



# The Face of Change

**B**eginning with our recent history some 200 years ago, our story is one that brought with it a Christian-based ethics and morals.

The winds of change, however, haven't stopped.

In the past few years or so, you may have noticed that there's a new face in town. No, we're not talking about "Mr Secular".

In fact, this "icon" has become so familiar he's almost everywhere – he might be in your garden, or decorating your coffee table, and he might even be waiting for you at the newsagency lottery counter.

Who is he?

He's name is none other than Buddha.

## Differences

Now, Christians who believe Jesus' command to "share the good news everywhere" certainly don't win any popularity awards, especially in today's supposedly progressively secular society, where religion is alright but only if it is kept private. Fewer people today, it seems, really want to be seen "with Jesus"!

Now Buddha is different. People like Buddha, because Buddha's subtle smile accepts whatever you believe. Buddha doesn't give us "commands" like Jesus does (for example Jesus says, "if you love me you'll keep my commandments") – no, Buddha is so much more obliging.

And Buddha's statue is available now at almost every gift, garden and variety store.

So, what's happening here? Are we really becoming more secular, or are we replacing one faith with another?

Stay with us. In a moment, we'll examine Jesus' own words.

## What Jesus Said

To a people not unlike ourselves, this is what Jesus said, almost 4000 years ago, about the religious and superstitious icons that were beginning to invade community life:

*"The images of their gods you are to burn in the fire. Do not covet the silver and gold on them, and do not take it for yourselves, or you will be ensnared by it, for it is detestable to the LORD your God. Do not bring a detestable thing into your house or you, like it, will be set apart for destruction. Utterly abhor and detest it, for it is set apart for destruction." (Deuteronomy 7:25-26)*

So, the next time you're tempted to rub the tummy of a Buddha statue "just for good luck" think again. We'd do well to remember Jesus' words: *"I am the way, the truth, and the life"...* and *"You shall have no other gods before me"*.



By John Klassek