

THE VALUE OF RELIGION IN THE SOCIETY

Your Name

Course Title, Course #

mm dd, yyyy

### *The Value of Religion in the Society*

There are estimated to be approximately 4200 religions world-wide. Religion can be thought of as a set of beliefs that provide a relationship between the natural and the supernatural world. It is ultimately social in nature, comprising a group of people who share like ideas about the origins of the world, creation, and life after death. Often, religion involves a certain amount of mythology that is meant to explain natural phenomenon that individuals find mystifying. It also involves a common literature, symbols, and rituals. In addition, it includes a commonly accepted set of rules for governing behavior. Worship of God, a god or gods, or some form of deity is also involved. Some religions have had such an influence over a society or civilization that it has controlled almost every aspect of that society, including as a judicial group and are willing to follow the common beliefs of those around them, to even let system<sup>1</sup>. People want to feel that they belong to a those beliefs control their lives to a great extent, such as individuals do that join a cult.

Religion has also been responsible for launching wars between societies, such as the crusades of the Middle Ages. Groups of like-minded individuals rail against groups with dissimilar beliefs. They determine to force their understandings or philosophies on others, insisting that they are superior, or that their ideology is the only true one in existence<sup>2</sup>. Religious wars have raged through the centuries in many parts of the world and still take place today. Religious intolerance is often connected to a deep-seated sense of racism and heritage. Theological views are handed down from one generation to another. Those from other cultural

---

<sup>1</sup> Mitchell, S. (2009, June 8). *What Does Pure Religion Look Like?* par. 1 Retrieved October 28, 2011 <<http://elev8.com/spirit/scripture-of-the-day/sheeri-mitchell/what-does-pure-religion-look-like/>>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. par. 3.

or ethnic backgrounds are often feared and distrusted. Concern is that their influences will override the cultural heritage of the other society, which includes traditions, ways of thinking, and patterns of living<sup>3</sup>.

People typically find comfort in religion, though. It fills a void for a sense of spirituality and comforts one in times of death. It allows an individual to construct meaning in his life, to see a connection between events in life and possible reasons for those events. Religion also provides a foundation for a society to build on in establishing rules of conduct, as well as positive and negative consequences for following or violating those rules. Religion helps to establish harmony and a sense of belonging among a group of people, provides hope for the future, and a sense of justice for those who are wronged. Finally, it gives people a feeling that someone is in control of the universe and that there is a grand plan for life after death. Religion makes up for what one finds lacking in life<sup>4</sup>.

Religion can be thought of in other terms, such as faith, belief, or a sense of purpose or calling. In this sense, individuals seek to feel that their lives have purpose and that they are committed to that purpose. They are content with their lives and have a sense of being fulfilled. Moreover, what people have faith in varies from one individual or group to another. It can be in the innate goodness of mankind, for example. It can be in the hope for peace among all nations, all people. It might be in the seeking and belief in the power of knowledge. Regardless of how one thinks of religion, though, it can move a person to work hard or to devote himself to helping others<sup>5</sup>. One point is certain. Religion or faith can provide a direction for one's life.

---

<sup>3</sup> Haviland, W. A., Prins, H. E., McBride, B., & Walrath, D. (2010). *Cultural Anthropology: The Human Challenge*. New Jersey: Cengage Learning. p. 225.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 322.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

## Bibliography

Haviland, W. A., Prins, H. E., McBride, B., & Walrath, D. (2010). *Cultural Anthropology: The Human Challenge*. New Jersey: Cengage Learning.

Mitchell, S. (2009). *What Does Pure Religion Look Like?* Retrieved October 28, 2011

<[http://elev8.com/spirit/scripture-of-the-day/sheeri-mitchell/what-does-pure religion-look-like/](http://elev8.com/spirit/scripture-of-the-day/sheeri-mitchell/what-does-pure-religion-look-like/)>.