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## Religions versus Spirituality

By Anneli Driessen Ph.D., Ph.D., MCC – March 19, 2021

More than 20% of the population describe themselves as “spiritual but not religious”, which is growing. ([www.SBNR.org](http://www.SBNR.org))

Here are five key distinctions between many organized religions and spirituality:

- Many organized religions represent God as an external entity, often associated with a male gender. Spirituality portrays God as an energy that is the integral aspect of humanity and all life here and Beyond.
- Many organized religions demand that one follows an external set of rules and Dogma. They often are based upon the teachings of a prophet or other enlightened beings. Spirituality encourages the individual to seek his or her own experiences through inner exploration and discovery.
- Many organized religions are about the depth of knowledge of their beliefs. Spirituality is about the depths of one’s consciousness.
- Many organized religions teach or preach about God. Spirituality encourages the individual to acquire *God-consciousness*.
- Many organized religions assert that their method of worship is the one true path to God. Spirituality maintains that all rivers lead to the same ocean.
- Religion tends to divide while spirituality tends to unite.

Numerous Mystic Scholars passionately proclaim that Jesus, the man, himself was spiritual but not religious. However, over the centuries, theologians and church leaders have edited, misinterpreted, and distorted Jesus’ original teachings.

Therefore, it is not surprising that many former churchgoers eventually have grown disillusioned with the Jesus presented by organized religion and “have thrown out the baby with the bathwater” when they stopped attending. But “throwing out the Christ with the Christianity” cuts off access to *Christ consciousness* — an endless source of profound wisdom, inspiration, and joy.

With a more in-depth study of the story of Jesus, one can realize that he did come to this planet not to *be* “the way” but to *lead and show* the way... In other words, Jesus was not a great *exception* but a great *example* of what is possible when human consciousness is expanded to receive the Divine.

Jesus Christ may be the face of Christianity. Still, the authentic Jesus is very different than the Jesus promoted through many organized religions as it is not about Jesus, the man. Still, the Christ-consciousness he exemplified as a potential for all of humanity.

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