



## **5 Starter Facts About Orthodox Christianity**

1. Orthodox Christianity is compiled of numerous self-governing Churches with common tradition and worship. The nominal head is the Patriarch of Constantinople. Approximately 12% of the world's Christians and 4% of the world population are Orthodox, and this number is decreasing as other branches grow.
2. Eastern Christianity stresses maintaining the form of worshipping God passed on from the very beginnings of Christianity. Eastern Christians believe that they confess the true doctrine of God in the right (orthodox) way. By preserving the inherited teachings of the Apostles, adherents believe they are more aware of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit being present both in history and the present day.
3. The Old Testament of the Bible is based on the ancient Jewish translation into Greek called the Septuagint, not the Hebrew translation.
4. Fasting is an essential part of Orthodox tradition. Adherents are expected to fast every Wednesday and Friday, along with four main fasting periods during the year: Lent (40 days in spring), Fast of the Apostles (in June), Dormition fast (two weeks in August), and the Christmas fast (40 days before Christmas).
5. Unlike Western tradition of Christmas supremacy, Easter is the principal festival of Eastern Orthodoxy. Eastern Orthodox Christmas also generally lacks the Western commercial tradition. It is celebrated on January 7th in the Gregorian Calendar – 13 days after other Christians.

Learn more at:

<https://www.goarch.org/-/the-fundamental-teachings-of-the-eastern-orthodox-church>

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/subdivisions/easternorthodox\\_1.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/subdivisions/easternorthodox_1.shtml)

*These five points are not meant to be comprehensive or authoritative. We hope they encourage you to explore this spirituality more deeply and seek out members of this community to learn about their beliefs in action. In understanding our differences we will better understand our common humanity.*

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