



An inquiry into the nature, activities and results of leading from a spiritual basis

Distinction between Spirituality and Religion

During our 1½ – 2 hour interviews with leaders who participated in our international research programme, we asked each one to share their views about how spirituality might be distinct from and/or related to religion.

This file contains each leader's answer to this question, along with the "spiritual theme" that summarises his or her spiritual view of life.

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**EXCERPTS ARE SORTED BY LAST NAME
THE FOLLOWING LEADERS ARE CONTAINED IN THIS FILE:**

<u>Name</u>	Country	Organisation Name	Sector or Industry	Position	Age	Years in Leadership
Aguenza, Floridas, F.	The Philippines	Planters Development Bank	Banking	President and COO	62	30
Behner, John R.	El Salvador	Nabisco	Food	Former Country Manager	66	40
Canada, Francisco Roberto	Argentina	Errepar S. A.	Publishing	Director, Partner	47	20
Chand, Amber	USA	The Amber Chand Collection	Retail Marketing	Founder	53	9
		Eziba	Retail Marketing	VP of Vision, Co-founder		
Chattopadhyay, A. K.	India	ACC Limited Refractories Division	Manufacture and Installation, Refractory	VP - Senior	50	20
Covey, Stephen R.	USA	FranklinCovey	Professional Services	Vice Chairman	73	45
Cruz, Alvaro	Colombia	Cundinamarca, (major state of Colombia)	Government	Former Governor of Cundinamarca	54	23
		I.C.M. Ingenieros Ltda.	Building Construction	CEO		
Cuneo, Federico	Peru	Bank of Boston	Banking	Former Director, Corporate	50	20
		American Glass Products	Glass Manufacturing and Distribution	Chairman		
Daugherty, Thomas	USA	Methodist Health Care System	Health Care/ Medical Care	VP of Spiritual Care and Values Integration	61	27
Delbecq, André L.	USA	Santa Clara University School of Business	Education (Higher)	Director (Institute for Spirituality of Org Leadership)	67	25
Franklin, Carol	Switzerland	World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)	Environmental Protection & Conservation	Former CEO	53	20
		Swiss Re	Insurance	Former Head of Human Resources		
Govindan, Rajan	USA	Bankers Trust	Banking	Former Senior Managing Director	56	35
Jensen, Niels Due	Denmark	Grundfos Mgmt A/S	Manufacturing, Pumps	Chairman – Group	60	30
Jiang, Niran	Australia	Institute of Human Excellence	Business Training & Consulting	CEO	40	15
	USA	S. C. Johnson	Household Products	Former Manager, Marketing		
	USA	Coca-Cola	Food	Former Mgr, Sr Trends		
Kanu, Victor-Krishna	Zambia	African Institute of Sathya Sai Education	Education	Director	73	30

Kolind, Lars	Denmark	Oticon	Hearing Impaired Products	Former CEO	54	26
Levy, Ricardo	USA	Catalytica, Inc.	Energy/ Pharmaceutical	CEO/Co-founder	57	30
Maitra, Ashoke	India	Times of India Group	Publishing, Newspaper	Director Human Resources	45	16
Merchant, Nilofer	USA	Rubicon Consultants	Marketing	President	34	8
Moitra, Deependra	India	Lucent Technologies	Tele-communications	General Manager, Engineering	32	7
Narayana, G.	India	Excel Industries, Ltd.	Chemicals, Biochem, Agri	Chairman - Executive	60	38
Narendran, Parantha	Czech Republic	Eurotel	Tele-communications	Strategy Director	34	3
Ollé, Ramón	The Netherlands	Epson Europe B.V.	Electronic Equipment and Services	President	52	27
Pillai, Anand	India	HCL COMNET	Computer Technology	VP of Sales and Marketing	43	18
Ploix, Hélène	France	Pechel Industriesa and Pechel Industries Partenaires	Equity Investment	Chairman and Managing Director	62	38
Raghavan, N. S.	India	Infosys Technologies, Ltd.	Information Technology	Founder Director & Joint Mgr Dir.	61	35
Raman, Ananth	USA	Graphtex, Inc.	Manufacturing – Electrical & Aluminium	Chairman & CEO, President	55	25
Ranganathan, V. V.	India	Ernst & Young India	Tax & Business Consulting	Senior Partner	53	24
Sinclair, James	USA/ Tanzania	Tan Range Exploration, Ltd.	Mining	Chairman	62	41
Vrethammar, Magnus	UK	Pergo	Laminated Flooring	Former President for Europe	52	22
	Sweden	Finess	Consumer Disposable	Former President, Consumer Division		
Webb, Janiece	USA	Motorola Corporation	Electronic Communications	Senior Vice President	47	28
Welling, S. K.	India	HMT International, Ltd. (Hindustan Machine Tools)	Exporter (Machine Tools, Watches, Tractors)	Executive Director	55	33

Aguenza, Floy – The Philippines

“President and COO of Planters Development Bank in The Philippines”

Spiritual Theme

“What would Jesus do?” “What would the Lord do?”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

I came from a Catholic upbringing, observing all the rituals as most Filipinos do. We’re born, baptised and schooled that way without much of a choice. However, apart from religion, I have always found great comfort in my faith.

Behner, John R. – El Salvador

“Former Country Manager for Nabisco in El Salvador”

Spiritual Theme

“Realising God by serving others.”

Only saying “serving everyone” does not include that, which is the most important to me, which is to realise my oneness with God.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

Religious beliefs generally have to do with the way you worship God, the ritualistic part of worship. Spirituality is more the practical application. I also see spirituality as having a personal relationship with God.

Canada, Francisco Roberto – Argentina

“Director and Partner of Errepar S.A., a major publishing firm in Argentina”

Spiritual Theme

Loving God.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

Spirituality and religion are not the same. Religion is the necessary structure to bring forth awareness of a God-presence in you. This is the first step towards God, which is the first step on the spiritual path. I am a Christian and I have loved my religion all of my life. Especially I love the Christian mystical writers, Santa Theresa de Jesus, St. John of the Cross, and others. They transcend the religion and go beyond it, as true spirituality transcends religion.

Chand, Amber – USA

“Founder of the Amber Chand Collection: Global Gifts for Peace and Understanding, an internet-based company in the USA that markets the products of artisans from around the world”

Spiritual Theme

Compassion, balance, grace, and friendliness are words that ring as a spiritual theme for me. Yes, this is a “God-being tapestry.”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

I think there is a tremendous difference between spirituality and religion. Religion for me has been dogma and rules and boundaries and boxes. It has divided and separated people. It may offer many beautiful things like rituals and ceremonies, but to me this is not spirituality. Spirituality has no borders or restraints, it never separates, it always connects. Even though I grew up in a Hindu household, I was encouraged to learn about other spiritual practices, so as a child I attended the Church of England while at a boarding school in England, and over the years I have cultivated a tremendous interest in Buddhism. In the end, I agree with what Sathya Sai Baba, my own spiritual teacher, says: “Religion is the language of love.” I will accept this definition of religion. But when I look at what is happening on our planet in the name of religion, I feel less and less inclined to use that word in my vocabulary. So I do not therefore consider myself as a religious person.

Chattopadhyay, A. K. – India

“Former Senior Vice President of ACC Limited Refractories Division in India”
“Executive Director of Tata Refractories, Ltd. in India”

Spiritual Theme

My spiritual theme is a combination of the four goals found in my spiritual view of life:

- To align oneself with a super power
- To find out the reasons within oneself
- To have faith in others
- To have a caring nature

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

For me there is a difference between spirituality and religion. I can follow one religion; you can follow another religion. The differences in following one religion or another have nothing to do with the spirituality that is common between them.

Of course I pray to God Almighty, but I don't do rituals and ceremonies like a lot of Hindus do. I do have a temple in my house where God is. I go there and pray for two or three minutes. I don't pray for something specific. I ask to think in a positive way, to think in a way that is good for others, things along those lines. I also ask for courage to face any type of adversity.

Covey, Stephen R. – USA

“Vice Chairman of FranklinCovey, a global professional services firm based in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

One of my mottoes serves as a powerful spiritual theme for me: “Live life in crescendo.” In other words, the most important work you’ll ever do is still ahead of you.

Another such spiritual theme for me would be: “Educate and obey your conscience.” Educating as I speak of it here involves getting into the sacred literature of all the great traditions that have had enduring value and then consciously living true to what you have learned. The more you live true to it, the stronger your conscience becomes. A constant effort is required to stay on track with such stewardship.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

I make a real conscientious effort in my leadership, writing, and speaking not to refer to any one particular religion, but only to deal with that which is universal. Although I am an active member of the Mormon Church I don’t get any Mormon theology snuck into it in some secret way. I have no hidden agenda. I am often asked the question, “How much has your Mormonism influenced your view”, and I say, “It has influenced me tremendously, but all that we are dealing with here are principles that are universal and timeless.” And then I would say, “If you disagree with me, just tell me which principles you believe in – and do you live them?”

Cruz, Alvaro – Colombia

“Former Minister of the Government of Colombia and Governor of Cundinamarca, Colombia”
“CEO of an engineering/building company in Colombia, I.C.M. Ingenieros Ltda.”

Spiritual Theme

Love and respect others.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

I feel there is a difference, because although religion might be one way of living a life, spirituality can lead into expansion, into greater consciousness. In order to keep their devotees some religions in the West have limited the possibilities of expanding their intelligence for greater discernment about life. However, as our spiritual teacher teaches us, most religions coincide on the basic principles of spirituality: love, respect, human solidarity and non-attachment are taught in these religions. I grew up in a religious environment as more than 90 percent of the Colombians are members of the Catholic Church, and for a number of years I was an active participant in all of the Catholic practices. I believe that if you practice certain principles for a long time, you can evolve yourself spiritually, whether it is within a religion or outside a religion.

Cuneo, Federico – Peru

“Senior Partner with Ernst & Young in Peru”

“Chair of Peru 2021, an NGO comprised of business executives working on sustainable development and corporate social responsibility for the country”

Spiritual Theme

Unity with the rest of the world, love, eternal life and light – those would be words I would use as a theme.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

Spirituality and religion do meld somewhere, but to me religion is a set of rules, which I think is good; it is an organised thing that you are suppose to learn and follow. Spirituality is more of a feeling that you are a free soul – it is feeling my inner essence. You don't have to follow any rules because in essence you work for the collective, so you respect the collective. I don't see the need to create a set of rules or go to church on Sunday. I don't knock it because I think it is beautiful for many people; but to me spirituality is not this, although it can include it.

I think the Catholic Church is very good and, using business terms, it is a very good product for a certain market. However, it is not for me even though I thank God that it is there. Since I began to read many books on spirituality, I respect Christ more, I respect the Bible more, I pray more, and I feel that God lives inside me; however I do not go to church.

I think that in meditation you are connected, and when you pray it has a lot more meaning than when I went to a church and prayed. I find the church to be disruptive because of people talking and impressing others by wearing the best clothes. I pray ten times more now than when I went to church. I love God more.

Daugherty, Thomas – USA

“Former Vice President of Spiritual Care and Values Integration with the Methodist Health Care System in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

One theme for me would be caring and compassion. Another would be faithfulness. A part of that has to do with persistence and perseverance, courage and humility.

For me, the Christian cross itself evokes all of this for me because it is such a powerful symbol of the Divine-human encounter. It represents the very best and the very worst of human experience, and it also represents the ultimate in God's love and compassion for all humankind.

The Divine-human encounter is certainly a theme that expresses all of this for me.

Distinction between Spirituality and Religion

I personally think that spirituality and religion are closely related, and it's not a matter of one or the other. On the other hand, I think the two can be separate for other people: a person can be very

religious and not very spiritual, or very spiritual and not religious. For me, my religious life is where I stay grounded with our Christian traditions and where I find a community of like-minded people.

Delbecq, André, D.B.A. – USA

“Former Dean of the Santa Clara University School of Business in the USA”

“Professor and Director of the Institute for Spirituality and Organizational Leadership at the Santa Clara University School of Business in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

Wonder is the theme that naturally comes to me. I have always loved innovation because I am continuously thrilled to see what was once only imagined (and partially imagined at that) emerge as an institutionalised reality. Innovation scholarship plumbs the mystery of creativity from concept to actualisation within large-scale systems. I have always had and continue to retain a great excitement associated with building collaboration between bright minds seeking to understand a complex problem and engaged in the discovery of a creative solution.

But now my sense of wonder is even enlarged. My eyes are opened to how the unimaginable emerges in all of creation; e.g. in nature in a blossoming flower, in the movements of the tides and the mysteries of the sea. I am increasingly appreciative of the insights from each of my colleagues when they join together for innovation. So the world is filled with wonder, echoing the limitlessness of the transcendent.

I have always had a good sense of adventure: I love boating, motorcycling, and travel and I am willing to take risks. But in the past these activities have been something that I felt I had to work hard at, something I mistakenly thought depended primarily on me. Now I see such efforts as tapping into a mysterious abundance. I don't do much of anything actually; I realise how little I do. This is not to diminish the importance of what each person does, but rather to increasingly see how God (the transcendent mystery that bears a thousand names), is at work in people and in nature. This allows for increased inner joy even in the midst of the greatest difficulties.

Of course I still have days of great unknowing; I still sometimes experience desolation and anguish. Yet even these experiences don't disturb a deep core sense of peace and wonder as my spiritual journey unfolds. It's as if the fire just gets brighter and brighter as my life unfolds.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

Spirituality and religion are, of course, not the same. Religion encompasses the belief system (dogma) associated with a world view, patterns of worship and ritual prayer, and brings together a community that shares a particular spiritual path and disciplines.

Spirituality, in contrast, is specific to the individual, and encompasses each person's lived experience. Each individual's worldview is never exactly the same as another's, even if they share the same “religion” since no two individuals have the same DNA, parents, life experiences, etc.

Franklin, Carol – Switzerland

“Former Head of Human Resources for Swiss Re Insurance in Switzerland”
“Former CEO of the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in Switzerland”

Spiritual Theme

Caring for and being responsible for the earth and its inhabitants. Be responsible. Be the change you want to see in the world. Help move the world forward.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

I think spirituality is broader than religion. All religions must be spiritual, but not all spirituality must be religious.

Govindan, Rajan – USA

“Former Senior Managing Director with Bankers Trust in the USA”
“Chief Operating Officer of Bear Stearns Asset Management in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

To me this would be “happiness and contentment” and “to act with right conduct.”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

To me spirituality is very different from religion. Religion is about rituals, whereas spirituality is more about understanding what you are doing and how you are living with right conduct.

Jensen, Niels Due – Denmark

“Group Chairman for Grundfos Management A/S in Denmark”

Spiritual Theme

Empathy, compassion, and love for my neighbour.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

I think that spirituality is the same as religion.

Since there is quite a bit of discussion going on in Denmark and other European countries as to religion at the workplace, I should add on that I feel that the question of religion is something which you want to keep to yourself. You do not walk around showing off that you are a Christian or a Muslim.

I do not mind at all that other people have a religion different from mine, as long as they keep it private and practice their religion in private, away from the workplace. With this, I primarily think of Muslims of which an increasing number is settling in Denmark and also come to work at Grundfos. We have nothing at all against the Muslims being highly religious, but of course we do mind it, if their behaviour

differs considerably from the behaviour we expect from ordinary Danish workers. With this I am thinking of the demand to pray at fixed hours five times a day and the use of religious symbols. At Grundfos we do not engage in any discussion about women wearing scarves, unless it is causing danger for the work security for the person wearing it. That is, you cannot wear a scarf, if you work at a machine turning around in front of you, risking that the scarf will get caught.

Jiang, Niran – Australia

“Formerly Senior Trends Manager for Coca Cola and Marketing Manager for S. C. Johnson in the USA”

“CEO for the Institute of Human Excellence in Australia”

Spiritual Theme

My spiritual theme would be interconnectedness, wonderment, and compassion.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

Religion is a human attempt to compartmentalise spirituality in one dimension of our relationship with the universe and with God. Religion is a part of spirituality, and on a philosophical basis all religions are on the path of enquiring into who we are, where we come from, where we go, and what life is about. I think spirituality is much broader than what is typically represented by religion.

When I grew up in China during the Cultural Revolution, religion was all torn down. The slogan of the Cultural Revolution was, “Tear down the old and build the new”. Idols were destroyed, and all the different churches were closed down because of the communist idea of collectively building an ideal society based on, “You take what you need, and you give what you can.” We were taught that there is no God, only humans on a journey. The time of the Cultural Revolution was a time of great division, also within the families. Nobody spoke about God; instead it was a time full of ideals of building an ideal society that works for everyone.

Kanu, Victor-Krishna – Zambia

“Former High Commissioner (Ambassador) for Sierra Leone to the UK, Norway and Sweden”

“Director of The African Institute of Sathya Sai Education in Zambia”

Spiritual Theme

Divine love is the central theme. Oneness is a parallel. Because if you say you love all, you do that because all are one.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

The distinction between spirituality and religion is that spirituality does not necessarily require belonging to a specific religious denomination or organisation, or practising a particular form of worship. Spirituality is inherent in religion but transcends all religions, races, cultures, social or political organisations. Spirituality is the all embracing. Religion, on the other hand, claims to be concerned with a special relationship with God. That relationship is dictated by the teachings of the masters and

accompanied by doctrines, forms of worship, rituals and codes of conduct sanctioned by the office bearers of that religion.

Kolind, Lars – Denmark

“Former CEO of Oticon in Denmark, one of the world’s premier suppliers of products for the hearing impaired”

“Chairman of Grundfos in Denmark”

Spiritual Theme

I believe that the theme of my spirituality would be: “love God and love your neighbour.”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

Spirituality for me is not really very distinct from religion. Spirituality is a slightly broader concept, but I must admit that my answers to this interview – and what I am doing in my work – are not inspired or influenced by a broader concept of spirituality, they are influenced by my religion.

Levy, Ricardo – USA

“Co-founder and CEO of Catalytica, Inc. in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

“Oneness”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

I think this is a very good question. For me religion is in an organised path to spirituality. It is not necessarily everybody’s path. For those who practice an organised religion it provides a structure to deepen their spirituality. I admire people who have grown up in a strong religious tradition and have well developed practices in their connection with the Infinite. If religious teachings are practiced well, they do go deeply and they have the value of focus. I believe those who practice religion in this way have an advantage over those of us who have been generalists.

Another way of saying it, a particular religion is just one *approach* to the spiritual journey. Spirituality has a much broader context that encompasses religious practice. In my definition of spirituality I talk about a force greater than ourselves, and I believe that every religion has this same concept. Now, what is that force? How do you define it? How do you get there? The answers vary enormously between religions. But at the end of the day, it’s all the same – it all thrives to address the mystery.

Maitra, Ashoke – India

“Former Director of Human Resources for the Times of India”

“Founder of the Centre for Human Resource Development and the Sri Ramakrishna International Institute of Management in India”

Spiritual Theme

I think my spiritual theme is “Manifestation of latent Divinity.”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

To my mind religion is a reflection of spirituality. It is a comment on spirituality. There was a person who was self-realised, who said something that someone found to be intrinsically true. Then they did a knowledge management job and captured it as an expert system and it became a religion. Then the self-realised followers went and spread it. And it became a community or a race or a religion, that’s all it means. The same thing happened with Christ, the same happened with Buddha.

So there was always a person who was self-realised, Al-Mohammed or Guru Nanak, or Sri Ramakrishna, or Sai Baba or any one. Because you are congruent to this thinking it brought you together and some synchronicity happened. Because you believe in it, you go and tell 10 people and 10 become 100 and 100 become 1000 and it becomes a cult, or a sect, or a religion.

So I think religion is a comment on spirituality. It is like the way we comment about things in the newspaper. It is a comment piece about a self-realised soul, and when that becomes managed as an expert knowledge system it becomes a religion.

Merchant, Nilofer – USA

“President and founder of Rubicon Consultants, a marketing consulting firm in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

“Living authentically” speaks a lot to me.

Also, I am looking outside at that beautiful tree and thinking about how spirituality helps me to draw strength from the roots of life. The tree doesn’t get nourishment from the leaves. And yet what do we see when we look at the tree? We see the branches and leaves and not the root system. So I think spirituality is about defining where our true strength comes from as the root system. We have a chance to consciously change the wellspring from which we draw our nourishment. So another theme would be “a wellspring of nourishment”.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

To me, I see this as three circles that may or may not overlap each other. One would be religion, the other spirituality and the third would be faith. I believe that people can be spiritual without being faithful and can be religious without being either spiritual or faithful.

I am a practicing Christian and go to church every Sunday. However, I do not consider myself a religious person. I consider myself to be a spiritual person and I use my religion as a way to express and nurture my spirituality.

Moitra, Deependra – India

“Formerly the youngest General Manager within Lucent Technologies, who at the time had 70,000 employees worldwide”

“Associate Vice President with Infosys Technologies, Ltd. in India”

Spiritual Theme

“Living with a purpose” would be my theme. True fulfilment is then the outcome of this journey.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

For me spirituality and religion are completely separate and unrelated. But yet I can understand how most people see a link between the two. I think how we see spirituality and religion is mostly due to our upbringing. Most people are introduced to a certain religion during their childhood. If they want to progress on the path of spirituality through a religious means, I do not think there is anything wrong with that, as long as they do not become rigid and dogmatic. I think when religious principles come in the way of your being spiritually open, then it becomes a problem.

Narayana, G. – India

“Chairman Emeritus for Excel Industries, Ltd. in India”

Spiritual Theme

My spiritual theme is: Noble actions, noble feelings, noble thoughts, noble responsibility.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

Religion is seeing God above. Spirituality is experiencing Divinity in others and self.

Narendran, Parantha – Czech Republic

“Former Strategy Director for Eurotel in the Czech Republic”

“Private Equity Consultant and Investor”

Spiritual Theme

If I think here of how spirituality affects me at work, it would be that spirituality challenges me and makes me grow.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

Religion I see as something that has been handed down to you. You may choose to apply some of the religious values in your life, and your life might become more spiritual because of that. But it is

something external to you, whereas spirituality is something that is within you; it's how you live your entire life.

Ollé, Ramón – The Netherlands

“President of Epson Europe in The Netherlands”

Spiritual Theme

“To know thyself.”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

This is a very interesting question for me. We cannot deny in our Christian culture that there is a direct relationship between spirituality and religion, because we were educated to believe in the duality of matter and spirit. That means our generation was taught that there is some part of man that is other than and distinct from material things. Religion tried to express what this other part of man was, because man was not capable of understanding it by himself.

If you are not capable of understanding the total concept of the world, including God in it, then you cannot understand even yourself. Religion educates us in this additional concept of the human that is spiritual. But today the big mistake is to equate man's spirituality with religion. And that's why the new generation doesn't have much to do with either spirituality or religion. People tend to think today that everything about man is rational, whereas I believe that not everything about man's life is rational; otherwise we have to deny a very big part of ourselves.

Pillai, Anand – India

“Head of the Learning and Development Department for HCL Technologies in India”

Spiritual Theme

Connecting with God, the source of “being.”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

My spirituality shifted from the religion I was born into, which was Hinduism, to my faith, which is in Christ. When I told my family about my salvation experience with Lord Jesus, they were very upset. But I told them, “Look, I have not changed my religion. I am a Hindu by birth and I will continue to be a Hindu. Neither will I be changing my name. What has changed is that my faith is now with Lord Jesus and that is whom I want to follow. My parents are the same, and my clothes are the same. What has changed is inside me.” To put their doubts to rest I don't plan to go into full time ministry or anything like that.

Ploix, Hélène – France

“Chairman and Managing Director of Pechel Industries and Pechel Industries Partenaires in Paris, France”

Spiritual Theme

I think I can express this as: “To contribute to society”. And to try to be attentive to others and have a better understanding of them.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

My understanding of spirituality, being from a Catholic family, is much linked to religion, to prayers, to belief in God. As Christians we are told that we have to distinguish between the spiritual and the temporal; the spiritual is about the church. That is why I was a little hesitant to participate in this interview. In my opinion, the Catholic religion is very much about appearance and about rituals. I think that it can become much too narrow.

Raghavan, N. S. – India

“Founding Director and former Joint Managing Director of Infosys in India”

Spiritual Theme

“Love and trust” automatically came to my mind as my theme.

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

The ritualistic form of religion has never appealed to me. I am not a highly religious person and I do not participate much in the ritualistic religion. Due to the respect I have for my parents and close relatives, I have been willing to do these rituals in order not to hurt their feelings.

But I believe very strongly in that part of religion that says you should show love, kindness and compassion towards people and try to make a difference in the lives of the people you touch. But the religion that says you must do this kind of prayer, or you have to follow this ritual, is not what I choose to follow.

Raman, Ananth – USA

“Chairman of Graphtext, Inc. a manufacturing company in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

“Awareness” and “Realising Divinity”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

I think there is a distinction between spirituality and religion. I tend to consider religion more as formal, more as ritualistic, more as concentrating on a set of belief systems, like karma, death and re-birth. These are not the ultimate Truth; they are belief systems. Does karma exist? I don't know. Is there

rebirth? I don't know. These are all belief systems that help us answer a lot of questions about life's mysteries, but they are not the ultimate Truth.

I used to run in two parallel worlds: religious rituals and spirituality. The way we learn spirituality as a Hindu is through the rituals. You do the rituals and most of the time you do not understand them; at some point, you try linking the rituals with the spirituality. But because of these rituals, you do develop a sense of values. You also have values that come from your parents and where you have lived. Basically, all of these become your core values.

All of the different religions have their own belief systems and at some point they do cross over with each other. While in spirituality there is no belief system. Spirituality talks about ultimate Truth, there is nothing to question. You must realise it, you must understand it, you must feel it. This is where I draw the line between spirituality and religion.

Sometimes, I think that perhaps I should start another religion. Because there are certain belief systems from Hinduism that I find acceptable, there are some from Christianity and there are some from Judaism. But unfortunately, each of these are suppose to contradict the others. I find it very difficult to classify myself as a Hindu because I don't want to lose all of the wonderful things that Christianity has.

Ranganathan, V. V. – India

“Formerly a Senior Partner with Ernst & Young India”

“Co-founder of Pinnacle Opportunities, a non-profit and Compassites, a product incubation company in Bangalore, India”

Spiritual Theme

“Seeing God in everyone”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

Because I was born into a Brahmin (priestly class) family, our atmosphere at home was quite charged with religious ceremonies, and I attended a number of these religious functions. Sometimes I was even made to perform some of these ceremonies even without understanding what they were, because in those days it was sacrilegious to even question anything that was religious. So I used to think that spirituality and religion were one and the same; I did not understand the subtle differences. So anything that had to do with some priests surrounding a fire and performing some rituals was spirituality to me. It has been very difficult to un-programme myself and think differently.

Having said that, I think the real understanding of the difference between religion and spirituality came to me when I met and listened to Swami Ranganathananda at the Ramakrishna Mission. I listened to a lot of his lectures in my twenties and began to take an interest in these things. He was a great man and he speaks so well. He is very lucid in his presentations and is very, very clear in his thoughts. I was fortunate to visit him recently in Calcutta, before he passed away, to pay my respects to him and he personally signed a copy of the *Bhagavad Gita* that he had authored an extensive commentary on. In those early days when I had listened to Swami it struck me that God doesn't reside only in temples. That was a time that I also read and learnt that the temples here in India are like national flags: the flags evoke a lot of pride and consciousness in people. But the national flag is not the nation; it only represents the nation. In the same way, temples are not God, or the only place God is; they represent

God. It is a place where you can go and get the concentration to transform yourself to that plane above the normal sensory perceptions.

Sinclair, James E. – USA

“Chairman and CEO of Tan Range Exploration, Ltd. in the USA and Tanzania”

Spiritual Theme

My theme for spirituality would be “Live it.”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

The fact of what makes this all happen is not the intellectual activity of a discourse or the writing in a book. It is the white spaces on the page between the words, that hold the words, or it is the quiet moments between each word that I am saying now. Is this what is meant when it is said that God “exists between the gaps?”

This is not poetry. If you had video cameras at the time of Christ you wouldn’t have many of the Christian churches that exist now. Jesus never defined himself as someone different; he went through periods of growth. Sathya Sai Baba, my spiritual teacher in India, is not standing there saying, “This body is God.” He is saying, “I am Divine.” “I am God.” So if this Divinity is what spirituality is, then is it in the practice of praying to God that is spiritual? Or is it in the means of the artist? You know those moments in your life when time didn’t exist? Those moments of joy when you had no body consciousness? What was that?

Vrethammar, Magnus – Sweden

“Former President for Europe of Pergo Flooring in the UK”

“President of an executive coaching and business development firm Creability AB in Sweden”

Spiritual Theme

Spirituality is an opening process. And then the question is, “What are you opening up to?” I would say love, as long as I am very careful in how I define love. Love can be, on an energy level, a very encompassing and still impersonal energy. So, if one considers this type of love, I would say that my theme is “opening up to love.”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

Spirituality for me is a universal context; it is limitless. Religion for me is limit; it is content, and it is dogma.

Webb, Janiece – USA

“Former Senior Vice President with Motorola Corporation in the USA”

Spiritual Theme

I think my spiritual theme would be “God in everyone.”

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

I see spirituality as different from religion. I do not necessarily need organised religion. I think spirituality is taking the principles that are taught in most religions and living them as a natural way of life. I am respectful of organised religion, but not to the point where I would sell my spirituality or my soul for it.

In the name of religion people will kill, maim, judge and shun others, and to me spirituality says you never have to do that. So the distinction is very important to me.

Welling, S. K. – India

“Former Executive Director of HMT International, Ltd. (Hindustan Machine Tools) in India”

Spiritual Theme

Purity of character through faith, bhakti (devotion), trust and love

Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

In religion, what happens is that you have rituals and other things. To my mind, the purpose of the rituals in a religion are usually misunderstood. For me, being spiritual is more important, because spirituality, in my opinion, is identifying myself with others. Most of the problems an individual has are because of the self. First you ask yourself the question, “Who am I?” and seek to find out – it is very difficult.