

## Buddha: Citizen of the World For All Ages

"Hate is never conquered by hate, hate is only conquered by love." One day, I found this quote by Buddha on a lunch box note from my mom because she knows I like positive quotes. Buddha changed the world by teaching people how to find happiness in a world that he thought was full of misery and sorrow. Born a prince named Siddhartha Guatama in ancient India sometime between the 6<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C., he had everything money could buy and a loving family. Yet, all he could see in life was despair and misery. It bothered him greatly knowing that he might face pain, old age, and illness and would definitely face death. One day, he met a monk, and this changed his world and ours.

The monk appeared to have found happiness. Siddhartha then decided to become a monk and traveled for six years, searching for peace and joy. He began to think that there was no answer. Then, one day when Siddhartha was resting under a fig tree, a thought occurred to him that could be a way to end all suffering. He realized that life was ruled by the Four Noble Truths, which explain suffering. To stop suffering, people must follow basic laws called the Eightfold Path. This is similar to the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule found in the Bible, but it also includes meditation and working on yourself.

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Our Lady of Perpetual Help

After Siddhartha discovered this path, monks began calling him "Buddha," which means "Awakened One." Since there is still so much hate and violence in the world, people still need to learn Buddha's ways. As a citizen of the world, Buddha's ideas can speak to everyone, regardless of their religion. It is hard to believe that someone who lived over 2,500 years ago still has a great effect on our world, and I wish that more people would follow his ideas. In our foyer on a shelf, my family has a laughing Buddha statue that reminds me to greet each day and every one I meet with joy and peace.