



ALI 585: Spirituality Defined in the Qur'an

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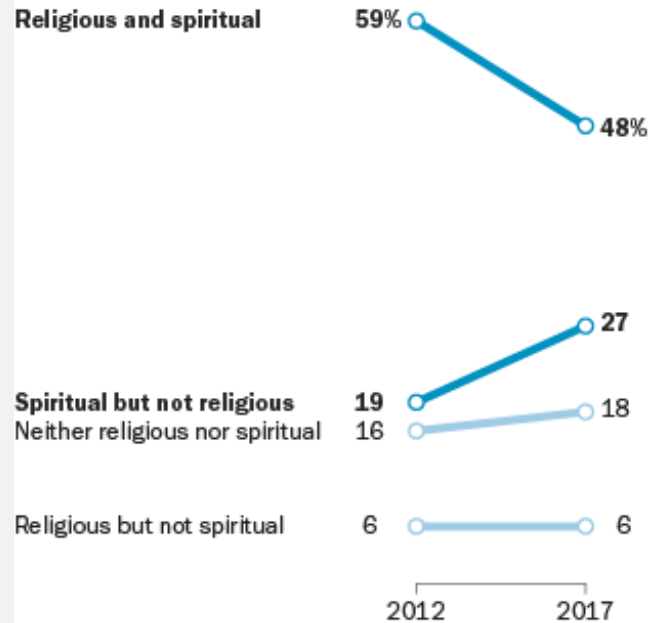
Outline

- Growth of Interest in Spirituality
- Contemporary Definitions of Spirituality
- Introduction to the Islamic Definition
- Evidence from the Qur'an
- Evidence from the Ahadith
- Comparing the Definitions
- Conclusion and Questions



A quarter of Americans now see themselves as spiritual but not religious

% who identify as ...



Note: Respondents were asked separate questions about whether they consider themselves to be "a religious person" and whether they consider themselves to be "a spiritual person." The "spiritual but not religious" category includes those who responded affirmatively to the question about being a spiritual person and also responded that they do not consider themselves to be a religious person. Statistically significant changes are indicated in bold. Figure courtesy of Pew Research Center.

The Landscape: Pew Research 2017

Defining Spirituality

Spirituality

a. Feeling of peace, tranquility and connectedness

b. Seeing particular metaphysical realities

Seeing

a. Physical sight: sees physical forms

b. Mental sight: understands concepts

c. Spiritual sight: heart experiences (sees) realities



Spiritual Sight in the Qur'an

Indeed it is not the eyes that turn
blind, but the hearts turn blind
those that are in the breasts!

(22:46)

Some faces will be fresh on that
day,

looking at their Lord, (75:22-23)



Spiritual Sight in the Qur'an

Soon We shall show them Our signs in the horizons and in their own souls until it becomes clear to them that He is the Real. Is it not sufficient that your Lord is witness to (witnessed in) all things?

Fussilat: 53



Spiritual Sight in Hadith

In al-Tawhid, narrating from Abu Basir, who narrates the following from Abu Abdullah [al-Sadiq] (a.s.):

I asked: "Tell me about Allah Almighty, will the believers see Him on Judgement Day?"

The Imam replied: "Yes, and they have seen Him before Judgement Day."

I asked: "When?"

He said: "When He asked them, "Am I not your Lord?"

They said: "Yes indeed."





Spiritual Sight in Hadith

He kept quiet for a while and then said: "The believers see Him in this world before Judgement Day. Do you not see Him right now?"

Abu Basir then said: "So I said to Him: "May I be sacrificed for you, may I speak to others of what you have said?"

The Imam then said: "No, for if you narrate it a denier who does not know what you mean would deny it and presume what you say to be anthropomorphism (tashbih) and disbelief (kufr). Seeing with the heart is not like seeing with the eyes. Far be Allah from what the anthropomorphist and heretics describe Him to be."





Spiritual Sight in Hadith

Imam 'Ali was asked by one of his companions, Tha'lab al-Yamani whether he had seen his Lord.

Imam 'Ali replied, "How can I worship something that I do not see?"

When asked how he saw Him, Imam 'Ali replied, "Eyes do not reach Him with physical sight, but the hearts reach Him with the realities of belief."

Spiritual Sight vs Feeling Spirituality

Feeling	Seeing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feeling without spirituality• Quick and easy• Beliefs are not necessary• Discipline is not necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spirituality without feeling• Slow and requires effort• The right beliefs are necessary• Structured program is necessary



The Islamic Model for Spirituality: Tazkiyah

one who purifies it is felicitous,
and one who betrays it fails.

91:9-10

It is He who sent to the unlettered [people] an
apostle from among themselves, to recite to
them His signs, to purify them, and to teach them
the Book and wisdom, and earlier they had
indeed been in manifest error.

62:2

