

A serene landscape painting. In the foreground, a white lotus flower with a yellow center sits on a green lily pad in a dark blue lake. The lake's surface is calm, reflecting the sky. In the middle ground, a bright sun is setting between two mountain ranges, creating a golden glow and a long, shimmering reflection on the water. The mountains are dark and jagged, with some trees visible on the slopes. The sky is a deep blue, filled with small white stars. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

Buddhism and Christianity

Similar thoughts

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This material is dedicated to the attempt to find kindred thoughts
in two world religions – Buddhism and Christianity.

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Introduction

The search for common ground brings people together. Focusing on differences always divides. Our world is vast and diverse, filled with many different countries and peoples, all of whom are its rightful inhabitants.

Understanding that your neighbor shares similar thoughts and aspirations with you always fosters trust and increases mutual understanding. This inevitably makes both individual relationships and the world as a whole warmer, more comfortable, and more interesting.

This material is dedicated to the attempt to find kindred thoughts in two world religions – Buddhism and Christianity.

Brief information about Buddhism

Buddhism emerged in the middle of the first millennium BCE (approximately the 5th–6th centuries BCE) in the territory of ancient India.

The founder of Buddhism was one man, Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha). Before his enlightenment, Siddhartha Gautama (approx. 563–483 BCE) was a prince of a small kingdom on the border of India and Nepal. He lived in luxury, protected from the suffering of the world. However, upon learning of the inevitable human problems — old age, sickness, hardship and death — he realized the inescapability of suffering and left his home in search of an answer to the question: " How to put an end to suffering?"

For six years, Siddhartha Gautama lived in a strict asceticism, while studying different philosophies and meditative practices, but found no answer there. By discarding extremes such as luxury as well as self-torture, he sat down under the Bodhi tree (the tree of enlightenment) and plunged into deep meditation. One night, he attained Enlightenment and became the Buddha (meaning "the Awakened One"). He understood the cause of suffering and the path to its cessation.

Gautama Buddha established a teaching that helps a person overcome the cycle of rebirth, liberate themselves from suffering and delusions of the mind, and transcend karmic existence by attaining Nirvana.

Fundamentals of teaching

The content of Buddhism consists of what the Buddha realized and what he began to teach others. The base of his teaching is often presented in the form of **Four Noble Truths**:

The Truth about suffering: Life in its nature is imperfect and imbued with suffering (not just physical, but also with discontent and disappointment).

The Truth about the cause of suffering: The cause of suffering lies in craving, attachments, hatred, and ignorance.

The Truth about the end of suffering: There is a state free from suffering—Nirvana.

The Truth about the path: There is the Eightfold Path—a practical guide to morality, meditation, and wisdom, leading to the cessation of suffering.

The components of the Eightfold Path

The Eightfold Path is traditionally divided into three basic groups, reflecting its comprehensive nature:

Perfecting wisdom. This group is connected to the development of a proper understanding of reality.

1. **Right View (right Understanding).** This is the foundation of the entire path. This concerns the understanding of the Four Noble Truths, karmic law and other basic aspects of Buddhism. This is the vision of things how they actually are as opposed to what we want them to be. All of this gives birth to the right motivation for actions and the entirety of one's behavior.
2. **Right Resolve (right Intention):** This is the aspiration of the mind, based on the right View. A person must once and forever decide to walk the path that leads to liberation, using the principles of Buddhism teachings.

Perfecting decency. This group addresses the cleansing of our behavior through our speech and actions. It creates the basis for the development of concentration and wisdom.

3. Right Speech. Abstinence from lies, slander, harsh language, gossip and twaddle. Speech must be truthful, benevolent, appropriate and useful.
4. Right Action. Abstinence from harming living creatures (non-violence), theft and appropriation, sexual misconduct (includes adultery). This is the practical expression of compassion and respect.
5. Right Livelihood. Earning a living in ways that do not harm others. For example, rejection of jobs connected to arms trade or deceit.

Perfecting Concentration. This group is connected to discipline and training of the mind.

6. Right Effort (Right Diligence). Control over your own thoughts and self-control. Prevention of having bad thoughts. Deliverance of bad thoughts. Awakening and developing new good thoughts. Support and amplification of already existing good thoughts.
7. Right Awareness (Right Mindfulness). Developing attention to all aspects of one's experience. Classically, this is practiced through four foundations of awareness: body, senses, mind and states of mind.

8. Right Concentration (Right Mental Collectedness). Developing a single direction for concentration, usually through the practice of meditation. The mind becomes calm, stable and immune from distractions. On highest stages it results in attaining the state absorption.

Spread and development

After his enlightenment, the Buddha went to the Deer Park in Sarnath and taught his first sermon to five ascetics. This event is known as the "First Turning of the Wheel of Dharma" and is considered the moment of the founding of the Buddhist community (Sangha). The community of male and female monks became the primary instrument for spreading the teaching.

An Indian emperor in the 3rd century BCE played a very important role in transforming Buddhism into a world religion. He became Buddhist and began to actively support it, sending missionaries to various parts of the world.

Buddhism today: schools (traditions), number of followers, countries of presence

Data on the number of Buddhists in various schools (traditions) is often approximate, as many countries do not keep precise religious statistics. Nevertheless, based on research and analysis, one could get somewhat of a general idea.

The total number of Buddhists in the world is approximately 500–520 million people.

Distribution by main schools (traditions) of Buddhism.

1. **Mahayana** (Great Vehicle). Approximate number: 250–300 million people (about 50-60% of all Buddhists). Main regions: China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia.

Key features: Emphasis on compassion and the ideal of the Bodhisattva—a person who strives for awakening for the benefit of all living beings.

Main sub-schools:

Pure Land: One of the most widespread schools, especially in East Asia. It emphasizes faith in the Buddha Amitabha and rebirth in his "Pure Land" where achieving enlightenment is easier.

Chan / Zen: Well-known in the West. Zen (Chan) emphasizes direct, immediate experience of enlightenment, here and now. Words, texts, and rituals here, are often considered secondary and can even be hindrances if one clings to them. Emphasis is placed on meditative practice (zazen), direct transmission of teaching "from heart to heart," and koans.

Nichiren: A school popular in Japan that focuses on the Lotus Sutra.

2. **Theravada** (Teaching of the Elders). Approximate number: 150–180 million people (about 30-35% of all Buddhists). Main regions: Thailand, Myanmar (Burma), Sri Lanka, Laos, Cambodia, parts of Vietnam, Indonesia. Considered the oldest surviving school of Buddhism.

3. **Vajrayana** (Diamond Vehicle), Tibetan school. Approximate number: 15–25 million people (about 3-5% of all Buddhists). Main regions: Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal, Mongolia, regions of Russia (Kalmykia, Buryatia, Tuva), northern regions of India. Key features: often considered a part of Mahayana but with unique methods.

Despite their various features and differences, the undisputed foundation across different schools (traditions) of Buddhism remains the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path.

Some Additional Notes:

Syncretism. In many countries, especially in East Asia, Buddhism is closely intertwined with local beliefs (Taoism, Confucianism, Shintoism). People there may simultaneously practice elements of several traditions.

"Non-Practicing" Buddhists. In some countries, many people associate themselves with Buddhism culturally, visiting temples during holidays, but are not active practitioners.

Buddhism in the West. All major traditions are represented in the West, but most often in the form of mixed groups or centers focused on meditation.

Brief Information about Christianity

Christianity is the largest religion in the world in terms of the number of followers. According to various estimates, there are about 2.4 billion Christians in the world today.

Christianity is also a very ancient religion – it is over four thousand years old. Its history, in brief, is as follows: first, God sent more than 20 prophets to the earth, who conveyed to people the initial information about Him, and also spoke of the Messiah, whom God would one day send into the world, and who would show all people the path to salvation.

When the Messiah – the Son of God, Jesus Christ – came to earth, He did everything in life that the prophets had spoken of. Jesus Christ gave people a teaching, subsequently called *Christianity*. All its principles are clearly set forth in the four Gospel texts. The qualities that God would like to see in people in order to grant them Eternal Life, were listed in the most detail by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

These have long been known, and here are some of them in a simple exposition: God likes people who are peacemakers, meek, pure in heart, seekers of truth, and unattached to material goods.

God teaches people to avoid violence, anger, and evil words. In cases of quarrels, He tells people to forgive their enemies quickly and return to peace. He calls people to have strong families and to always remain faithful in family relationships. God teaches people not to turn away from those who ask for help, and to hold no grudge against anyone. When helping people, God says to always do so humbly and without boasting. God teaches people to think more about the spiritual and moral, and less about the material. God also teaches people to always have faith and to rely on Him in everything. And in the end, He says that only those who observe these words will receive Eternal Life in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus Christ preached for a long time in various cities of Israel. However, after some time, the enemies of Christ found a way to seize and execute Him. But after this, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead, thereby proving the reality of immortality and the truth of all His words spoken on Earth.

After Jesus ascended to Heaven in the presence of witnesses, Christianity was spread throughout the world by His twelve disciples – the *apostles*. They preached the word of God to people in various countries, and gained many followers there. After them, the work of Christ on earth was continued by *saints*, righteous people, and ordinary believers. Saints are those Christians who honorably and courageously walked the path given by God, and became examples of faith and righteousness. As a rule, they enjoy popular love and veneration. Saints are

particularly close to God, and He performs His miracles through them.

Christianity is an ancient religion, but it is full of life even today. The first prophets of God appeared on earth over 4,000 years ago, but His saints continue to appear in the world even in our time. Their total number already amounts to several thousand people.

Now, concerning the evidence for the truth of Christianity. To confirm the truthfulness of all His words, the correctness of Jesus Christ's teaching, and the truth of the words of the apostles and saints, God has always used, and continues to use, *miracles*. A miracle is an evident and visible supremacy over the various physical laws of the world, laws related to life and human health. Through these miracles, God proves that He is the Creator of the world and of all the laws within it, and that He can easily change or surpass His own rules.

God's miracles, demonstrating supremacy over the physical laws of the world, have been very diverse over the centuries, and often quite grand in scale: for example, sometimes the sea parted before a multitude of people, sometimes the day was prolonged, sometimes a star guided people, and many other things. A great many of God's miracles concerned life and human health: sometimes the dead came back to life, and multitudes of people suffering from various serious illnesses were instantly healed. There were many other miracles – for instance, saints sometimes

levitated above the earth, at times they shone brightly, sometimes they were seen far from their place of residence, and much, much more. The number of miracles performed by God on earth is immense – besides the prophets, the Son of God, and the apostles, they accompanied nearly all the saints. This means that there are many thousands of cases of miracles on earth, confirmed by witnesses.

These confirmations were sometimes on a very large scale. For example, when the prophet Moses led the Jewish people out of Egypt, God manifested very grand miracles, witnessed by practically all the Israelites. And there were about one hundred and fifty thousand of them at that time. Or, for instance, the prophet Elijah ascended to heaven in a chariot in the presence of several thousand witnesses.

When the Son of God, Jesus Christ, came to earth, He publicly performed many miracles, which were later described in detail by the apostle-evangelists. Witnesses to those miracles sometimes numbered in the dozens, sometimes hundreds, and sometimes even thousands. As in the case when Jesus fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fish.

Then God performed numerous miracles in various countries through the apostles. After them, God's miracles on earth occur mainly through the saints, and this continues almost to the present day. For instance, one of the saints of recent years, Paisios of

Mount Athos, was canonized in 2015. The book describing the miracles that God manifested to people through him runs to several hundred pages, and many witnesses to those events are still alive.

God's miracles also occur when people pray for help to God, His Son, the apostles, or the saints of any era. The number of proven cases of miracles here is also immense, and they are constantly being added to.

So, with the proofs of Christianity on Earth everything looks very large-scale and convincing. This, along with the possibility for any person to attain Eternal Life in Heaven through a highly moral life on earth, is the reason for the widespread dissemination of Christianity in the world.

Comparing thoughts

Spiritual comparison is a difficult matter, and it is often highly subjective. Because anyone making the comparison inevitably holds to certain views and convictions, and these convictions will leave an imprint on their commentary, to a greater or lesser extent. The author of this book has tried to minimize his own opinion.

To this end, he consistently presented the Four Noble Truths and all the stages of the Eightfold Path of Buddhism. Then, for each point, the author selected sayings and thoughts from authoritative Christian sources that are close in meaning or spirit, without any commentary of his own.

The Buddhist and Christian texts in the book are simple and understandable. Having familiarized himself with them, the reader can readily draw his own conclusion regarding the similarity of thoughts within them. To do this, he will need nothing more than interest, attention, and logic.

Moreover, in any case engaging with the timeless wisdom of humanity will certainly never be a waste of time for anyone.

Buddhism

(Four Noble Truths)

1. **The Truth about suffering:** Life in its nature is imperfect and imbued with suffering (not just physical, but also with discontent and disappointment).

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Christianity

Every earthly life is a sea of misfortunes. (St. Macarius of Egypt, "Fifty Spiritual Homilies")

Life on earth is a journey linked to sorrow. (St. Ignatius Branchaninov, "Ascetic experiments")

Without a spiritual life a person is some-what not-living... He lives, yet his life is not complete, not perfect. (St. Theophan the Recluse, "Path to salvation")

"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33)

"Yet man is born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7)

Without God there is nothing but sin, sorrow and spiritual tightness. (St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, "A spiritual treasure gathered from the world")

Without the spiritual wisdom, everything becomes shameful and ugly, yet with it everything becomes joyful, easy and is being accomplished with joy. (St. John Chrysostom, "Writings collection")

"The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace" (Romans 8:6)

Buddhism

(Four Noble Truths)

2. The Truth about the cause of suffering: The cause of suffering lies in craving, attachments, hatred and ignorance.

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Christianity

Indeed, we are unhappy as we are slaves to things and by living mechanically, are subject to the flow of circumstances. All of our energy we input into insignificant things which are here today, yet tomorrow may be gone. The fluidity and transience of our lives with all its resentments, condemnations and envy we consider to be our true life. By being irritated and disappointed we lose the world in our heart and descend into darkness.
(Archbishop Sergei Korolev, “Walking in the light”)

“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man” (Mark 7:21-23)

We live in the sin of a mirage life. We are overwhelmed by self-love, thirst for money, thirst for fame, pride and all of these we consider as true life. (Archbishop Sergei Korolev, “Walking in the light”)

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world... For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:15-16)

Thus, we liken our soul and impregnated sin, to a big tree with a lot of branches and the roots deep in the soil. The same is with sin, which upon entering and dominating our soul and pervading the deepest hiding-places, becomes a habit and preconception (St. Macarius of Egypt, “Fifty Spiritual Homilies”)

The existence of happiness in our lives lies in existence of our spiritual lives. No matter how delightful the forms of life may be, should the person fail to overcome the sin within, he shall not reach true happiness. (Archbishop Sergei Korolev, “Walking in the light”)

Buddhism

(Four Noble Truths)

3. **The Truth about the end of suffering:** There is a state free from suffering—Nirvana.

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Christianity

“Jesus answered and said to him: Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God... That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit... The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:3-8)

On this sinful earth, beginning with one’s heart by the act of creation and accomplishment of one’s nature we enter into a different existence. We get other feelings and thoughts.
(Archbishop Sergei Korolev, “Walking in the light”)

Despise the bustle of concern for the world, to attain unceasing happiness... The world constitutes the elevation of the feelings of mind and he who attained it, attained the unpretentious joy. (St. Isaac the Syrian, “Ascetical homilies”)

Our soul is made for eternity, yet we completely fail to care for it. We struggle to gain all kinds of treasures except the treasures of eternity. We are bad merchants. We greatly underestimate our soul. (Archbishop Sergei Korolev, “Walking in the light”)

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

“...to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (Ephesians 4:22-24)

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God” (Matthew 5:8)

Buddhism

(Four Noble Truths)

4. **The Truth about the path:** There is the Eightfold Path —a practical guide to morality, meditation and wisdom, leading to the cessation of suffering.

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Christianity

“Very truly I tell you, whoever obeys my word will never see death” (John 8:51)

“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free”
(John 8:32)

The task and purpose of earthly existence - to rise through this temporary, short life - to the life higher and eternal one.
(Archbishop Joann Shahovskoy, “The moment of holy silence”)

Keep the Commandments: for they are the light, illuminating you on the path to the Kingdom of Heaven. (St. Ignatius Brianchaninov, “Ascetic experiences”)

“I am the way and the truth and the life” (John 14:6)

“For the works that the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I am doing—testify that the Father has sent me”
(John 5:36)

The miracles of Lord Jesus Christ were the expression of His Almighty power and love, and were used to bring people faith in Him - the faith in the Son of God (St. Serafim Slobodskoy, “God’s law”)

“If you want to enter life, keep the commandments” (Matthew 19:17)

“...what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18)

Buddhism

(Eightfold Path)

1. Right View (right Understanding). This is the foundation of the entire path. This concerns the understanding of the Four Noble Truths, karmic law and other basic aspects of Buddhism. This is the vision of things how they actually are as opposed to what we want them to be. All of this gives birth to the right motivation for actions and the entirety of one's behavior.

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Christianity

Things that are unclean and disgusting man discards, yet one needs to understand first what it is really unclean and disgusting. Without the feeling of disgust, there will be no discarding. In order to reject a sin, one must first feel disgust for it. (St. Paisios of Mount Athos, "Words")

He who keeps right thoughts and feelings in the heart, acts rightly. (St. Theophan the Recluse, "Path to salvation")

“Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day...what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

“Do not love the world or anything in the world...The world and its desires pass away” (1 John 2:15-17)

Spiritual work must be alien to dreaminess; it must be accomplished in a complete state of consciousness and freedom with a bright vision onto oneself and others. (St. Ignatius Brianchaninov, “Ascetic experiences”)

Flame naturally rushes upwards, and the soul created for the Kingdom of Heaven no earthly pleasure can satisfy. (St. John Climacus, “The Ladder of Divine Ascent”)

Principal work - the temper of the heart. However, it depends on thoughts. Why do the bad thoughts come? Because faith and piety not kept in memory. Keep them in memory and thus your heart shall warm. (St. Theophan the Recluse, “Path to salvation”)

Buddhism

(Eightfold Path)

2. **Right Resolve** (right Intention): This is the aspiration of the mind, based on the right View. A person must once and forever decide to walk the path that leads to liberation, using the principles of Buddhism teachings.

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Christianity

Primary work - the resolve to walk the path of salvation and continue it steadily. Without such determination, nothing can be accomplished. (St. Theophan the Recluse “Path to salvation”)

...without resolve (or intention) of the will, man can do nothing. (‘Ancient Patericon’ Chapter 16)

... man must endeavour to rid himself of flaws and to develop the good that resides within, to become God’s man. (St. Paisios of Mount Athos, “Words”)

“No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62)

“Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called...” (1 Timothy 6:12)

The state of spiritual struggle is a sign of spiritual growth, for the spiritual process must never stop. Each moment, man chooses good or evil. Thus, choosing the path between good and evil constitutes our very important internal struggle.
(Archbishop Sergei Korolev, “Walking in the light”)

Beginning of good - resolve to perform the Commandments of God and to reject all sin... The resolve must be unyielding. (St. Ignatius Brianchaninov, “Ascetic experiences”)

Buddhism

(Eightfold Path)

3. Right Speech. Abstinence from lies, slander, harsh language, gossip and twaddle. Speech must be truthful, benevolent, appropriate and useful.

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Christianity

“But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken”
(Matthew 12:36)

“Whoever would love life and see good days must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech” (1 Peter 3:10)

“But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other...” (Colossians 3:8-9)

“...put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor...”
(Ephesians 4:25)

Should you love truth, be true in your words, actions and intentions. (St. Ephrem the Syrian, “Good-loving”)

“...keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit...” (Psalm 34:13)

Be friendly to all, affable, word of yours be dissolved by the grace of God. (St. Ephrem the Syrian, “Prayer. Collection of essays”)

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen” (Ephesians 4:29)

“Keep your mouth free of perversity; keep corrupt talk far from your lips” (Proverbs 4:24)

Buddhism

(Eightfold Path)

4. **Right Action.** Abstinence from harming living creatures (non-violence), theft and appropriation, sexual misconduct (includes adultery). This is the practical expression of compassion and respect.

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Christianity

“...turn from evil and do good...” (1 Peter 3:11)

“Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

The wealth gained through unjust means does not profit the soul, and any appropriation of someone is a sin. (St. John Chrysostom, “Writings collection”)

Faith without action is dead. Actions of faith - are the actions of love and mercy for others. (St. Theophan the Recluse “Path to salvation”)

We must be kind not only to people, but also to animals. My compassion to animals is such that my heart is often torn by their suffering. (St. Seraphim of Sarov, “Living, directives”)

One cannot be a Christian without good deeds, like the sun cannot be without light. (St. John Chrysostom, “Writings collection”)

“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor” (Exodus 20:16-17)

To keep purity - means to reject with all might the intentions of lust and to avoid all that gives rise to them. (St. John Climacus, “The Ladder of Divine Ascent”)

Buddhism

(Eightfold Path)

5. **Right Livelihood.** Earning a living in ways that do not harm others. For example, rejection of jobs connected to arms trade or deceit.

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Christianity

Let each one know, by doing one's craftwork, one may please God, albeit with diligence and honesty. (St. John Chrysostom, "Writings collection")

Work and earn as much as you need for a prosperous life, yet keep in mind, for your work to be just without harm to others. It is not this good, that you have gathered much, but that you have gathered without sin. (St. Theophan the Recluse "Path to salvation")

"I have the right to do anything... but not everything is beneficial" (1 Corinthians 6:12)

One should choose such activities that do not bind one to the ground, but elevate into the sky... All activities allowed by the Commandments of God can be God-pleasing. (St. Theophan the Recluse “Path to salvation”)

Any Christian must remain in his rank, doing his work in glory of God and for the benefit of the neighbors. (St. Nicodemus, “Unseen swearing”)

“Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need” (Ephesians 4:28)

Saving one-self from sin is to keep your mind from unnecessary intentions, heart - from passions and body - from bad deeds. (St. Isaiah of Scetis, “Philokalia”)

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you” (Matthew 7:12)

Buddhism

(Eightfold Path)

6. **Right Effort** (Right Diligence). Control over your own thoughts and self-control. Prevention of having bad thoughts. Deliverance of bad thoughts. Awakening and developing new good thoughts. Support and amplification of already existing good thoughts.

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Christianity

One must keep oneself in check, control oneself when the enemy brings bad, evil thoughts, one should strive to banish them and to substitute them for good, kind ones. By making the effort this way, you cultivate your inner disposition and make it kind. However, this work is not for 2-3 days. Long time and serious struggle is needed for the soul to wear the winning crown. (St. Paisios of Mount Athos, “Words”)

...requires daily to counteract the substance of numerous and abundant bad thoughts, forcing one’s mind to always charge towards in love to God, and receive a feeling of grace from God in return. (St. Macarius of Egypt, “Fifty Spiritual Homilies”)

The most necessary enterprise for a man - the creation of the factory for 'Good thoughts'. This way, even the evil and the bad your mind will recycle into good and kind. (St. Paisios of Mount Athos, "Words")

Big sins don't require as much attention as the little, insignificant sins. For big sins cause disgust by its own property, while little sins predispose us for sloth and hinder our courage to rise for their destruction. This is why they soon grow into great ones, if we not stay awake. (St. John Chrysostom, "Writings collection")

One must always strive to include good thoughts into his work, do not judge easily (by other's flaws) but to look upon other's deeds with condescension and love. When good thoughts multiply, man's soul is cleansed, he behaves with reverence and then settles. The life of this man becomes a paradise on earth. (St. Paisios of Mount Athos, "Words")

Greatest, incomparable joy consists of discovery of good within and others. (Archbishop Sergei Korolev, "Walking in the light")

Buddhism

(Eightfold Path)

7. Right Awareness (Right Mindfulness). Developing attention to all aspects of one's experience. Classically, this is practiced through four foundations of awareness: body, senses, mind and states of mind.

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Christianity

... one must tend to the purity of his heart: it requires day after day to observe whether any dirt appeared, one must constantly check with what and when it was polluted, for this dirt, this filth must be immediately cleaned. (St. Luke, archbishop of Crimea, "Selected sermons")

One must always avoid, within one's power, any temptations and to meticulously track his feelings, as it all begins with them. Should this be too hard, one should at least abstain from curiosity, cease to look at sinful imagery for long...When sinful images changes rapidly, eyes do not linger there and slightly skip through them, so these images does not imprint on our soul deeply, and does not disturb us later. (St. Paisios of Mount Athos, "Words")

One must stand in heart with sobriety and focus, and to follow one's occurring thoughts. (St. Theophan the Recluse, "What is spiritual life and how to prepare for it")

One must always closely examine what moves a person on the outside and what controls him inside, to examine his actions and wishes. This area is difficult, yet the interactions of people - is all life. (Archbishop Sergei Korolev, "Walking in the light")

"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it" (Proverbs 4:23)

"For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what defile a person..." (Matthew 15:19-20)

The beginning of spiritual struggle - attention of mind, and keeping of heart. (St. Nilus of Sora, "Rules of skete life")

Buddhism

(Eightfold Path)

8. Right Concentration (Right Mental Collectedness).

Developing a single direction for concentration, usually through the practice of meditation. The mind becomes calm, stable and immune from distractions. On highest stages it results in attaining the state absorption.

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Christianity

Never allow your mind ‘to spin’. For even if your mind constantly not exists in a state of sinful subjects, but spins around neutral things, those neutral things ‘neutralise’ it, and the mind wastes itself in vain. Besides, thoughts born of absentmindedness are more treacherous than thoughts that are directly evil. For these thoughts go unnoticed and we do not rid ourselves from them. (St. Paisios of Mount Athos, “Words”)

State of mind...must be: it must be foreign to daydreaming, calm, not entertained by the tides of thoughts. (St. Ignatius Brianchaninov, “Ascetic experiences”)

We must know that we cannot succeed in uphold any Commandment, nor even the love of God and of our neighbors, by wandering our thoughts everywhere. (St. Basil of Caesare, “Three Holy Hierarchs”)

The main work - keeping guard of mind and heart, riddance of sinful thoughts... One must not allow any indiscriminate thought at heart, and each to meet with a question: Where from and why you come? (St. Theophan the Recluse “Path to salvation”)

“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation”
(Matthew 26:41)

The mind must be...somewhat nailed to a single place and subject, not to have fun and not to wander through passionate thoughts. (St. Theophan the Recluse “Path to salvation”)

Obtain a peaceful spirit and thousands around you will be saved.
(St Seraphim of Sarov, “Living, directives”)

Perfect attention of the mind is the perfect detachment it from every visible and mental thing. Perfect detachment is the concentration of the mind within itself. (St. Ignatius Brianchaninov, “Ascetic experiences”)

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