

The background of the entire image is a close-up of a snake's head, showing its scales and eyes. Overlaid on this is a complex, wavy, hypnotic pattern that resembles a topographical map or a distorted grid. The colors in the pattern range from dark blues and greys to light yellows and oranges, creating a sense of depth and movement. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image, where the pattern is more prominent.

*The differences Between  
Mysticism and Religion;  
Outward Spirituality  
and Inward Spirituality*

*Mark Crawford*



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# The differences Between Mysticism and Religion; Outward Spirituality and Inward Spirituality

As spirit/soul entities in physical/animal form, there are two different yet distinct worlds at our disposal, one conducive to our spiritual self and one designed to provide for our physical self. In the mirror of the physical universe you will likewise find two kinds of people, people who seek the pleasures of spirituality, and people who prefer the pleasures of physical existence. I did not come here to condemn one and praise the other, to have an "Opinion". I came here to share, and so I will not debate you on the varied definition of Righteousness, for I confess to you once again, that I am the greatest of all sinners, the least among you. In truth, just as we are both physical and spiritual, we are all, both, seekers of spirituality and partakers in the pleasures of the flesh. This is both natural and acceptable. There is no condemnation for living life, other living life, being, less than you are capable of being. For the truth is that we are all on The Path, we are all trying to find the AllFather/AllMother. The difference is, that some recognize the Quest and are conscious in it, while others are not consciously engaged and therefore do not recognize their divine purpose, and are directionless in it. That is the difference between the pathway of sorrow and the pathway of contentment.

Being that I myself, am a person of great worldly experience, both positive and negative, I know that those who are not meant to be here will not be here, will have closed the cover, per se, and so it is that I am left speaking to those, the remaining few, who like me, are seekers of spirituality. And so it is that I will break the equation down one more time by telling you that, just as there are two types of worlds and two types of people, there are also two distinct walks on the path that you and I have chosen, the Path of Spirituality - I call them, Outward Spirituality and Inward Spirituality - the way of the Religionist and the way of the Mystic. Lets take a look at the most common form of spirituality, that of Outward practice.

# "Outward Spirituality"

Outward Spirituality is the practice of religion, all religions, recognized and unrecognized. These include all the different factions of Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and all the so labeled innumerable Pagan religions, to include all of the "offshoots" which use combinations of any and all of the above. Religion is religion, not a good thing, not a bad thing. Not one better, not one worse. Religion is nothing more than a "Belief System" put into words and rituals. I call it the practice of external spirituality.

Those who are externally spiritual, people who seek The All by reasoning, by things they imagine God wants, by imagining what God wants them, through long periods of contemplation and practice, to be. These good people do religious work to obtain the virtue of their beliefs. They delight in talking about their beliefs. They delight in showing their virtue through acts such as love and kindness. They find delight in their devotion to the outward expression of ritual and prayer. This is the path of searching for righteousness through actions, by doing things they believe will elevate them in the eyes of their God. The followers of this way believe that as a result of their studies, rituals and prayers that the AllFather/AllMother is close to them. This is a noble walk, but it is the way of the beginner, the milk of spiritual infancy.

Reality has shown us that there are many on this path of religious conviction, who, even after a lifetime of practice, of external spirituality, are in fact void of God. Many of these practitioners have nothing of true spirituality, except the desire. Many of these seekers do not recognize that more often than not, they serve, not The ALL, but instead, that small voice of the ego which constantly tells us right from wrong. Many have been fooled into misidentifying the wishes of their own ego, for the wishes of The All.

Those who walk the path of external spirituality, must always be busy doing some form of outward activity, constantly performing some form of works, or studying their choice of scriptures to bolster their mind against the weakness of the flesh. But in reality, whatever external practices they perform, little is gained, for these practices, in most cases, are the delusionary practices of the false ego, the little "self".

# "Internal Spirituality"

Internal Spirituality is not the way of the novice, it is the way of the advanced seeker, it is the practice of those who have passed beyond the beginning. These believers have come to realize that the outward practices are those of the human desire for personal fulfillment, and are nothing more than the manifested desires of the human mind.

These adepts have learned to resist the outward exhibitions of the ego, by withdrawing into the innermost parts of the spiritual self, and once there by turning everything about about themselves over to the will of The All. In their withdrawal from the physical desires they reject the metaphorical "Serpent" in the Garden of Eden, and by doing so bow out from the grand stage of ego, and retire themselves from a leading role in the physical play of illusion.

In this state of consciousness, the Mystic, can regain control of the "Serpent" by consciously assuming mastery over the physical desires and with upturned eyes enter the proverbial "Garden of Eden" and into the presence of their Lord. Faith. They return upon the wings of faith. They return without limits or conditions, without imaginings of what The All is like; without a preconceived "Opinion" of who or what God is or is not. They come without expectation. They come not for the reward of salvation, they return because they have centered their entire consciousness on faith, without expectation. They return by way of a still whispering voice whose words are the starlight guidance to a traveler in a nighttime desert. They return because they have been "Chosen" to do so, and to do otherwise is unthinkable - for it is their time.

These, surfers of the inner being, have proven themselves worthy by passing through the crushing waves of tribulation and have stood firm under the innumerable trials thrown at them by the hands of Fate. In every test they have denied the "Serpent", its "self" status, and have stood upon the faith needed to realize the true "Self". These adepts have shed the serpent skin that has held them captive for a thousand lifetimes, they do this by remembering to forget, to forget the false illusions of the human ego. In the conscious "Choice" to shed themselves from the serpent thinking process, they have knowingly denied the enticing pull of the insatiable human ego and put down the illegitimate scepter of "Opinion".

No, they are not immune to the desires of physical life, nor are they immune to temptation, nor are they delivered from temptation... nor are they perfect in thought and action, in fact it is the opposite. You my child, must understand this: When following this path, you will be subjected to the harshest sanctions of sorrow and beaten with the stiffest rod of temptation available, because it is out of temptation and failure, out of sorrow, remorse and suffering that the "Choice" presents itself, where the "Choice" is confronted, and from "Choice" comes the chance at victory. It is victory in combat that makes the warrior believe in the training. Without combat, there can be no warriors; without a war there is no victory. Without the vanquishing of an enemy there can be no finite gain. The enemy of Internal Spirituality, is the human ego.

No, Mystics are not perfect, and yes, it is true that those who practice the occult mysteries are subjected to the most devious temptations, even more so than the ape body we possess. The difference however is, that there are no set of circumstances that cause the Mystic to overreact to a point of no

return, to fall so far off center that they do not catch and re-establish their spiritual balance. In all news of the "self" they maintain their equilibrium and stay focused on the inner path. They, the adept, walk that path with a lowered chin and a focused eye, seeing the landing place of each step, precise and unwavering. When good news strikes them, they accept it as God's will and alter not their step. When, as a lightning bolt, bad news strikes them, they accept it as God's purpose and alter not their step. Nothing causes them to react to the ups and downs of the self/ego. For their willpower is the master of their body; mind over ape.

The Inner Way, is the practice of centering of the "self" on the "Self". It is in this way that the adept purifies the mind so that it, the Individual Mind, can be attuned to the Divine Mind. This inner connection is where the Lord operates. It is there, within, that The All is contacted, and it is the Lord your Creator, who helps the adept eradicate the power of the human ego. Without this help from The All, even the Mystic will fall prey to the illusion of the false mechanizations of the human ego.

Once you have learned to quit the ego and to pass through the gateway of the spirit and bathe in the never-ending light contained therein you become established in virtue. In this virtuous state of existence, the "Serpent/ego" is precisely unmasked and put into its proper place and the believer lives in a perpetual state of faith. There freedom is found, freedom from the limitations of flesh that external spirituality alone cannot overcome.

It is through the connecting of the Individual Mind with that of the Divine Mind that the practitioner of internal spirituality is shown the purpose of, and the value of things like failure, weakness, imperfection and most importantly, suffering. And though they, like all of us, cringe when facing the reality of human suffering, they, nonetheless have faith in the Lord's purpose. There is suffering in self, but relief in God.

It is with willpower and mind control that we respectfully come before The AllFather/AllMother without the limits of ego driven "Questions" and "Opinions". The adept following the path of Internal Spirituality stands with complete faith and understanding in the One before whom they stand; especially when they are being brought to heel through suffering.

When the aspirant moves, within, to encounter the Divine Mind, there is no reaction, no thought even of any reward for good works, or any explanation needed concerning any suffering they are experiencing. Those things are meaningless, part of the great ordeal, here. The Chosen must face and overcome their oldest fears in their most trying reality, tribulation is part of the Great Method being performed to strengthen them. There, before the Divine Self, at the center of being, the adept of Internal Spirituality knows that this conjoining of spirits is far more important than study or prayer. The mystic withdraws into the inner sanctum, not to gather accolades, to teach, or with the desires of the ego. No, they go there so that they might come to "know" the AllFather/AllMother and to attune self to the Divine Self.

# Overview

Recognize the difference between Internal Spirituality and External Spirituality. This is accomplished through meditation on, as the Catholics teach, the Sacred Heart. or, as the Buddhist /Hindu's teach, the heart chakra. The Sacred Heart Chakra is where the Spirit of God is found ... this is the true Garden of Eden.

Let others seek the glory, the accolades, the honors of the believers; the "Opinions" of men. Find your center, your heart, feel yourself there, hold your thoughts there, spend your "Time" there, and your "Time" will be erased. Every minute you spend there is a minute less your soul will be required to spend, here. This is the "Closet of Christ", the "Narrow Road".



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