

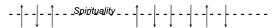
#### **RELIGION**

- Religion as tradition of beliefs concerning the cause, nature and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a supernatural agency.
- wikipedia
- Re-ligare to bind fast; to tie together; to re-link

#### **Exoteric and Esoteric**

Exoteric - the outer expression of a religion

- institution, liturgy, doctrine, architecture, symbols, songs



Esoteric - the inner dimension of a religion

- mystical experience, sense of belonging, inner freedom, healing

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## **JUDAISM**

- Re-linking with God in terms of Covenant
- Human beings created by God as good, but alienated through sin.
- God takes the initiative to restore relationship
- $\bullet$  Covenant a binding agreement that constitutes God and the Hebrews as family. "I will be your God, you will be my people."
- $\bullet \ A \ progression: Noah, Abraham, Moses, David: promise \ of \ Messiah.$



# Christianity

- \* A world religion 2.1 billion members
- + Split from Judaism around 2,000 years ago
- \* Based on belief that Jesus of Nazareth, who had been crucified, was risen from the dead
- Communities, teachings and practices of the followers of Jesus -- Christians.

#### The Good News

- Not the teaching of Jesus
- Not a philosophy of life
- Not a political ideology
- Not a method of asectical practice
- Not a new set of laws to follow
- But . . . "Christ Jesus, who is our righteousness, holiness and redemption (1 Cor. 1:30)."

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### A New Covenant

- + Fulfillment of Jewish covenantal development.
- Jesus establishes a new relationship between humanity and God.
- This new relationship is claimed through faith, not through adherence to the Jewish Law.
- Initiation into the community of believers is through Baptism.
- Eucharist as the ritualized remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ.

## Jesus' Presence to Us

- → Individual, personal, relational
- In and "as" his mystical body, the Church.
- In and "through" Sacramental encounters.
- ◆ Cosmically, through creation.

# Personal Relationship

- + Jesus lives and is present to us.
- + His memories from his life remain.
- \* Scripture as touchpoint.
- + Dialogical prayer.



# Community



- + He is identified with the Christian community.
- \* Where two or more are gathered in His name
- + Church as Christ's visible presence
- + Church as center of His ongoing work on earth
- + Christians as "cells" in the Body of Christ

## Sacramental

- + Sign that communicates grace
- + Church as first Sacrament of Christ's presence



- Sacramentals signs and symbols that facilitate connection
- Sacraments touch-points with Christ's life; consecrates, heals, nourishes.

### Cosmic Presence



- God creates through the Word
- All creation has connection with God through the Word.
- Jesus is the Incarnate Word and is present to all creation.
- + Creation as "iconic"