

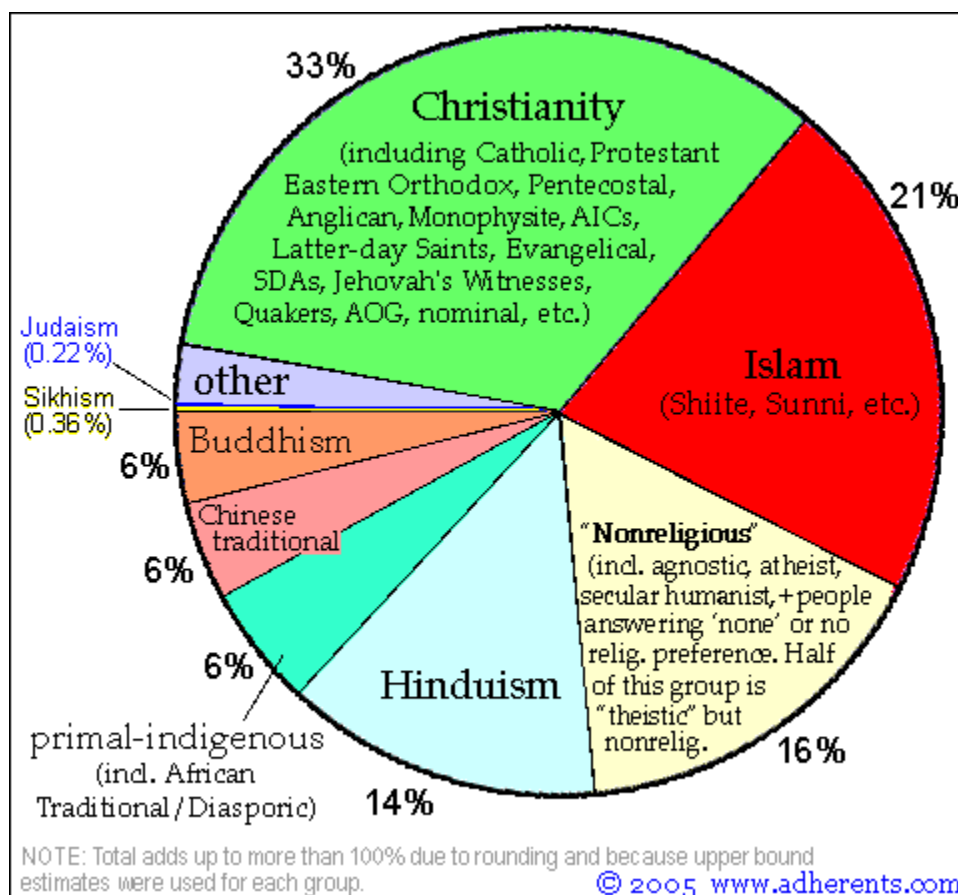
## Important Religions Which Affected the Early Church

Label	Approximate number of adherents in 2005 <sup>1</sup>	Place of origin	Year of origin (approximately)
Christianity	2,100,000,000	Israel	33 AD
Hinduism	900,000,000	India	1700 – 1100 BC
Taoism/Confucianism <sup>2</sup>	400,000,000	China	700 – 480 BC
Buddhism	376,000,000	China	480 BC
Judaism	14,000,000	Israel	1700 BC
Zoroastrianism	2,600,000	Iran	1600 BC

<sup>1</sup> Estimates of numbers of adherents in Christ's time are unavailable

<sup>2</sup> Shown below as "Chinese traditional"

Current state of major world religions:<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> In the five years since this chart was drawn, Islam has increased significantly. Muslim authorities place their population at 1.66 billion or about 27% of the world's population. The CIA's estimate is slightly less at 1.33 billion.

By the first century BC several cultures had arisen and greatly influenced the eastern hemisphere. In Asia and Australasia a large and widespread civilization dominated and religions such as Hinduism, Confucianism, and Buddhism had encouraged ethical behavior. The Chinese had invented gunpowder, writing, printing, and settled agriculture before 400 BC when the Great Wall was built.

In Europe, Greece had risen and fallen but not before it influenced the world with its art and philosophy. The Roman Empire controlled most of the western Mediterranean, western Europe, and northern areas including what is now the British Isles, Baltic States, and western Germany. Rome's system of government and civil engineering feats led to great cultural luxuries as well as intense class and race struggles.

In the Middle East and Africa, people concentrated on engineering sciences, agriculture, and the rule of law. The Code of Hammurabi was promulgated in the 19<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> Century BC and Zoroaster introduced the struggle between good and evil and taught that good behavior leads to happiness