

Ritual and Religious faith

Ritual is a religious service which involves a series of actions performed in a fixed order. In other words, a ritual is a way of behaving as per prescribed or established form of religious ceremony.

It is observance of a set form or system of rites as a part of public/private worship.

Rituals are practices, services or procedures done as rite, especially at regular intervals in set precise manner.

Religious rituals reinforce the basic tenets of religion. When rituals make people feel good, they reinforce the belief that their religion is the correct one. Religions have their own rituals attached to their beliefs.

Some rituals across religions (like fasting) are specific to one religion while others are practiced throughout.

Ritual gives shape to emotions and helps humans come to terms with the major events of life. They have generally been seen as indispensable in deepening spiritual insight. The repetition of rituals instills religious values and attitudes in the lives of the worshippers.

Rituals motivate and move us. Through ritual we build families and community, we make transitions and mark important events in our lives, we express ourselves in joy and sorrow, and perhaps, most importantly, we create and sustain identity.

Our ancient ancestors used the bond of rituals to create ties of kinship necessary for survival in a world full of dangers.

Rituals formed structure and hierarchy and helped define their places in the world, which in turn led to early forms of worship such as totemism, animism.. and paganism. (modern religious movement incorporating beliefs or practices from outside the main world religions, especially nature worship).

"Modern paganism includes a respect for mother earth"

In increasingly secular times, we may no longer need rituals for our physical survival, but it still remains essential for our mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.

Rituals are expressions of culture.

Ritual keeps us aware. of the meaning of who we are. In times of transition, loss, disconnection and loneliness, rituals offer transformative power. It can provide a language for expression, stability and serve as an integrative force in community, mediate tradition, and offer emotional support.

Rituals survived criticisms (from perspective of rationality, progressive knowledge, science etc.) They do continue to play an important role in human life. We continue to have rituals of healing, rituals to mark rites of passage such as attaining puberty, or getting married, death-rituals etc.

Rituals are ingrained in the spiritual believe system.

As rituals have their roots in religion, they are agents of controlling our behavior in community and through which develop the sense of belongingness.

Metaphorically, rituals are extremely important. A time to rest, replenish and restore ourselves on our long and winding path through life. Rituals help us to re-evaluate our journey thus. and to reaffirm that the path we are following is the right one for us.

Rituals remove us from the ordinary space and time and place us in the sacred space. Even in the world of reason/science, rituals give our lives a sense of meaning and purpose.

The terms sacred (the transcendent realm) and profane (the realm of time, space and cause and effect) have remained useful in distinguishing ritual behavior from other types of actions...the belief systems, myths and the line are viewed as expressions of the nature of the sacred realm in which ritual become the determining the conduct of the individual in a society expressing a relation to the sacred and profane.

Rituals are characteristically symbolic in relation to its reference. Ritual is often described as a symbolic expression of actual social relations, status or the role of individuals in the society.