

# Religiosity Lost It's Meaning with A Passage of Time: Rise of Spirituality Is the Ultimate Reach

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(Dadabhagawan.org, n.d.)

Spirituality and religion are two sides of same coin, where one states about the inquisitiveness, curiosity and awareness; other is currently being associated with the blind faith, following a system of rituals and has it's origin from fear. Swami Vivekananda once said that “spirituality is the backbone of India” (Vivekananda's Teachings From Religions To Spirituality, 2023). Swami ji believed that religion and spirituality are both to unveil the inner science of consciousness so that the entire universe can be learned. Ancient India is known for its rich heritage in meditation, yoga, pranayama and mantras. (Explore a world unlike any other, n.d.) Mayong village – the land of black magic, a place few kms away from Kamakhya temple in Assam, is still a place to many wizards and tantric – many documentaries, articles, interviews supports this, is vivid association for claiming India's richness still lies in mantras.

(Vivekananda's Teachings From Religions To Spirituality, 2023) Anything that separates us from the Universe is a sin while anything that brings us close to the universe, cosmos is a virtue. Keeping this idea as origin point, Religion is virtue that brings us close to cosmos and God. Religion is that one idea that can help in increasing the level of spirituality, currently the standard is falsely set by associating the concept with false believe and imposition on others. Spirituality is above all and is the ultimate reach of the human soul.

This paper is a descriptive study to explore a deep insight on the purpose of life through a way of spirituality, personal transformation, achieving inner peace, and adopting a lifestyle in modern life with improving mental health condition. Rapid change can be easily adopted through a way of spiritual presence in life.

**Keywords-** Religion, Spirituality, Learning, psychological impact, Meditation

## 1. Introduction

Someone has very rightfully refined it by saying that “Religion is belief in another's experience. Spirituality is one's own experience- Anonymous”. The customs, ideology, pattern for practicing a worship, is an age of ritual that is being followed, and (probably) with some changes the ripples are still into existence. The same phenomenon which was sometimes back was meant keeping some agenda in place has become a part of the process. Spirituality is above this ideation and age old concept, it is a feeling of one's own existence, falling in love with God , admiring the perception of your own self, inculcating value within that brings one more closer to almighty. As mentioned in the quotes of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin “”We are not human beings on a spiritual journey. We are spiritual beings on a human journey” (Chardin, n.d.), this resemble the very identity of existence lies in spirituality, religion is just a mode to attain that spiritual space of lord.

### Research Question:

- Is there a difference between religion and spirituality?
- Does it mean if one is not religion than he is not spiritual?

### Purpose of the study

This study aims to explore the above research curiosities and identify the potential reach of religion and spirituality. This study also tries to find if there is any change in the understanding of the religion and spirituality from generation to generation. The insights of the paper has been drawn majorly from the secondary resource and also a part after discussing it with people.

### Literature Review

Be it a theist or atheist, everyone entails into a deep thought about the fundamentals; where one ever ponders about the fundamental question of their existence, spirituality comes in existence (Austin, 2021). Theist or a believer of almighty practices some rituals and patterns of believes to come close to God while one who is atheist may not indulge into a religion practices.

From the above episode of thoughts a conclusion can be drawn that that spirituality exists in every means, in every being; while religion is a choice.

A verse from Bhagvad Gita ( vani of Srivigraha) says that destiny will always play it's role, every birth will be followed by a death and death by a life.

**Chapter 2, Verse 27 Srimad Bhagavad gita (kanpur, n.d.):**

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।  
तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥”

"One who has taken his birth is sure to die, and after death, one is sure to take birth again. Therefore, in the unavoidable discharge of your duty, you should not lament."

Every chapter of life is destined to happen, one do not have a control on it. If the existence is there, spirituality exists.

**Karma is destined to play it's role**

**Chapter 2, Verse 47 Srimad Bhagavad Gita**

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।  
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ २-४७

“You have the right to work but never to bear it's fruits.

Let not the fruits of action be your motive, nor let your attachment be to inaction”. (kanpur D. a., n.d.)

The lessons of Bhagavad Gita also gives a direction that based on your karma (your work), your birth is destined; religiosity (practicing the religion practices in a particular manner) though can be a mode to bring you close to almighty but not enough to take the best form of birth in the next life or to attain liberation (moksha).

A significant episode of mythology is embedded in the Gajendra Moksha (a story taken from Shrimad Bhagavatam). The protagonist of the story was Raja Indradyumna (Wikipedia, n.d.) a strong devotee of Parabrahma Sri Narayana. Once the king took a vow of silence in his devotion during when a saint named Agastya came and seeing the king not giving him a recognition, cursed him to take a birth of Gaja, an elephant. Similar such stories are imbibed in our mythology, whether it be kind Baharat taking a form a dear in the next birth or kind Indrayumna taking the birth of elephant and attaining moksha in his Gaja form. These reflection of stories evidenced that though one practices religion practices, chanting, karma is defined and spirituality is the very essence of life which reincarnate with the soul's reincarnation. Religion is to hold and attain spirituality.

ॐ नमो भगवते तस्मै यत एतच्चिदात्मकम् । पुरुषायादिबीजाय परेशायाभिधीमहि ॥

यस्मिन्निदं यतश्चेदं येनेदं इदमेव यः । यतश्च परमं यत्परं न प्रपद्ये स्वयम्भुवम् ॥ (Bhagavata Purana 8.3.2-3)

(Bhagawat Purana)

Gajendra (King in the past birth) could recall his past birth and devoted through deep devotion and meditation to the almighty and show his obeisance. His devotion and prayers engrafted in the form of stotra. Gajendra could not follow traditional practices but his devotion is the offering to God. This enlighten us towards that religion is a way of paying homage to spirituality. The same can also be

understood via considering Spirituality being a broader horizon while religion a subset of it. Religion hence is also far beyond the strict age-old traditional practices.

### **The decline of Institutional Religiosity**

History unveils that Kabir Das (c. 1398–1518), a mystic poet who was born in a Muslim family did not adhere to a system of religion. He was deeply influence by Hindu religion lost in Ram bhakti. He is called by the names of Ram, Allah, and Hari. He rejected the rituals and practices, rather give a voice to that spirituality is within.

Indian history is very rich; many of the saints and philosopher have farsighted the events of differences between religion and spirituality where spirituality is the shell to odd events and religion is to gain that shell. Further, religion and spirituality are only medium to reach the enlightenment.

### **Spirituality is far beyond the food habits**

Swami Vivekananda (Shankar, 2021) was once questioned about him being non-vegetarian. To this, Swamiji very beautifully explained that spirituality is beyond the eating habits. The almighty has no means with one's eating habit, rather life is designed in a manner where consumption habit is predefined. On the basis of work and labour, consumption habit should be set, if more labour is required meats, non veg food is preferable to provide one with more energy, same level of source, protein cannot be unfortunately be gained from plant insights. Food should never be factors to define once devotion towards God. Further Swamiji's life (a youth icon), was more important for him at that point than he segregating the food into different categories and making a choice. The one who reached high on spiritual spectrum can never distinguish food categories and define the devotion; love for God is much ahead and far from choice, prayers, food habits and clothes. Devotion is from within, spirituality is from within and religion is from within. It's not about Hinduism, Islam or Christianity, but rather communities disconnecting from the traditional rituals.

### **Turning point of spirituality**

Transition, change is a constant mechanism, every transformation gives a way to life. Siddhartha (Sangeeta, 2021), wealthy prince left his luxury and comfort to seek peace within followed by liberation. Paulo Coelho (Coelho, 1993), a shepherd boy left his familiar life to discover treasure by following the omen of universe and pattern of dream. There is no theory or logic that defines it but say it a prophecy or spiritual awakening that brings a turning point.

### **Spirituality – the ultimate reach**

The one who is generous, honest, kind and loving, will not be involved into a vilest of the activity or deeds that are directed against anyone. Bhakti is supreme form of devotion through which one rescues himself/herself from all kinds of fear and manifestation of fanaticism (Vivekananda). Bhakti is about love, and this love is an instrument to liberation.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Need (McLeod, 2026) coined by Sir Abraham Maslow in his framework of Need Hierarchy mentions about that after every need, a new demand calls for, but the final destination is always the self-actualization.



Maslow's hierarchy of needs

(Thought Co., n.d.)

Self-actualization, the final destination is reached only after the satisfaction of basic needs, for eg- one who is very rich , who is satisfied with food, shelter, love, safety, money, tries to attain peace through meditation, looks for self-attainment, higher level of life. In Gajendra Moksha (Bhagawat Purana), the king there in the last birth satisfied with all the luxuries of life (in the previous birth) attain Moksha in the form of Gaja (elephant) thought being in the animal form.

Life unfolds with more opportunities if and only if the basic and lower needs are satisfied.

## **Spirituality and Religion are different**

Spirituality (Dadabhagawan.org, n.d.) is a means through which one attains enlightenment , gives a better clarity and vision to see things that others cannot foresee. The religion refrain one from doing bad to others and there is always a scope of development.

## **Potential Critiques and challenges**

Life challenges and critiques has to do with the personal limitation of faith. The conflict happens between the mind and heart, science and faith. However, one may not forget that life existence itself is a mystery that no science can answer till date.

Challenges, obstacles are a part of existence, if makes life more impactful and beautiful. The self-love and love for all comes with the faith, faith comes through believe on one self and their purpose of existence, this is what we call as spirituality. This spirituality can be attained via means of ritual practices, calls to be as one religion.

## **Research Gap**

The broader scale of thought has need been analysed in any of the research work. Though some papers tries to reveal about spirituality and religion separately or with the mediating factor of AI, no complete notion been formed about the nature of religion and spirituality and how they are different.

## Research Methodology

Majorly secondary source of data been critically reviewed to draw the conclusion. Our history, Purnas, Vedas, Mythological facts and some of the interviews has been critically assessed and addressed to draw a certain level of conclusion. Some available recorded videos have also been a part of discussion in this study. Why does religion comes in the way of enlightenment, as a conflicting debate topic as the purpose is to look towards the sky, the universe, the spiritual space.

## Understanding facts

Each story is intrigued to know more. It's a manner of self-realization and self-cognition to come at a point. One may not force on someone their believe and ideology, but depiction by listening to great people and through written facts in our history, this paper tries to reveal some understanding and faith.

## Mother – The Nurturer

If one get's to know their true nature, they are believed to someone next to God. (bliss) Lot of maturity in spiritual life comes with time and age. People were very likely to get attracted towards Swami Vivekananda. Through Vivekananda, they found Ramkrina Parahanansa, and then get got mother, creator of universe, Sri Maa Sarada. Maa Sarada is believed to know her true nature, the creator, the nurturer.

## Meditation, Religion and Spirituality

Ravi Shankar addressed this in one of the interviews (Living) that spirituality unites all religion together, and that religion has it's own role and nature to play. Meditation is not a religion, similarly religion is not a spirituality. (Gurangadas)The purpose of spiritual; practice is to have self control.

## Discussion and Conclusion

यावानर्थ उदपाने सर्वतः सम्प्लुतोदके |  
तावान्सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः || 46|| (Bhavat Gita verse 2.46)

This it-self ends the discussion as the shloka reveals that there is no need of small pond when entire Earth is covered with water.

One takes a form in next birth , and let say born in a different religion, however the broader area, the essence of sould remains the same- to attain liberation, attain God, Ishwara, Allaha, Bhagawan, Thakur.

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