Religion In Contemporary Society
UN General Assembly Thematic Debate
Civilizations and the Challenge for Peace: Obstacles & Opportunities

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Religion – A Perspective

Religion is
- A set of community-specific beliefs and practices
- Rituals
- Study of ancestral or cultural traditions, mythology etc
- Personal faith and mystic experience

Religion refers to
- Personal practices related to communal faith
- Group rituals and communication stemming from shared conviction

My career & safety
Satiate my hunger
God ! Life Savior
Varied Practices

• Sensorial nature of religion
  – Incense

• Internet – A religious hub for worshiping
At The Root Level...

Poverty

Fundamentalism

Injustice

Inequality

PROGRESS THROUGH JAIN WAY OF LIFE
What is Fundamentalism?

Fundamentalism is an absolutist view. It is to have a strict single-sided view of the past, present, and future. Fundamentalists believe that one possesses the Truth - the answer to everything. Fundamentalists are people who think only they possess the Truth.

Diagram:
- Fundamentalist view
- Dialogue view
- Acceptance view
- Tolerant view
- Open-mindedness view
Truth Doesn't Change; Perspectives Do

The same reality can be viewed from different standpoints
Multiplicity of Views

Rabbit With A Carrot

Duck With Beads
Absolutists are fixed on one view, which restricts them from exploring other views

Non-absolutists have the freedom to explore different views
Religion in Contemporary Society

- Religion is an outer formation of the real truth, which is our soul & the spiritual experience
  - Non-Violence
    - Respect for human rights
    - Peaceful co-existence
    - Not only physical but mental as well
  - Non-Possessiveness
    - Limit your possessions
  - **Non-Onesidedness**
    - Respect for others’ views
    - Dialogue between people of different nations and different cultures
    - Respect for diversity

Mutual understanding can be achieved through:
- Continuous Exchange of Information and Knowledge
- Free Flow of Ideas via Word and Image
Young Jains of India [YJI]

• Founded in 2005
• More than 2500 members all across India
• Focus on Non-Violence, Non-Possessiveness and Non-Onesidedness
  – Referred as Jain Way of Life [JWOL]
  – Glocalize
• Objective
  – Develop & prepare next generation leadership who have the above values instilled in their careers and life
  – Use the JWOL principles for the betterment and upliftment of the society
UNESCO’s Contribution

Power of Peace Network
An initiative to foster mutual understanding and self-expression

Objective
• Support and train a network of local creative talent on all continents
• Acquire, develop and brand programmes and content on peace-related themes
• Distribute this content globally through radio, television, internet, telephony, Ipods, games and new digital and web-based services
परस्परोपग्रह्हो जीवान्मृ
Souls render service to one another