

James
It is time
to grow
up!

Men to Men Ministry

Lesson 7

True Religion

James 1: 26-27



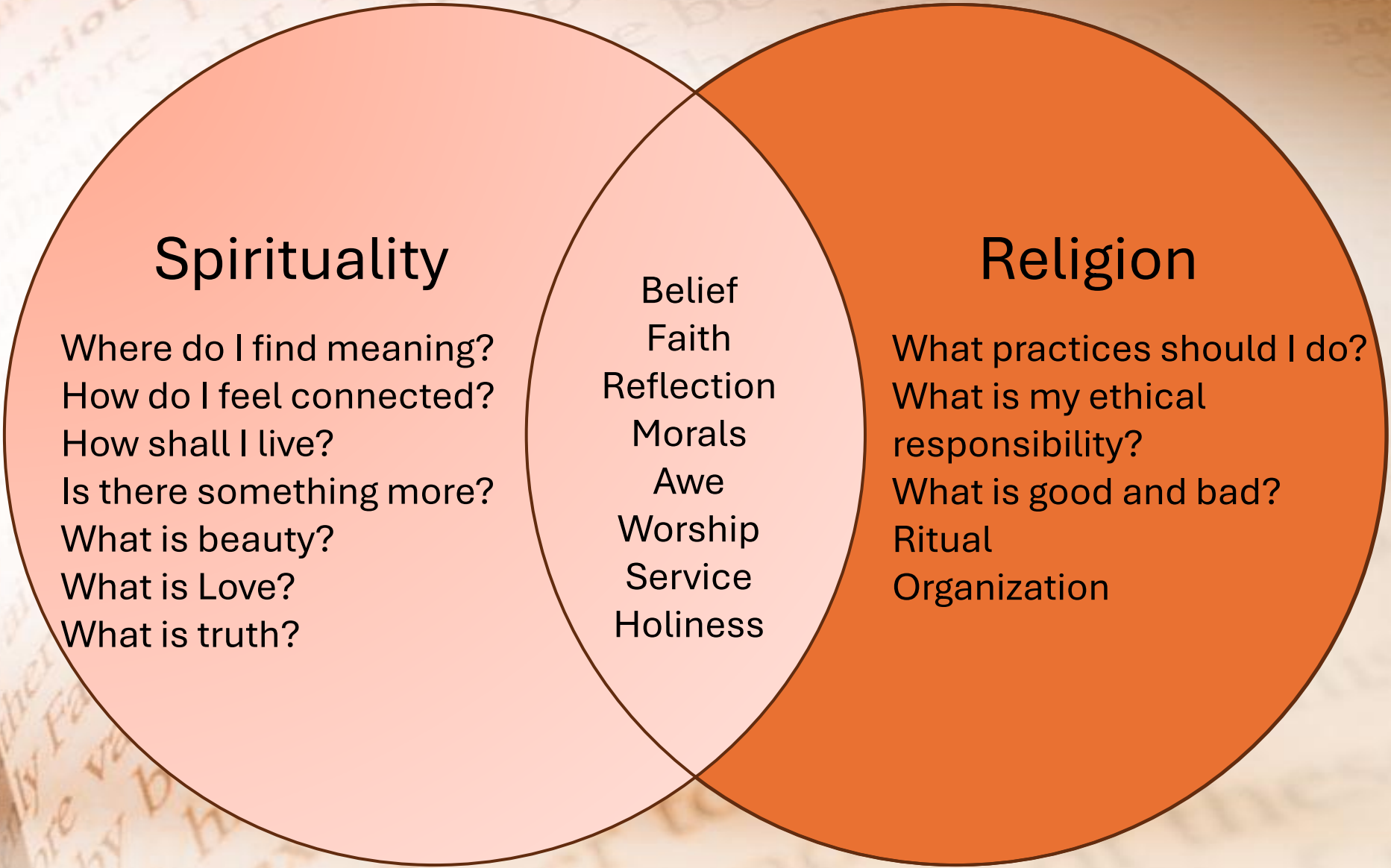
What are some of the advantages to Religion

- **Community and support**
- **Rituals and traditions**
- **Moral and Ethical guidance**
- **Sense of purpose and meaning**
- **Mental health benefits**
- **Opportunities for service..**

RELIGION

- **Θρησκεία – thrēskeía**

- **ACTS 26:5 “since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I lived a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our **religion**.”**
- **Colossians 2:18 “{Take care that} no one keeps defrauding you of your prize by delighting in humility and the **worship** of the angels, taking his stand on {visions} he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,**
- **James 1:26 “If anyone thinks himself to be **religious**, yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his {own} heart, this person's **religion** is worthless.”**
- **James 1:27 “Pure and undefiled **religion** in the sight of {our} God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, {and} to keep oneself unstained by the world.**



Spirituality

Where do I find meaning?
How do I feel connected?
How shall I live?
Is there something more?
What is beauty?
What is Love?
What is truth?

Belief
Faith
Reflection
Morals
Awe
Worship
Service
Holiness

Religion

What practices should I do?
What is my ethical responsibility?
What is good and bad?
Ritual
Organization

Group One – Jewish Christians

1. An absolute requirement of the Law - God's only mission
 - a) Judaizers – Circumcision before you can be saved
 - b) Ethnic responsibility to continue the favor of the People.
 - c) Gentile (proselyte) requirement of keeping the total law
 - a) Not grafted in the covenant of Moses
 - b) Grafted in to the covenant of Abraham (faith)
 - d) Both works and faith are required for salvation.
 - e) Messianic Jew “To the Jew first then to the Gentile”
2. God had a provision for the Gentile – God's two missions
 - a) Circumcision for the Gentile converts
 - b) Exception to the Law on some points.
 - a. Dependence upon ethnic, cultural, and geographical conditions
 - b. Gentiles were an extension of the Covenant
 - c. Separate but equal
3. Two missions Jewish believers and Gentile Believers
 - 1) “The Superior way” – God's plan is the source of Christianity
 - 2) Circumcision was seen as an outward sign of an inward change.
 - 3) A ritual beyond Christian Baptism.

Simon Zealot

Pharisees

Peter

Barnabas

James

Matthew

Group 2 – Christian Jews

1. Acknowledged the two missions of God
 - a) DEI for the whole world
 - b) Home Rule
 - c) Greatest error of Judaism was the exclusion of Gentiles
 - d) Rituals and customs by conditions.
2. Only one mission of God – To all the nations
 - a) Jews were called to be holy and change all nations
 - b) Circumcision not important at all, (Failure Ritual)
3. Grace only
 - a) Rejection of the Law
 - b) No need to keep all the customs and special days
 - c) Jews were no longer special, on of many peoples.

Silas

Barsabbas

Mark

Luke

Paul

John

Titus

What is religion?

Atheist – There is no god.

Humanist – Nothing in particular.

Agnostic – I don't know if there is a God

Deism – Higher Power

Theist – There is a God

Pantheist – There are many Gods

Humanistic theist – I am God

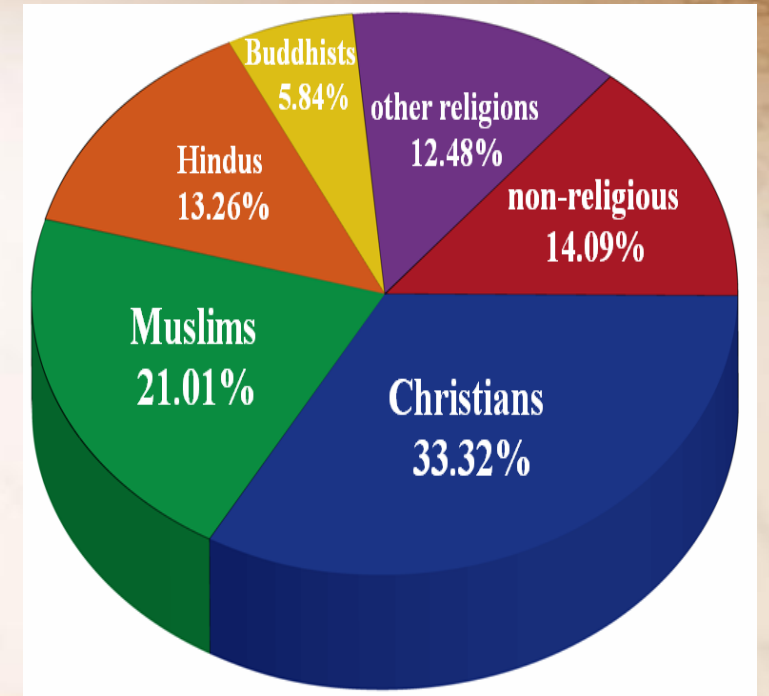
Agnostic theist – God is but he does not care.

Practical theist – God sets ethics for society

Ritualistic theist – God is honored by my rituals

Religious theist – God sets my morals in worship

Worshipful theist – God is the center of all my actions



Pure Religion

26 If anyone thinks himself to be religious,

and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart,

this man's religion is worthless.

27 This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father,

to visit orphans and widows in their distress,

and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

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ROMANS 12:1,2 Phillips Translation

With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to him and acceptable by him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God re-mold your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity.