



# The Major World Religions

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II Kings 17:24-41

John Long, FBC BA Nov 30, 2008



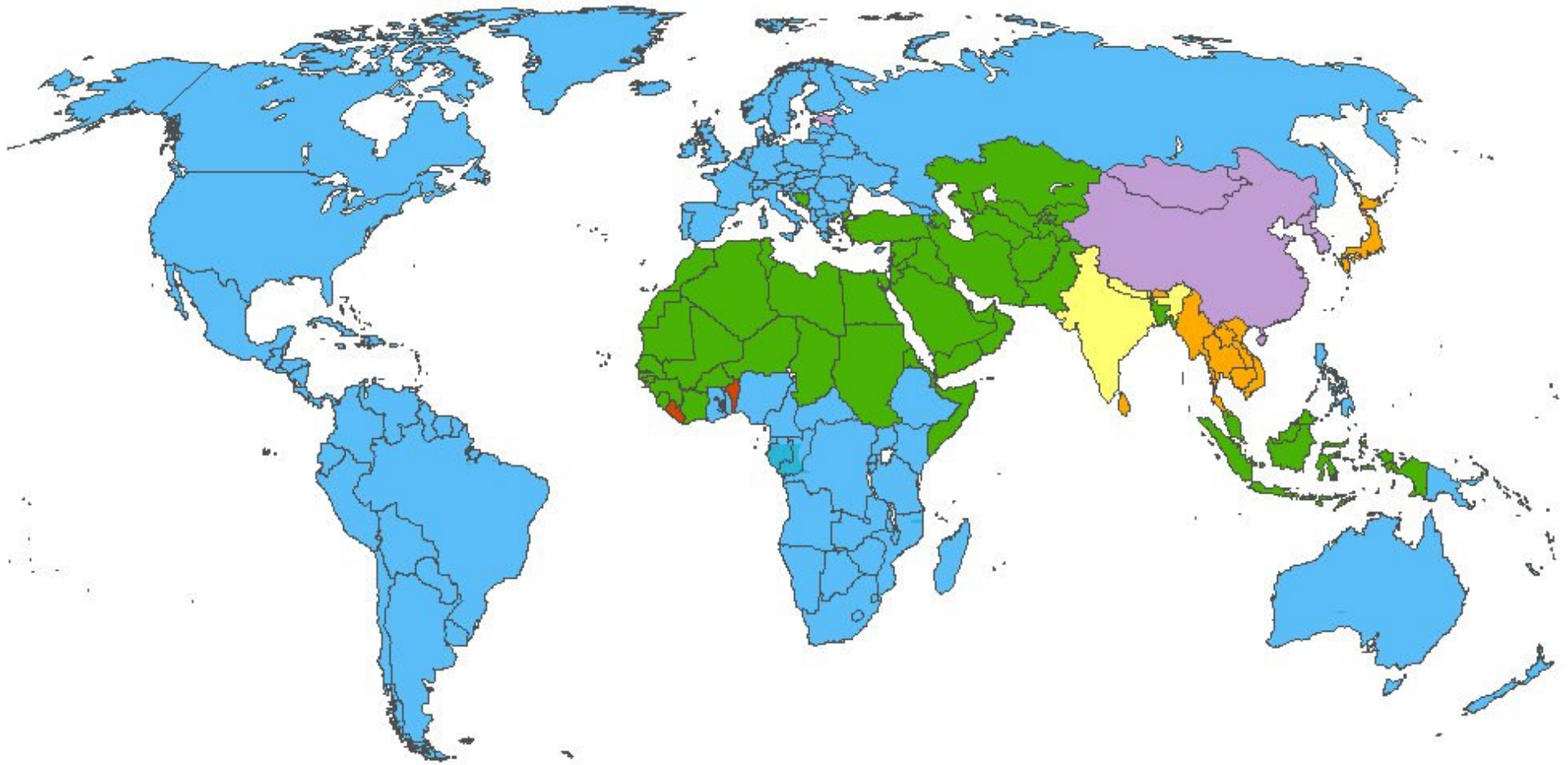
# Objectives:



- Comparison and contrast the tenets of the major world religions (i.e., Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Non-Religious\*).
- Understanding the different beliefs and practices of each to help effectively share the gospel with those who follow the other beliefs than Christianity.

*\*A separate study of Chinese traditional religions, such as **Confucianism & Taoism***

# Majority Religion



Christian

Islam

Hindu

Buddhist

Non-religious

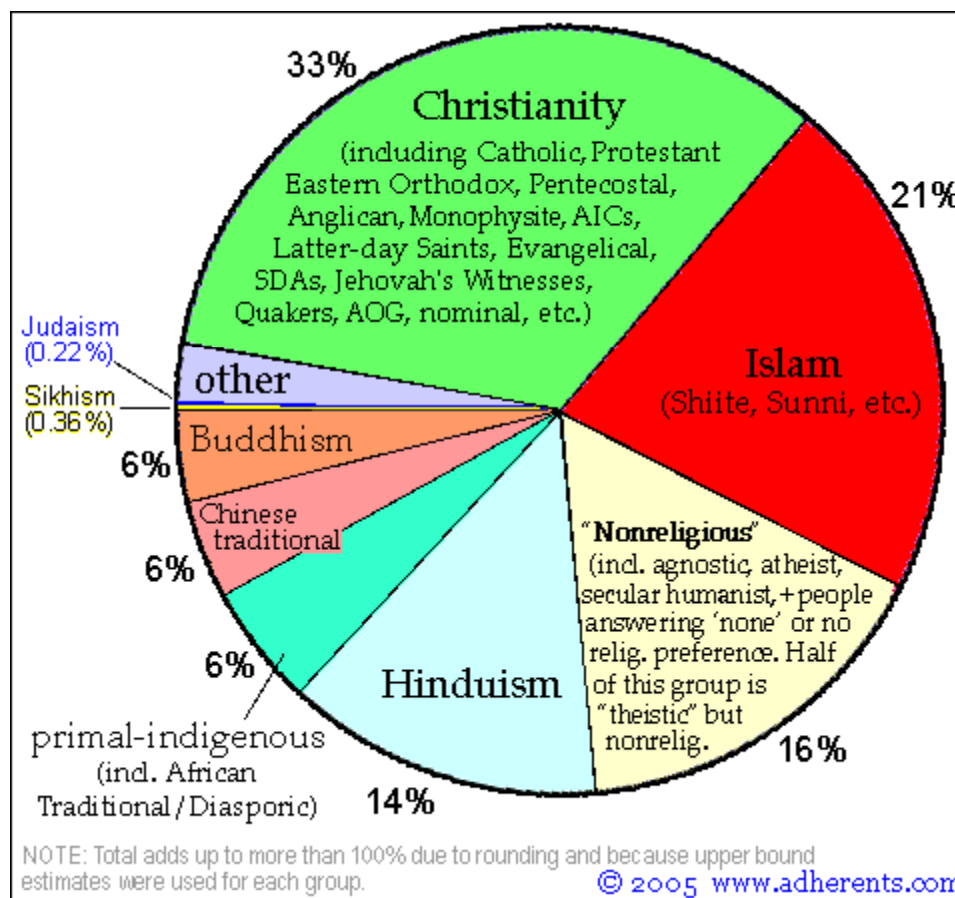


# Major Religions of the World

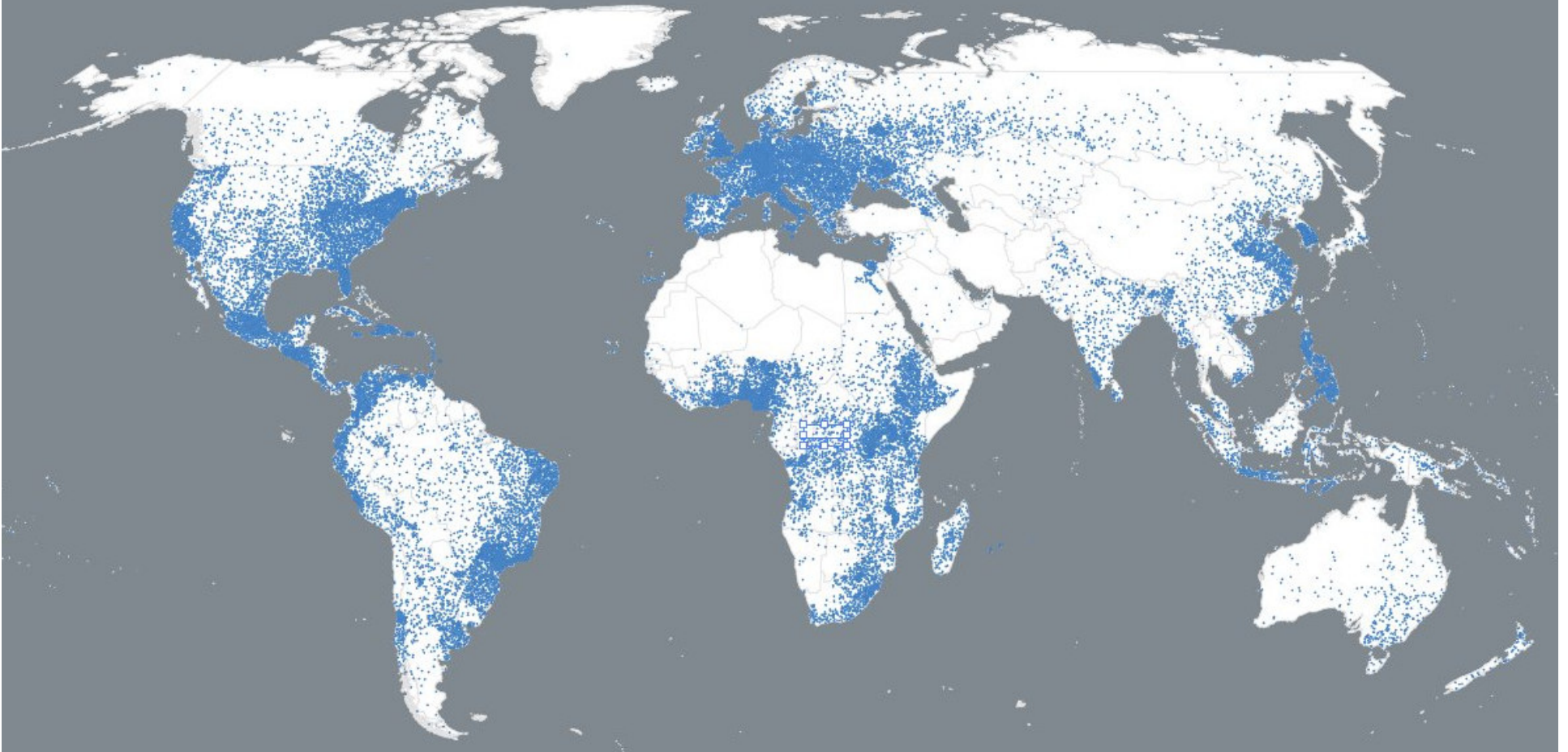
## Ranked by Number of Adherents

■ (Sizes shown are **approximate estimates**, and are here mainly for the purpose of ordering the groups, not providing a definitive number. This list is sociological/statistical in perspective.)

- ❑ **Christianity**: 2.1 billion
- ❑ **Islam**: 1.5 billion
- ❑ **Secular/Nonreligious/Agnostic/Atheist**: 1.1 billion
- ❑ **Hinduism**: 900 million
- ❑ **Chinese traditional religion**: 394 million
- ❑ **Buddhism**: 376 million
- ❑ (Current USA Population: 303,824,640 - July 2008 est.)

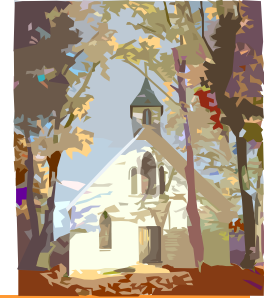


# The World's Christians





# Christianity for Contrast



- God is the Creator of the universe and all mankind.
- There is one God, who is Three Persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- The Bible is the Holy Book that records God's revelation.
- Jesus is both fully man and fully God. He was born of the Virgin Mary.
- He was crucified, resurrected from the dead, and ascended to the Father in heaven.
- Sin and Evil are realities in our existence.
- All believers are promised life everlasting.



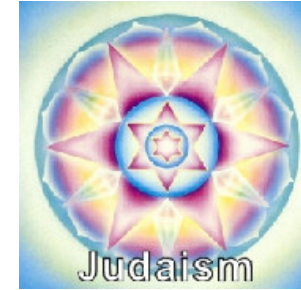
# Judaism Basics



- Judaism is a religion of just one people: the Jews.
- Judaism was the first to teach belief in only one God.
- Two other important religions influenced by Judaism: Christianity and Islam.
- The "Torah," the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, is the most important Jewish scripture. It contains the basic laws of Judaism.
- Another important book is the "Talmud," serving primarily as a guide to the civil and religious laws of Judaism. The Jewish house of worship is called a synagogue.
- Rabbis (spiritual leaders) conduct services, act as interpreters of Jewish laws, and deliver sermons.
- Today there are over 18 million followers of Judaism scattered throughout the world. A large number of those people live in the Jewish nation of Israel. Over six million live in the United States.



# Jewish Philosophy

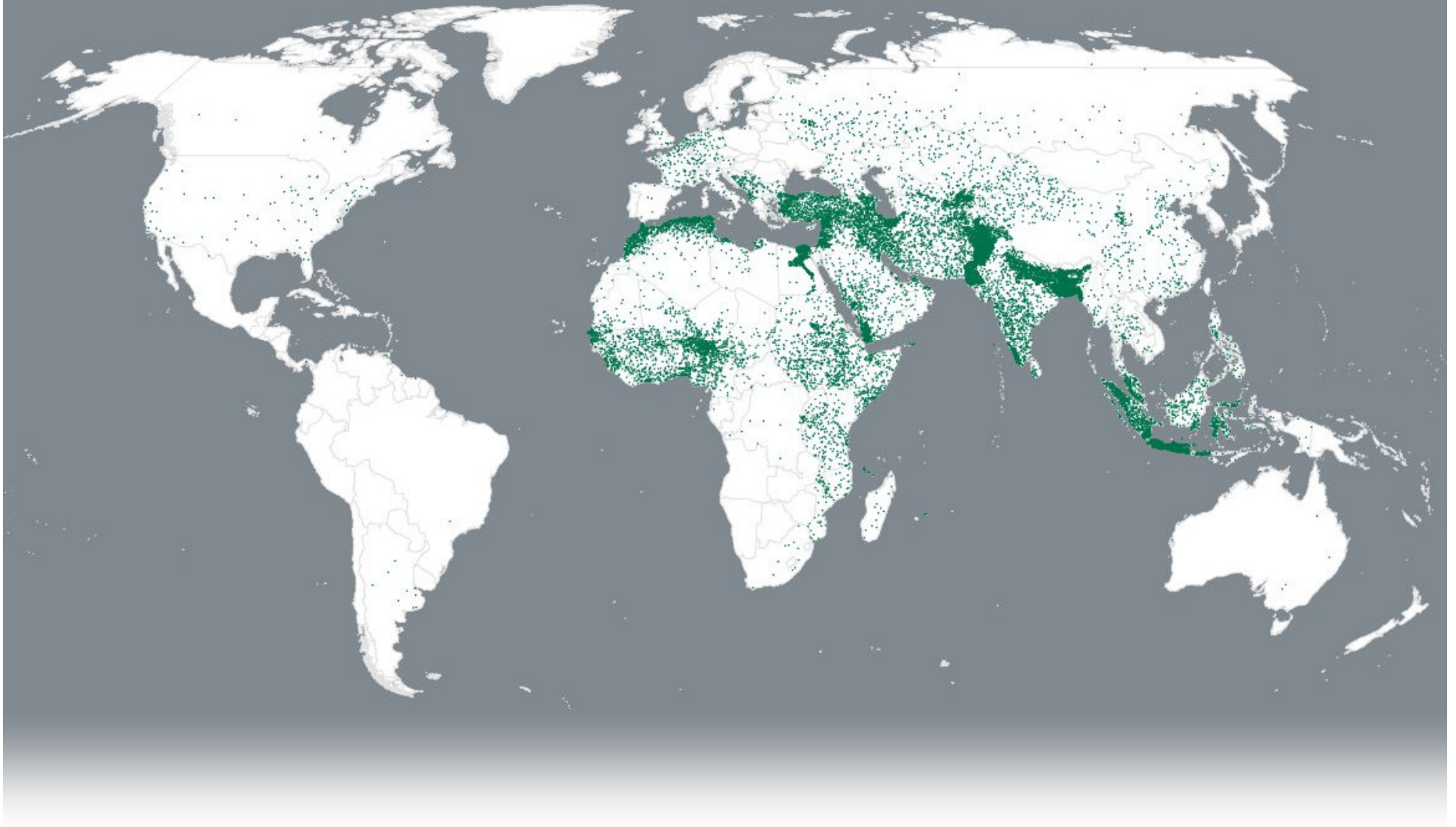


- God is one and unique
- God is the creator
- God is transcendent
- God is immanent.
- God is lawgiver
- God is personal
- Followers' obligation to worship
- The Torah is God's law
- God is judge
- The Messiah will come.

Judaism teaches that death is not the end and that there is a world to come. Jews think that God will send a Messiah (a deliverer) to unite them and lead them in His way. Christians believe that Jesus was the Messiah. The Jewish people do not agree; they anticipate His arrival in the future.



# The World's Muslims



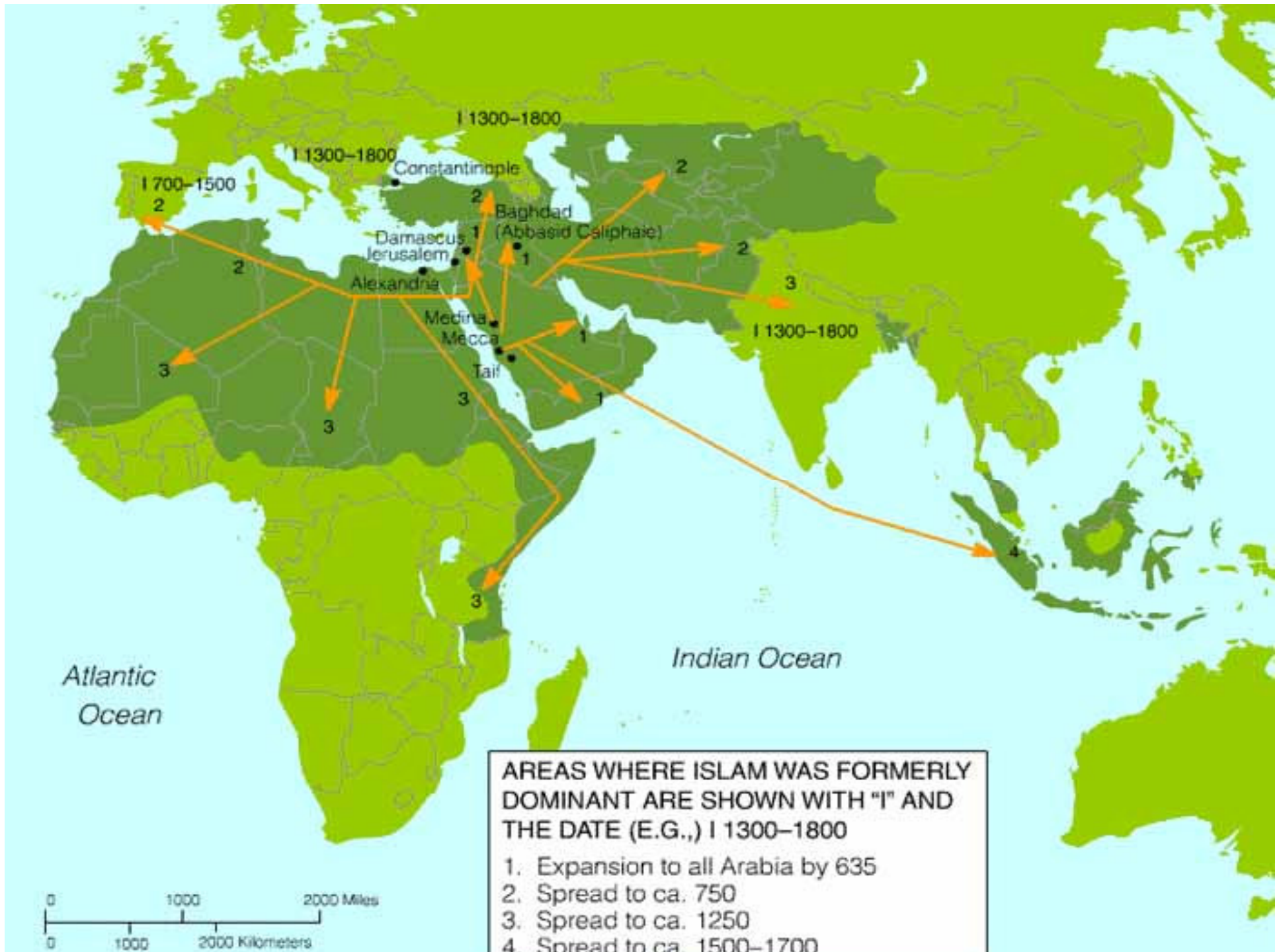


# Islam Basics



- The holy book of Islam is the "Koran." Muslims believe its words to be those of Allah himself, spoken to Muhammad by an angel.
- Allah, is the Islamic God. (the shahadah)
- People who believe these ideas are called Muslims.
- Islam is the name given to the religion preached by the prophet Muhammad (ca. 570 Mecca – June 8, 632 Medina).
- The Islamic religion started in the area known as Palestine in the year 600AD.
- Most of the followers are in the region north and east of the Mediterranean Sea.





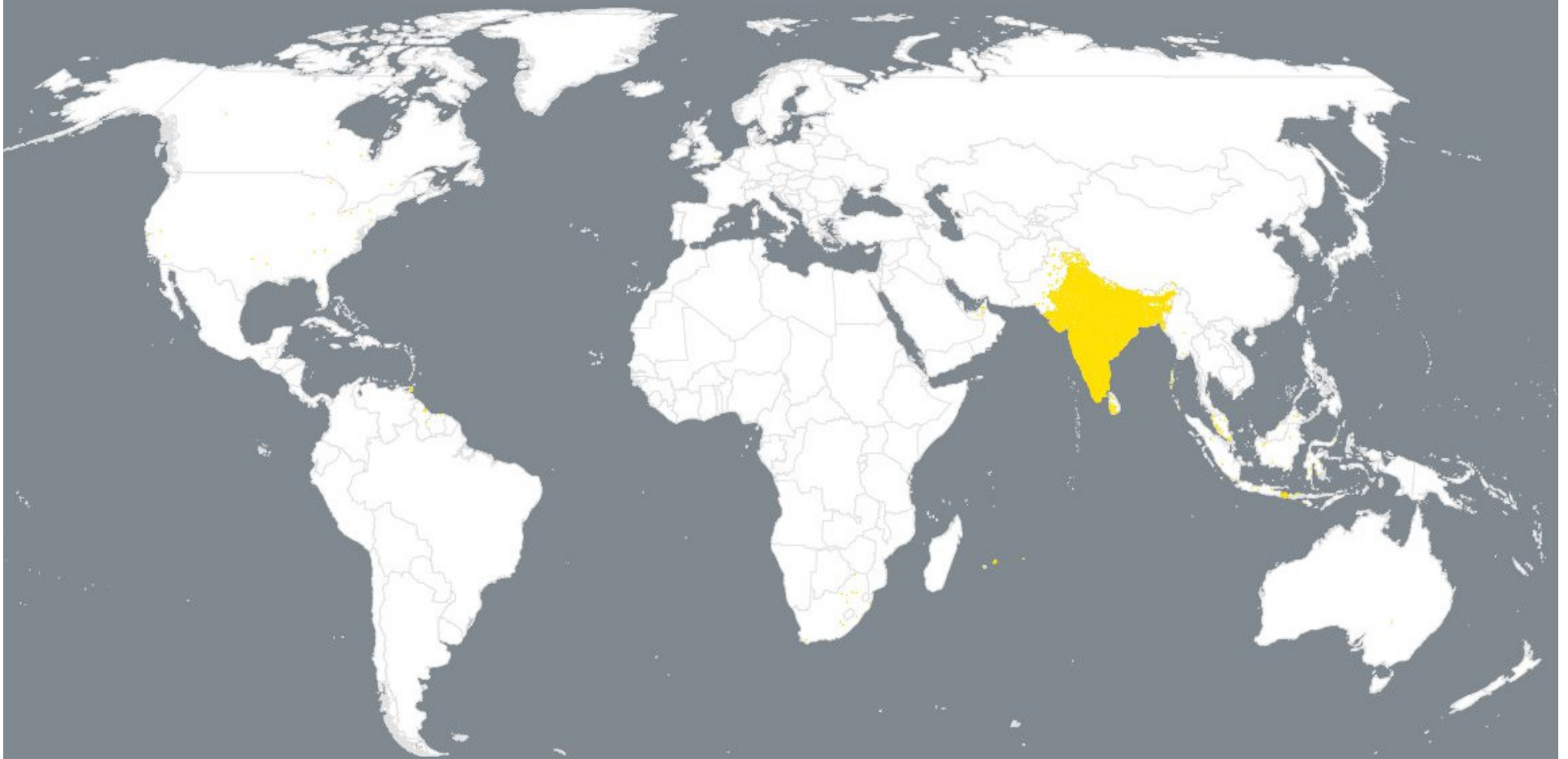


# Islamic Philosophy



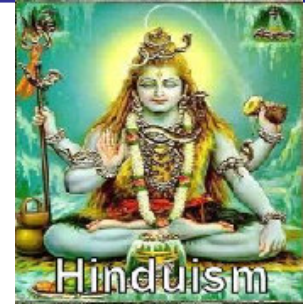
- Muslims learn that life on earth is a period of testing and preparation for the life to come. Angels record good and bad deeds.
- People should behave themselves and help others, (Zakat, or alms-giving) trusting in Allah's justice and mercy for their reward.
- Muslims pray five times daily (Salah, or ritual prayer) in their mosques (churches). While praying, they face the holy city of Mecca (in Saudi-Arabia).
- Sawm, or fasting during the month of Ramadan . the ninth month of the Islamic calendar;
- All Muslims are required to make a pilgrimage (The Haji, trip to Mecca) at least once in their lifetime.

# The World's Hindus





# Hinduism Basics

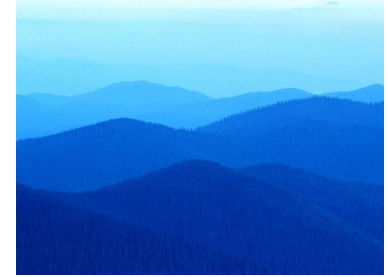


- Hinduism is one of the world's oldest religions.
- Over 2/3's of the world's Hindus live in India; large numbers reside in Africa also.
- Hindus believe in many gods, numbering into the thousands. They recognize one supreme spirit called Brahman ("the Absolute.")  
Hinduism has many sacred books, the oldest being a series called the "Vedas."
- Traditional Hindu society was divided into groups of four classes (or varnas). This was known as the "caste system."



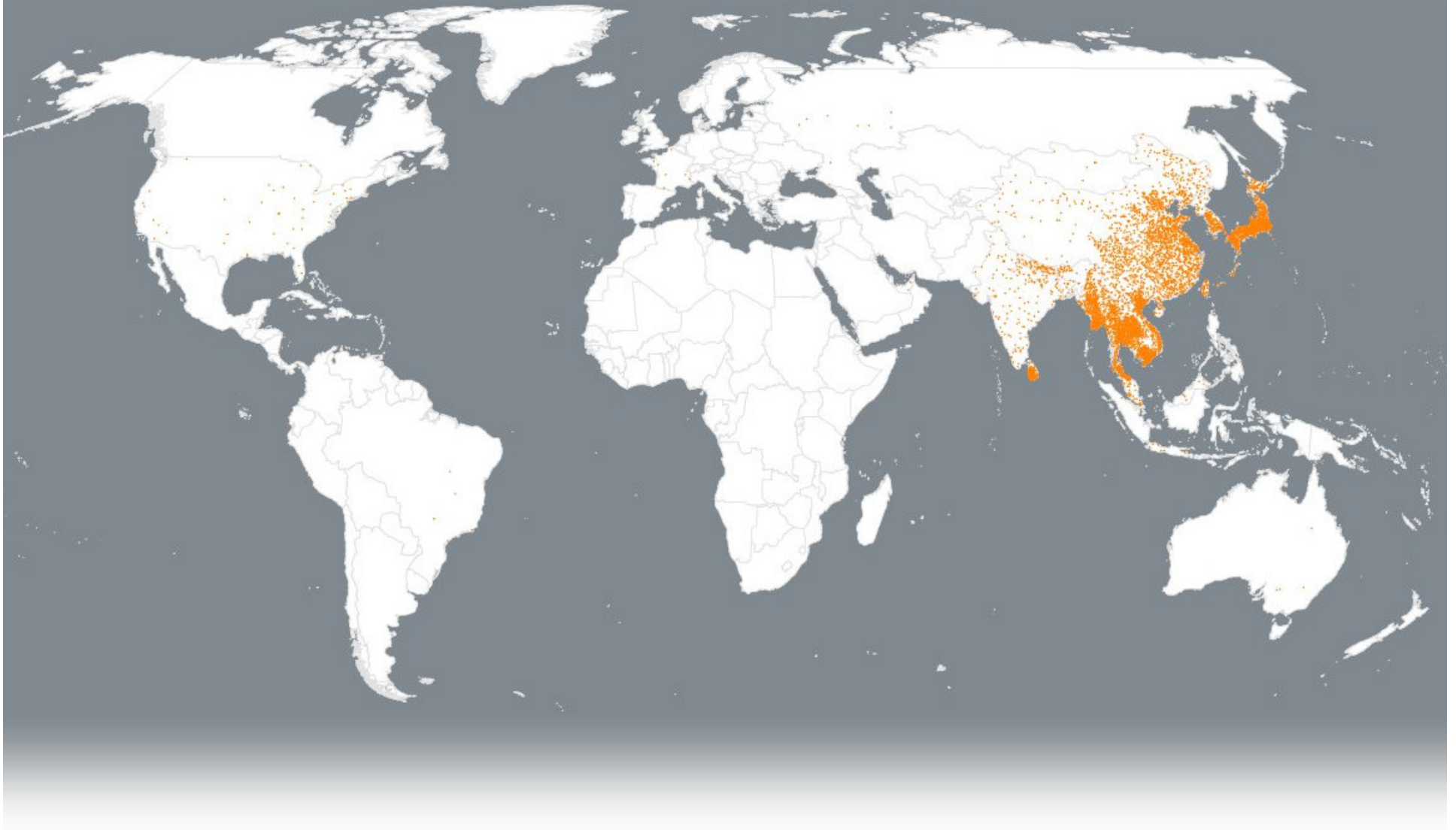


# Hindu Philosophy



- The goal of Hindus is to someday join with Brahman.
- The Hindu's soul then merges with Brahman in a condition of spiritual perfection (Moksha - liberation from *samsara*).
- Until that union takes place, believers are in a continuous process of rebirth called "reincarnation."
- Dharma are the personal ethics/duties of each practitioner
- At death, the Hindu's deeds (Karma - action and subsequent reaction) determine what the next life will be.
- Followers work to break this cycle - birth, death, re-birth - (Samsāra - "Wheel of Life") and gain release.

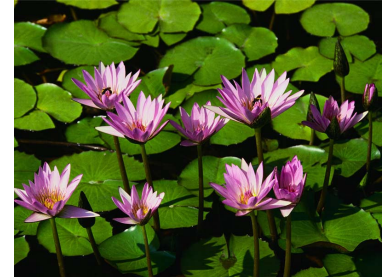
# The World's Buddhists





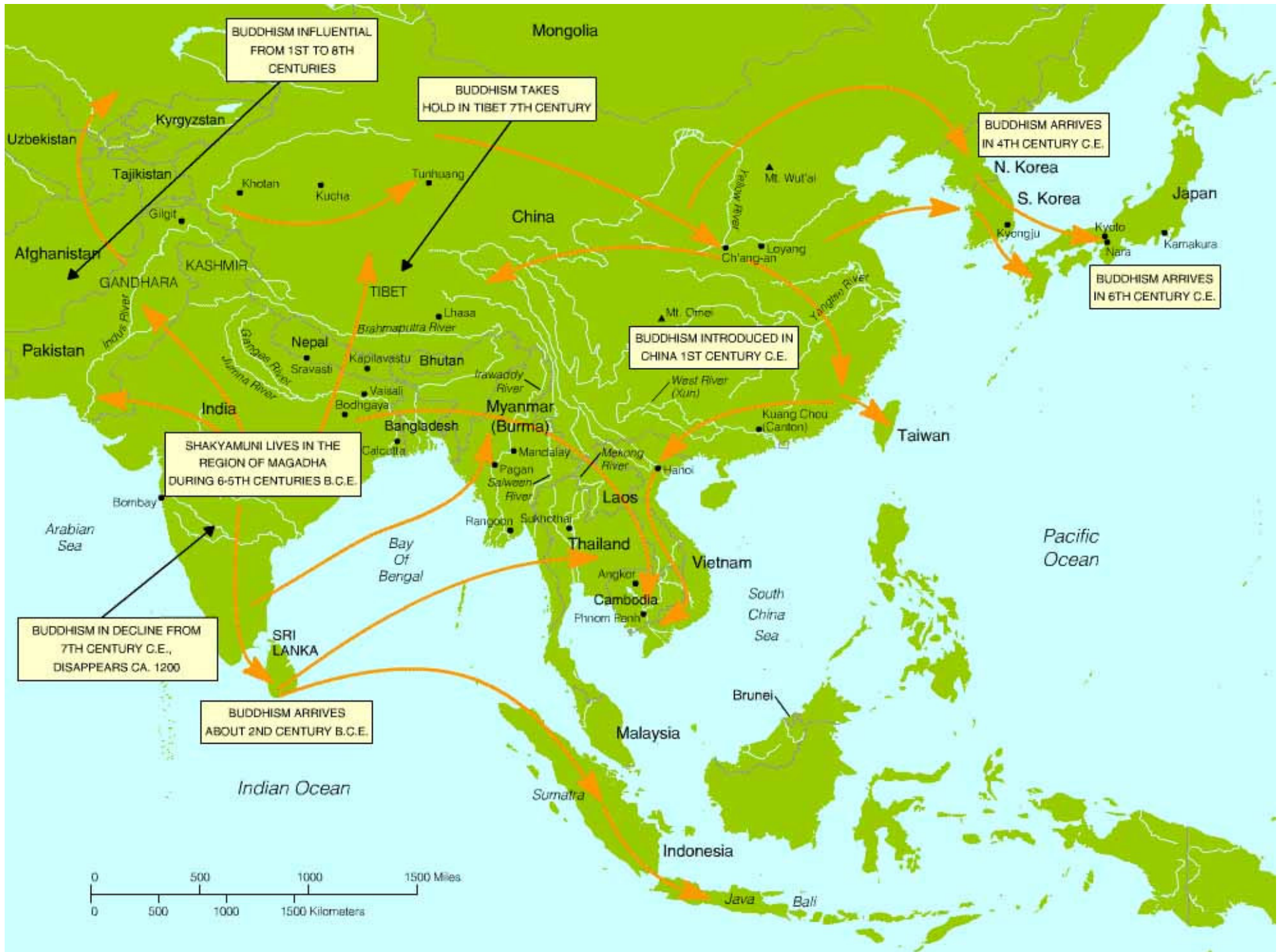


# Buddhism Basics



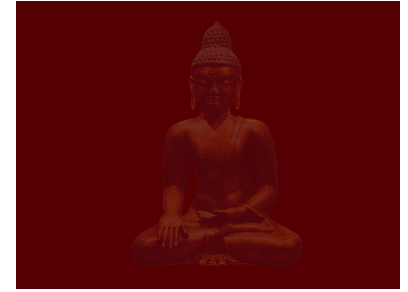
- Founding person of Buddhism is Siddhartha Gautama, commonly known as "The Buddha" (the Awakened One),
- The Dalai Lama is a Buddhist monk who remains the leader of the Tibetans.
- Buddhism is a major religion in China, Japan, India, and Tibet.
- Buddhism is the world's oldest universal religion and it is the second fastest growing religion.





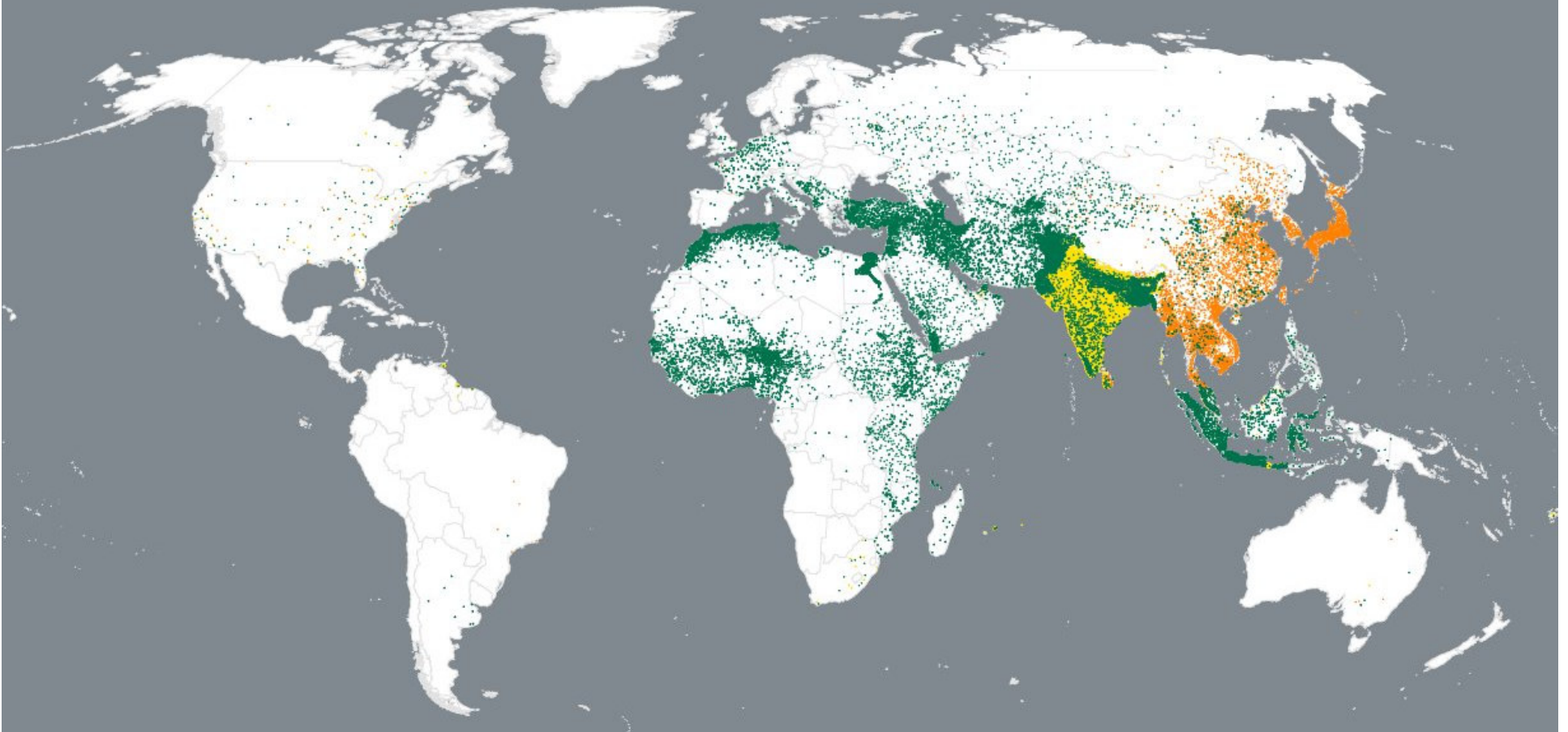


# Major Philosophy:



- Buddhism states that existence is a continuing cycle of death and rebirth called reincarnation.
- Each person's position in life is determined by his or her behavior in the previous life. This is known as their "karma" – cause and effect (also a Hindu belief).
- Love: without conditions
- Compassion: or feeling at one with the person who is suffering
- Sympathetic Joy: Celebrate the happiness of others, and do not resent their good fortune.
- Impartiality: Treat everyone equally, and do not use others for personal gain or to win approval.

# The Unevangelized





# Unevangelized Population (in millions)

1	India	344,000,000
2	China	262,000,000
3	Pakistan	144,000,000
4	Indonesia	68,600,000
5	Iran	48,700,000
6	Thailand	34,100,000
7	Algeria	32,900,000
8	Morocco	30,900,000
9	Bangladesh	30,000,000
10	Afghanistan	26,000,000



**Majority of the Unevangelized World**



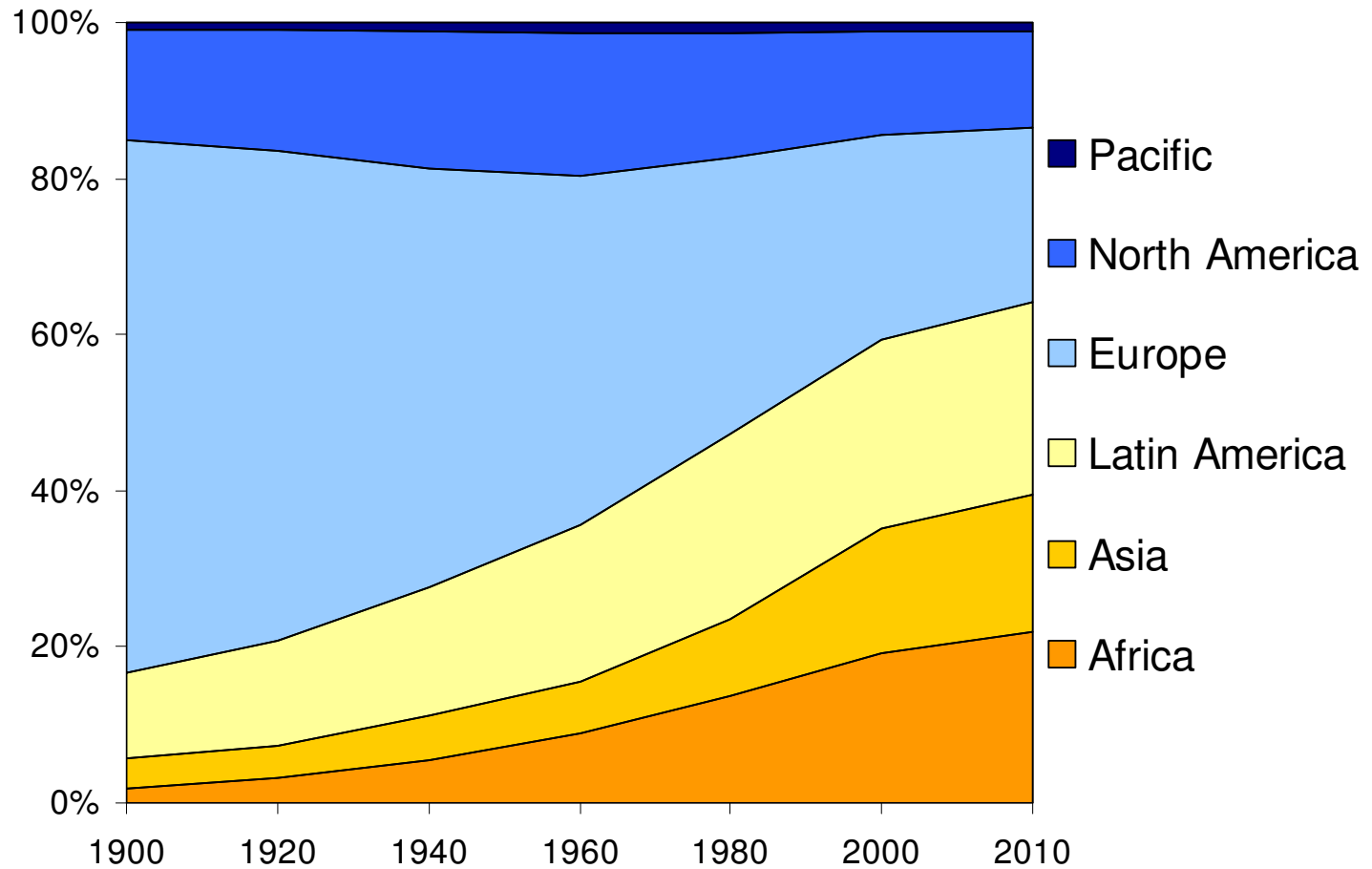
# Countries with the Most Unreached Peoples



Country	# Peoples	# Unreached Peoples
India	2332	2082
China	499	406
Pakistan	401	386
Bangladesh	370	336
Nepal	315	292



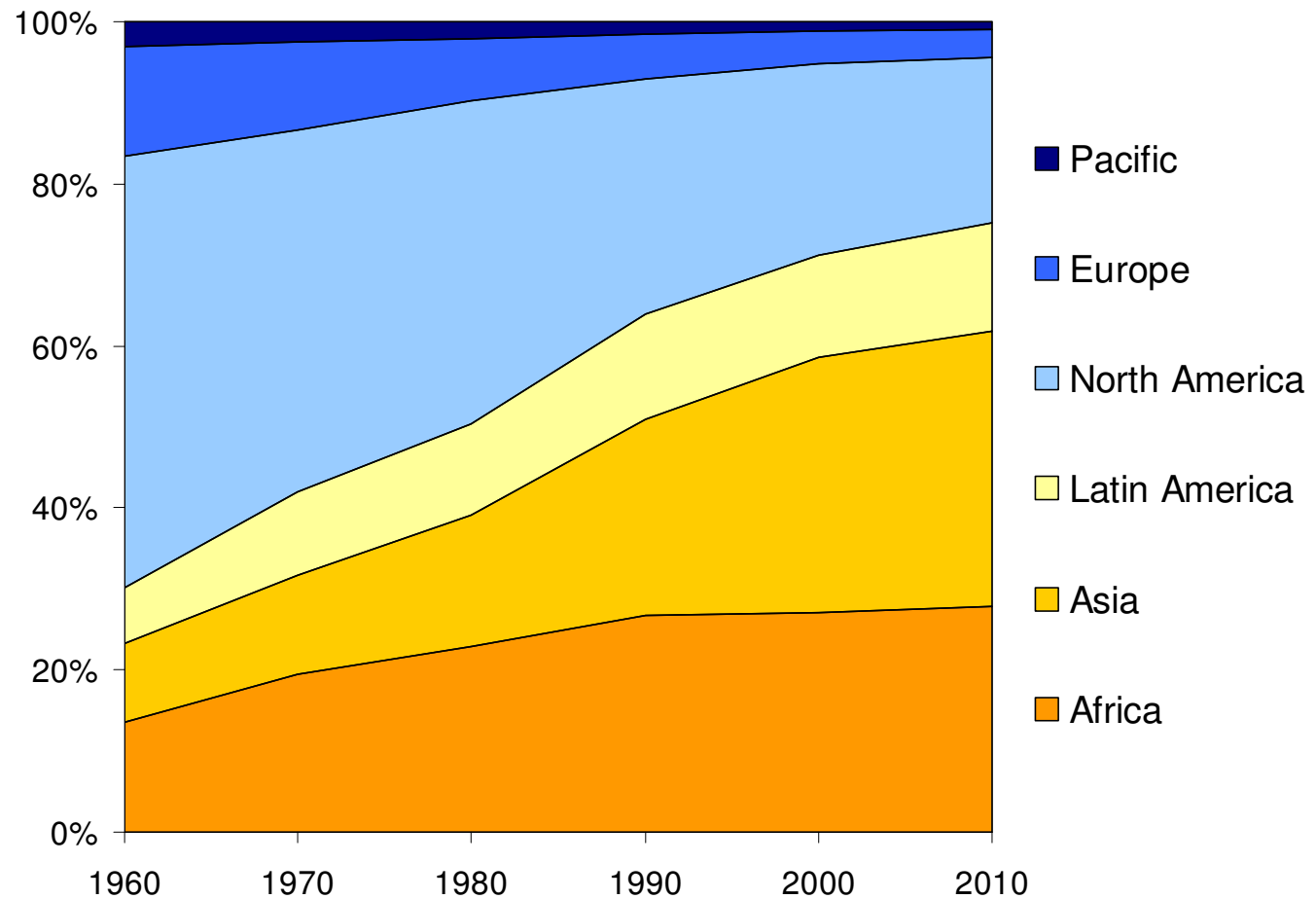
# World Christianity Continent by Continent





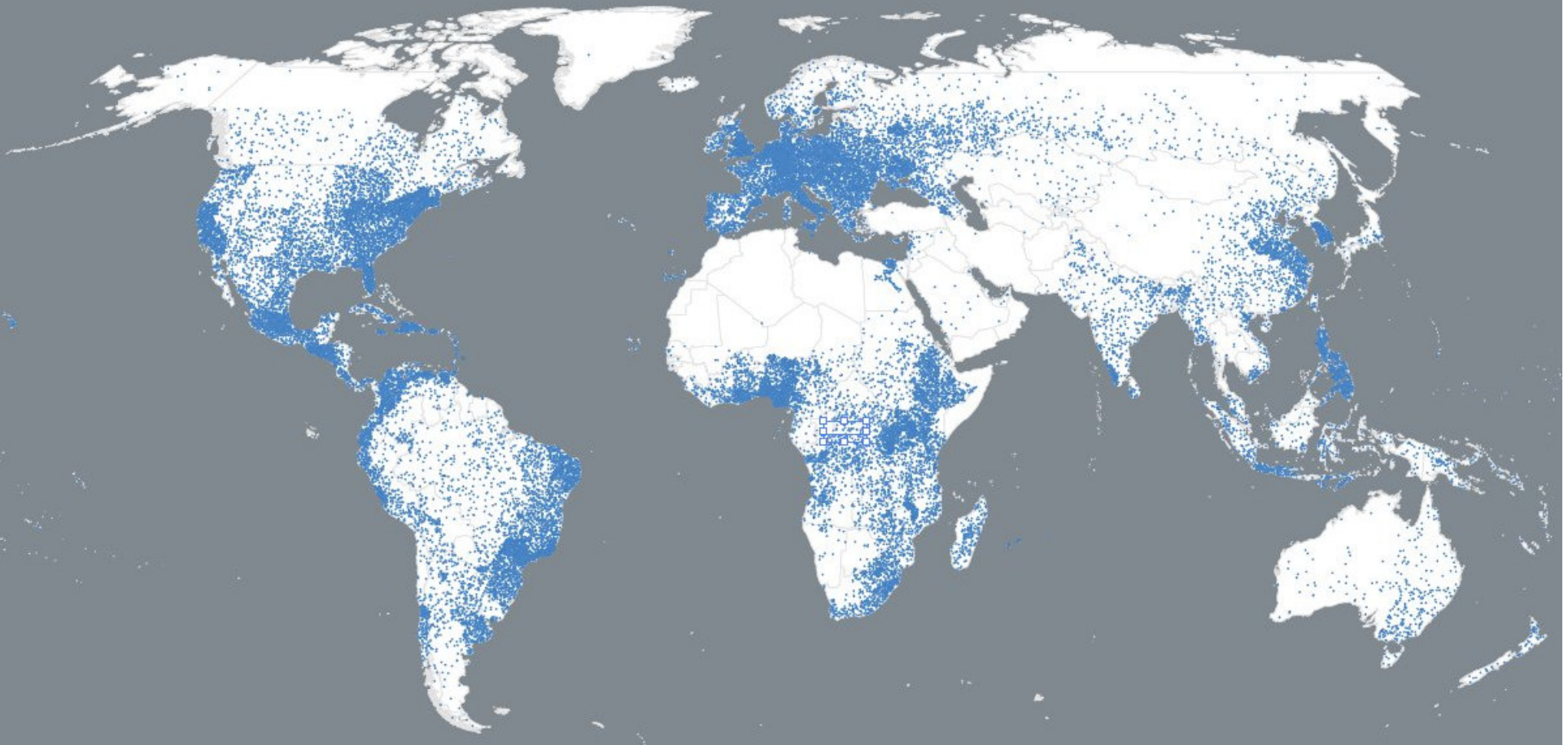
# World Evangelicals

## Continent by Continent





# Christians and the Unevangelized





# Getting The Job Done

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**Priorities**

**Mobilizing**

**Sacrifice**

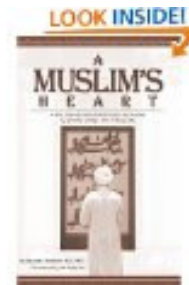
**Partnership**

**Prayer**



# Recommended Resources

- A Muslim's Heart: What Every Christian Needs to Know to Share Christ with Muslims by Edward J. Hoskins



- an exchange between an atheist and a Christian. Luis Palau, a well-known Christian evangelist, and Zhao Qizheng



- Religion of Peace or Refuge for Terror? What are we to think of the claims of Islam? Is Muhammad God's final prophet?





# Online Resources & Credits

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- <http://www.churchofindia.com/hindusforjesus.htm> testimonies and ministry helps
- <http://www.rethinkingforum.com> contextualized Hindu ministry
- <http://www.aradhnamusic.com> Traditional Indian style worship music

[www.IMB.org](http://www.IMB.org)   [www.operationworld.org](http://www.operationworld.org)