

Religion

marriage, family and kinship, religion is another important institution.

is also one of the earliest institutions of human society.

From ancient days religion has been influencing human life in human society both primitive and modern.

and every aspect of human life and human society bears the influence of religion.

Religion

very difficult and almost impossible to trace the exact origin of religion. However, as an institution religion plays an important role in society and imparts beliefs and patterns of behavior. Since the days of its arrival man has been intrigued by questions such as why and how this world was created and what happens after death when he fails to get an accurate answer to these questions he began to believe in the existence of a supernatural power which marks the origin of religion.

Religions in India

Religion in India is characterized by a diversity of religious beliefs and practices. The Indian subcontinent is the birthplace of four of the world's major religions namely Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. Religious diversity and religious tolerance are established by the Indian Constitution of India which defines freedom of religion a fundamental right and holds India to be a secular state.

Religions in India

- According to the 2011 census,
- 79.8% of the population of India practices Hinduism
- 14.2% adheres to Islam
- 2.3% adheres to Christianity
- 1.7% adheres to Sikhism
- 0.7% adheres to Buddhism
- 0.4% adheres to Jainism.
- Judaism also have a history in India, and each has at least several thousand adherents in India

Meaning of religion

- Religion is a belief in supernatural power or it refers to the performance of practices which binds together or links human beings with the unseen super power.
- Religion is related to the mysteries of human existence.
- Religion is a belief in God. In other words religion is the human response to the apprehension of something of power, which is supernatural .
- It is the expression of the manner and type of adjustment effected by the people with their conception of the supernatural.

Meaning of religion

- In a strict sociological sense religion is defined as “those institutionalized systems of beliefs, symbols values and practices that provide groups of men with solutions to their questions of ultimate being.
- Thus religion comprises of systems of attitudes beliefs, symbols which are based on the assumption that certain kinds of social relations are sacred or morally imperative and a structure of activities governed or influenced by these systems.

Definitions:

- According to Ogburn, “Religion is attitudes towards superhuman powers.”
- According to J.M. Frazer, “Religion is a belief in powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature of human life.”
- According to H.M. Johnson, “Religion is a more or less coherent system of beliefs and practices concerning a super-natural order of beings, forces places or other entities.”

Definitions:

- According to Malinowski, “Religion is a mode of action as well as a system of belief and a sociological phenomenon as well as a personal experience.”
- Sigmund Freud — “Religion is a collective neurosis.”
- Karl Marx — “Religion is the opiate of the masses.”

Definitions:

Müller in his book “Science of Religion” termed religion as a mental faculty or disposition which enables human to apprehend the divine.”

Tylor in his work “Primitive Culture” defines religion as “a belief in spiritual beings”.

Spencer in his work “Religious Philosophy” describes religion as “the conservation of value.”

As different scholars define religion according to their own views, it is very difficult to agree upon a universally accepted definition that can satisfy everyone. **Because religion is a very complex phenomenon**

it can be defined with six characteristics: **Sacred, myth, community, morality, and religious leaders.**

Components or Basic elements of Religion:

- According to Anderson and Parker religion mainly consists of four primary components such as:
- *(1) Belief in Supernatural Power:*
- Every religion believes in some supernatural power i.e. powers outside of man and the present world. The supernatural powers are believed to influence human life and conditions.

(2) Man's adjustment to Supernatural Powers:

- It is another component of religion. As man is dependent on these supernatural powers hence he must adjust himself to the powers. As a result every religion provides for some external acts or rituals such as prayer; Kirtans Utterance of hymns etc. Non-performance of these rituals regarded as sinful.

(3) Acts defined as Sinful:

- It is another component of religion. Every religion defines some acts as sacred and some other as sinful which suppose to destroy the harmonious relationships between man and god.

(4) Method of Salvation:

- It is another component of religion. Man needs some method by which he can attain salvation or Nirvana or by which harmony between man and god will be re-established by the removal of guilt or bondage. Because every religion consider salvation as the ultimate aim of life. But besides the above components religion may have some other components which are as follows.

(5) Belief in some sacred things:

- Every religion believes on some holy or sacred things which constitute the centre of religion. These sacred or holy things are symbolic. But this belief based on faith.
- For example, Cow is sacred for Hindus.

(6) Procedure of Worship:

- It is another component of religion. Every religion has its own specific procedure of worshipping. The follower of religion worship the supernatural power either in the form of a statute or in a formless manner.

(7) Place of Worship:

- Every religion has its own definite place of worship in which its followers offer their prayer to the supernatural power.
- For example Hindu Worship in a Temple.