singing modern worship songs.

Church itself is another element of Christian culture. In the past, churches were standalone buildings with smaller congregations. As Christianity has spread, churches have taken new forms. Some churches have started in schools or shopping centers. The architecture of church buildings has changed. Some congregations number in the thousands or tens of thousands, while other networks of house churches have spread through many parts of the world. The focus has shifted from the building to the congregation that gathers in the building.

There are many other elements of Christian culture. Church attire has changed significantly over time. In the past, church clothing was called “Sunday best,” or suits and dresses. Now you will probably see most churchgoers in standard jeans or khakis. The reach of pastors has changed as well. With the invention of social media, some pastors have congregations all over the world. This simply was not possible in days gone by. As you think about the culture of Christianity, appreciate the culture of the church you attend and thank God for the opportunity to worship him in a variety of ways.

# The Top Religions of the World

Many people know that Christianity is the most followed religion worldwide, but do you know others? Take a look at the top eight religions in the world, and their flags. <https://www.infoplease.com/culture-entertainment/religion/top-ten-organized-religions-world>



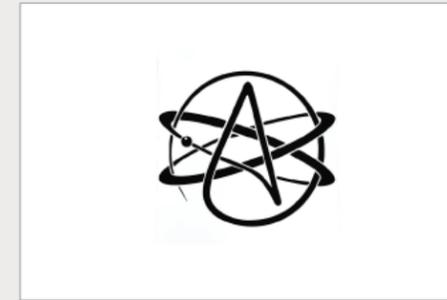
## #1 - CHRISTIANITY

- ~ 2.38 billion followers worldwide in 2020
- ~ Denominations including Catholicism, Protestantism, and more
- ~ Prominent countries include the US, Brazil, and Mexico



## #2 - ISLAM

- ~ 1.91 billion followers worldwide in 2020
- ~ The most common denominations include Sunni and Shi'a.
- ~ Prominent countries include Afghanistan, Morocco, or Pakistan



## #3 - UNAFFILIATED

- ~ 1.19 billion followers worldwide in 2020
- ~ Includes atheism and agnosticism, do not practice organized religion
- ~ Prominent countries include China, Denmark, and France



## #4 - HINDUISM

- ~ 1.16 billion followers worldwide in 2020
- ~ Main denominations include Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism, and Smartism
- ~ Prominent countries include India, Malaysia, and the UK



## #5 - BUDDHISM

- ~ 507 million followers worldwide in 2020
- ~ Beliefs include reincarnation, which says that death is not the end of life
- ~ Prominent countries include Thailand, Cambodia, and Myanmar



## #6 - FOLK RELIGIONS

- ~ 430 million followers worldwide in 2020
- ~ Also known as ethnic religions, these are variations of well-known religions
- ~ Prominent countries include Haiti, Sudan, and Cameroon



## #7 - OTHER RELIGIONS

- ~ 61 million followers worldwide in 2020
- ~ Denominations include Confucianism or Taoism
- ~ Prominent countries include China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan



## #8 - JUDAISM

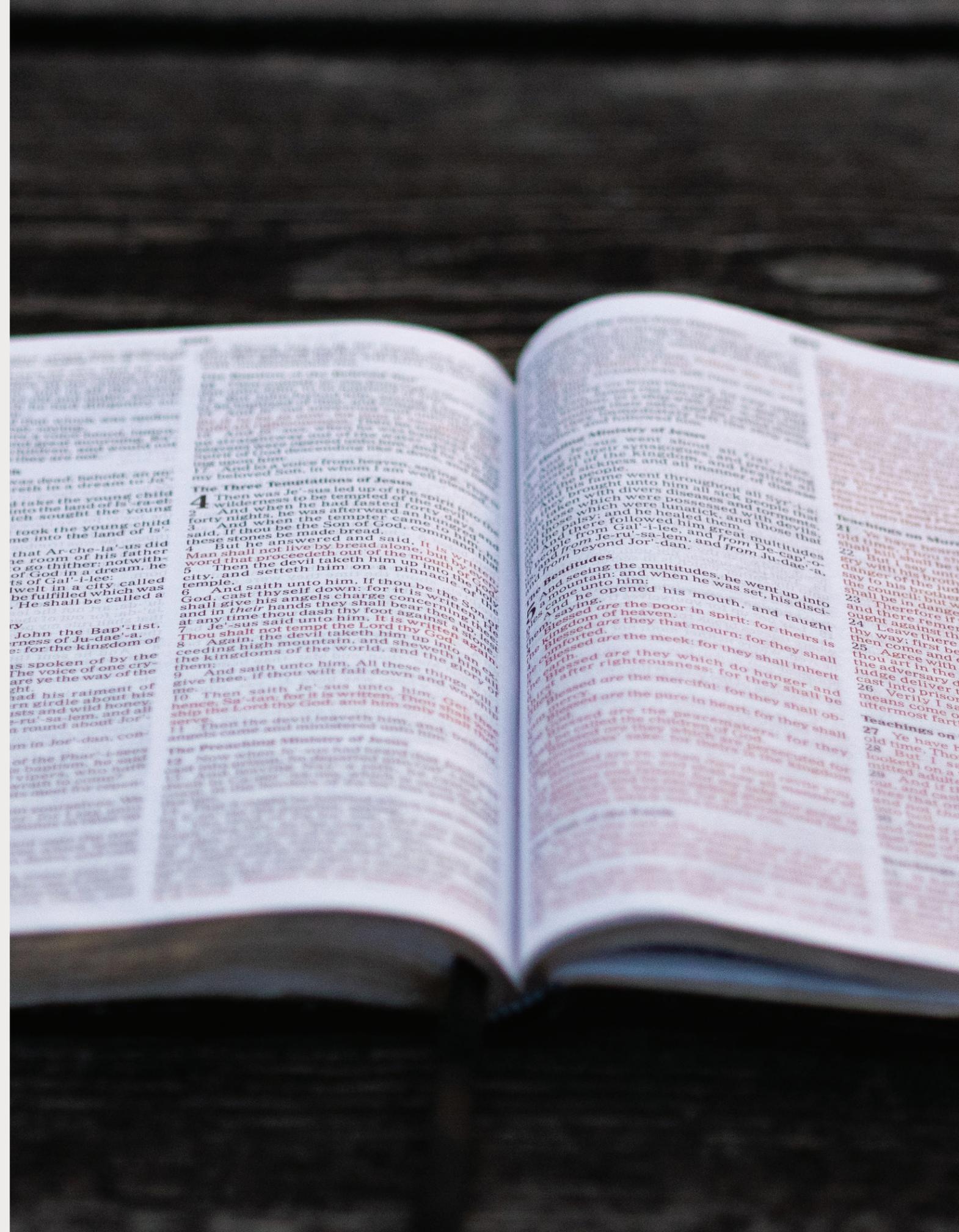
- ~ 14.6 million followers worldwide in 2020
- ~ Denominations include Haredi, Dati, Masorti, and Hiloni
- ~ Prominent countries include Israel, the US, and France

CultureBound  
+  
YOU

Christianity is our foundation.

At CultureBound, we believe in the God of Christianity. We believe that God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all take part in human life in the present and for all eternity. These are just the basics. CultureBound is structured on the transformational relationship that God offers to people, and on the relationships that he calls us to have as we live out the truths of the Bible.

Our teaching is meant for those who are looking to share the Gospel with people of different cultures. This could mean staying in your home country and reaching out to neighbors or moving to a new place.





Our core courses are CultureCourse and LanguageCourse. In CultureCourse, we share with you how to build relationships with those from a different culture. Starting with relationship rather than teaching allows you to reach people on a deeper level. Many people are opposed to sharing their life with someone from a new culture. If you meet them where they are, they will be much more receptive.

In LanguageCourse, we teach you how to learn a language. It is difficult to share the message of Jesus when you cannot communicate. We give you the tools necessary for success in learning a language. Most importantly, it is helpful to find someone who can help you as you learn.

Additionally, we offer other courses and training. Our ChurchCourse focuses on reaching those in your neighborhood. Similar to CultureCourse, we give you practical steps for building bridges. In our CAST training, we have created a shorter course designed for those going on short-term mission trips.

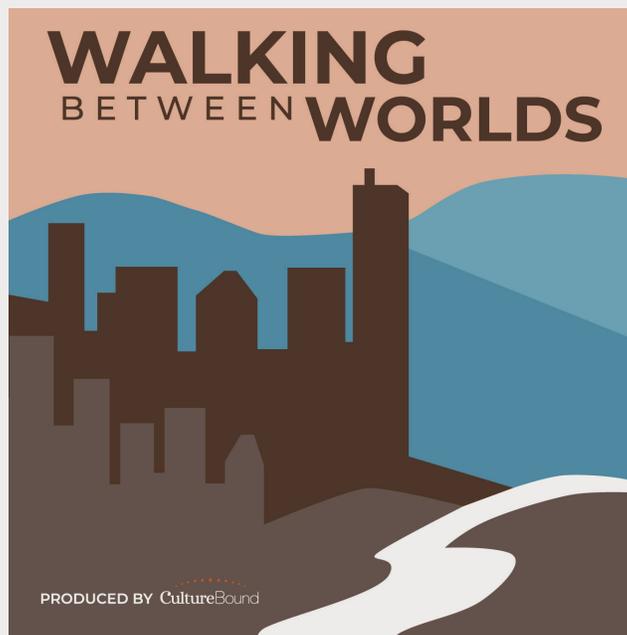
All of our teaching points to our creator God. We believe that we should share his good news with the world and that is what we are working towards. We hope you can join us in one of our courses in 2022!

# Stay Connected



@CultureBoundOrg

**Subscribe and Listen to our Podcast!**



  
**CultureBound**

[www.culturebound.org](http://www.culturebound.org)

 PO Box 16716, Portland, OR 97292 USA  503.235.3818  [Info@CultureBound.org](mailto:Info@CultureBound.org)

**For Donations**

 PO Box 1138, Monument, CO 80132 USA  719.488.4121

 [CultureBoundDonorServices@tenfoldbpo.org](mailto:CultureBoundDonorServices@tenfoldbpo.org)