

# Celestial Grace Temple

## What is Religion ?

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**Religion is the set of beliefs, feelings, dogmas and practices that define the relations between human beings and sacred or divinity.**

A given religion is defined by specific elements of a community of believers: dogmas, sacred books, rites, worship, sacrament, moral prescription, interdicts, and organization. The majority of religions have developed starting from a revelation based on the exemplary history of a nation, of a prophet or a wise man who taught an ideal of life.

A religion may be defined with its three great characteristics:

- Believes and religious practices
- The religious feeling i.e. faith
- Unity in a community of those who share the same faith: the Church.

It is what differentiates religion from magic.

The study of disappeared or existing religions shows the universal character of this phenomenon and a very large variety in the ritual doctrines and practices.

One generally distinguishes the religions called primitive or animists, the Oriental religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, Confucianism, Taoism and the religions monotheists derived from the Bible (Judaism, Christianity, Islam). Christianity has itself given birth to several religions or Christian Churches (Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Evangelic).

The word religion is derived from Latin "religio" (what attaches or retains, moral bond, anxiety of self-consciousness, scruple) used by the Romans, before Jesus Christ, to indicate the worship of the demons.

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The origin of "religio" is debated since antiquity. Cicero said it comes from "relegere" (to read again, to re-examine carefully, to gather) in the meaning "to carefully consider the things related to the worship of gods".

Later, Lucretius, Lactancius and Tertullianus see its origin in "religare" (to connect) to refer "the bond of piety that binds to God".

Initially used for Christianity, the use of the word religion gradually extended to all the forms of social demonstration in connection with sacred.

### **Sacred**

The consciousness and the perception of sacred are constants of religions and constitute the heart of these. The principal components of sacred are:

- The fear of the infinite power, of what nobody can approach without precaution, from where the necessity of a ritual of approach. This fear is at the origin of the religious respect and veneration.
- The mystery of unknowable, of unexplainable, of transcendental.
- The power of the religious objects or symbols and the interdicts that are associated to them.

### **Faith**

In the faith, we may see the consequence of the feeling of man's finitude and of dependence in relation to a force that is beyond him and to which he is subjected.

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Faith is in relation to essential and mysterious principles that are inaccessible to reason and asserts to know the Truth about the "Who?" and the "Why?" of the things (nature, life, universe.

It involves the being of believers in its totality toward something that remains a mystery.

This is why it is illusory to try to convince an adult believer to atheism or that he has better to change for another religion. Only a process of personal and interior maturation (being able to be fed with knowledge or exchanges with the external world) can lead a believer believing to evolve.

May the grace of God be with you always --- Amen.

*Pastor Andy Anderson*  
Celestial Grace Ministry