

Religion vs. Spirituality

Much time and effort is spent clarifying the difference between religion and positive spirituality in the rehabilitative process. This paper is written to specifically clarify the inequality between the two.

Religion is knowledge about God while spirituality is knowing God. Religion satisfies the mind and emotions. Spirituality satisfies the soul. Religion puts on its best manners, cloths and face on Sundays (or on special Holy Days) or whenever certain people are around. Spirituality behaves itself everyday and everywhere, even when all alone. Religion is working as hard as we can for God. Spirituality is God working as hard as He can in us after we have made our decision to turn our will and life over to His care.

Religion will cause a person to be found in church (or a place of worship) everyday, if necessary. Spirituality will cause the church (or place of worship) to be found in the person, everyday if necessary. Religion will make us do a lot of things we really don't want to do. Spirituality will make us do only what we should do, because the desire is in our heart.

Religion will make a certain set of "good habits" form us. Spirituality will cause us to form "good habits". A person works on their religion. Spirituality works on the person. Religion will cause us to do good. Spirituality causes us to be good and do good as well.

Religion will make us look good to others, while Spirituality makes us look good to God. Religion is concerned with showing "love, joy, peace..." etc. Spirituality is concerned with possessing "love, joy, peace..." etc. and thereby automatically producing these positive attributes.

Religion makes us more pleased with ourselves than with God. Spirituality makes us pleased with God but never really completely satisfied with ourselves. With religion, the human is the dominant entity. With spirituality the creator is all in all. Religion is powered by love of self. Spirituality is powered with the love of God. Religion will allow a person to feed the poor but hate their neighbor. Spirituality will cause us to love everyone.

Religion allows a person to worry about how people are treating them. Spirituality, however, causes us to be more concerned about how we are treating others. Religion will make us feel like we deserve or can earn "heaven". Spirituality will cause us to know that "heaven" is a gift of God. Religion will sometimes make people "sick" of another person. Spirituality will sometimes make us sick of ourselves. People should see the beauty of the Godly life and desire it. Spirituality attracts. Religion is what we, since time's beginning, have been offering to God. Spirituality is what God, since time's beginning, has been offering to us. This then is the chief difference between the two: Religion arises from the earth; spirituality comes down from heaven. To get religion, one must sometimes give up certain "things". To get spirituality, you give up everything out of love for God and receive His gift of grace.

Religion by no means is all negative, but sometimes it does get in the way of spirituality when "the religion" becomes god. As a gym or spa is to an individual who has decided to become more physically fit and healthy, so is religion to the one who is seeking spiritual fitness and a method to develop and exercise their spirituality.