

Confucianism



Confucius

- Confucius was one of the most important scholars in Chinese history.
- He was born around 550 B.C. at a time when the government was having trouble keeping order and warlords controlled much of the countryside.





- He believed that the key to peace and social order was for people to behave with good character and virtue.
- Virtue is behaving fairly and with justice toward others.
- His Golden Rule of Behavior was **“What you do not like when done unto yourself, do not unto others.”**
- His goal was for all relationships to have peace and harmony.

- He believed a good ruler was one who treated his people fairly and was kind to them.
- Confucius was not a religious prophet or even a religious leader.
- He was a teacher and Confucianism is thought of as a philosophy or ethical system based on good deeds and morality rather than a religion.



Five Basic Relationships

Confucius believed if each relationship was based on kindness, there would be peace and harmony in the country.

- Ruler and subject
- Father and son
- Husband and wife
- Older brother and younger brother
- Friend and Friend

Confucian Influence in Government

- Wudi, the Han emperor of China in 121 B.C., declared that Confucianism would be the official guiding practice for the Chinese government during his reign.
- He hired Confucian scholars to make up his government staff.
- Confucian philosophy continued to have a great influence on Chinese government for almost 2,000 years.



Modern Confucian Influence



- Even since the Communist revolt in China in 1949, many in China still support the teaching of Confucius and his emphasis on dealing with others fairly.
- Many historians see Confucianism as one of the foundations of Chinese society.