



# ALI 585: Spirituality Defined in the Qur'an

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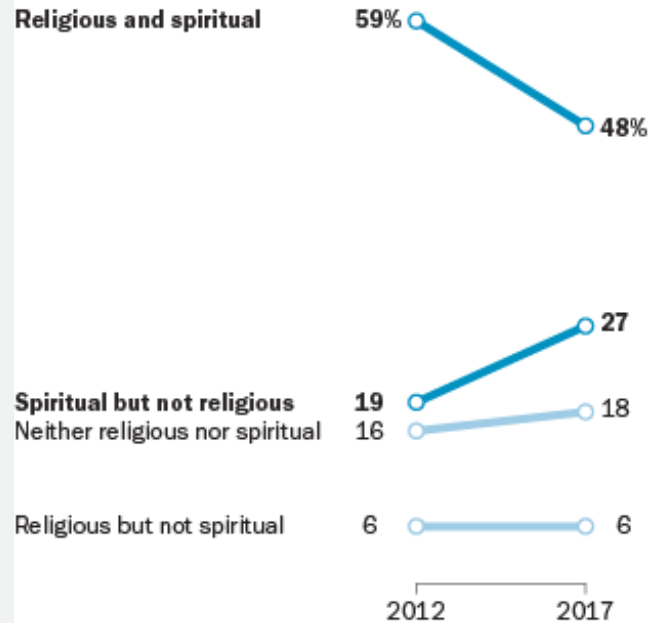
# Outline

- 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 Hadith

*The sign of my certainty is that it makes me sad and keeps me awake all night and thirsty on hot days. I have become uninterested in the world and its contents.*

*It is as if I can see the Throne of Allah being established to reckon the people and the people gathered for the Reckoning. I am also with them.*

*I can see the dwellers of paradise enjoying, reclining on cushions and introducing one another.*

*I can see the denizens of the Fire under chastisement and asking for help.*



# 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

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



