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Religion and Spirituality – what differentiates Religion from Spirituality?

By Vijay Kumar

Religion and Spirituality – what differentiates Religion from Spirituality?

Religion is "absolute truth of life" of the physical manifested world. It is Religion and not Spirituality which forms the basis of the present society we live in. In the present the needs for following a Religion being at its minimum... it is easy to follow any Religion. Anyone... even a layman can follow any Religion but not Spirituality?

What vastly differentiates Religion and Spirituality? Religion... if it forms the core of the physical manifested world... it is the Spirituality (the truth of our Soul within) which upholds the values in the society. Without Spirituality the physical manifested world cannot sustain for long but in the absence of religion... the society can survive on its own.

It is Spirituality (the truth of our real self... our Soul within) which forms the core of the cosmic world. The physical manifested world is a reality in terms of the senses (which guide every human being on its earthly journey). In the cosmic world... our physical manifested world does not hold good for there is nothing solid in the Cosmos. Everything in the Cosmos is made up of the basic building block of the Cosmos which comprise of atoms and molecules alone.

Religion is meant for passing of the physical manifested life in a meaningful manner. Unable to understand the nature of God... humanity has built for itself various religious centers all over the globe. These religious centers are they a mosque, temple or a church... provide a succor to the ever ailing society. They quench the thirst of an average human being... one who does not have time or the resources to contemplate directly on God the Almighty.

Indulgence in Spirituality is not meant for the average human being. To be able to fathom the depths of the Scriptures of the various religions of the world (the core truths of Spirituality)... one needs to dive deep into the pearls of wisdom contained in the various sacred Scriptures of the world.

Spirituality is totally oblivious of a religion. In the field of Spirituality one need not go to a mosque, temple or a church in search of God. It is contemplation and only contemplation which shall lead one to God the Almighty.

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Spirituality (contrary to religion) is all about the spirit existing within every human being neigh every living being (Jiva as we call it in Hinduism). It is truth of every life prevailing on Mother Earth. It is the real self of us which exists within every living being since the birth of that body in the form of an individual soul. Spirituality and Religion are the two fundamentals of life which every living being is required to follow simultaneously.

One can live without Religion but not without Spirituality for Spirituality forms the core of very existence of every living being. It is the spirit within every human being that we exist as a physical form on Mother Earth. We may or may not indulge in understanding Spirituality or a Religion but inherently every living being pursues the path of Spirituality in every manifestation. Spirituality is that fundamental of life which cannot be ignored by one.

To be able to understand the basics of the Spirituality (not religion) one needs to understand the

underlying meaning of the various sacred Scriptures existing on Mother Earth. Whatever our religious masters teach us on the physical plane may not be a truthful representation of whatever is contained in the sacred Scriptures. Many commentaries may exist related to a particular sacred Scripture but all may not be correct or rightly represent the facts contained therein.

To be able to interpret the sacred Scriptures correctly one needs to understand the inner meaning of the core teachings contained therein. Spirituality in other words can only be best understood from a realized master. Only those who have reached the level of Mahavira, Gautama Buddha, Jesus Christ or Prophet Mohammed can deliver the humanity of its ills.

On the contrary going to a temple, mosque or a church can provide temporary succor to the ailing humanity but it is only Spirituality which can provide a permanent relief. Religion provides relief in day-to-day life but Spirituality liberates one forever from the cycle of birth and death. Religion is primarily a following of an enlightened master... it is only the correct interpretation of his teachings that one can follow spirituality to its logical end.

Buddhism Religion relates to the teachings of Gautama Buddha. The Islamic Religion is based on the teachings of Prophet Mohammed. Jainism (which can not be rightly called as a Religion but a way of life) is based on the collective teachings of the various Tirthankars (enlightened souls). Similarly Christianity is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Following the teachings of Mahavira, Gautama Buddha, Jesus Christ or Prophet Mohammed... One can definitely reach the higher portals of Religion but to become one like Mahavira, Gautama Buddha, Jesus Christ or Prophet Mohammed one needs to understand the core teachings of the realized masters themselves in a totally unadulterated form.

In a nutshell, if we desire to understand the fundamentals of life itself and reach the end of the cosmic journey... we need to understand Spirituality in totality. And on the contrary if we desire to live the present physical manifested life in the best manner possible then following the dictates of Religion alone would suffice.

Vijay Kumar... The Man who Realized God in 1993 explains what differentiates Religion from Spirituality. Subscribe free Newsletter "Spiritual Secrets Unveiled" – Explore hidden cosmic truths – Glossary of Words in Hinduism

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PSYCHOTHERAPY, SPIRITUALITY, AND AGING

By Dr. Dorree Lynn

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As I work with people fifty and over, I am aware that no matter how important the psychologically related issues of their personal lives may be, it is rare when spirituality doesn't become an issue fairly early in our work together. As my patient, Jamie, a tall, shy, sixty-three year old woman said: "Although I entered therapy to try to come to terms with so many possibilities that I have never considered before, such as my failing health, my dislike of my body which no longer holds its shape, my fear of being alone, wondering what I would do if my husband Sam dies before me, and, of course, dealing with my own potential death, the truth is that I never really expected to feel so peaceful and serene as I aged. I think it has to do with my new interest in spirituality and what meaning it holds for me. I have found myself going to church again after a lapse of many years. I'm still not sure I believe in God, but I do seem to believe in something greater than myself." Quietly she looked at me, a question in her lovely blue eyes. Finally, she asked: "Do you believe in God?"

Somewhere in mid-life many people begin to realize they are not going to live forever. Often, as with Jamie, they enter psychotherapy to deal with very real life issues only to find that they flow easily between talking about their personal dynamics and their cosmic beliefs. A 1995 Gallup poll found that the older a person is, the more important the rituals of religion were likely to be. Also, findings are consistent that older people who use religion to cope do better psychologically and physically than those who do not.

As we age, the concept of spirituality --whether through or apart from religious ritual -- takes on greater significance. Since our population is aging and for the first time in our history seniors will outnumber youth, perhaps there will be a change in the ways our society views both age and spirituality. Ultimately we need to move towards the ultimate answer, which is as old as time: We need to give back and to love.

This column's for you,

DR. D

Dorree Lynn, PH.D

Dr. Dorree Lynn is co-founder of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Psychotherapy and a practicing clinician in New York and Washington, DC. Dr. Lynn served on the executive board of the

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American Academy of Psychotherapists and she is on the editorial board of their publication, Voices. She is also a regular columnist for the Washington, DC newspaper, The Georgetown. Dr. Lynn is a noted speaker and well known on the lecture circuit.

All Christian Writings



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