

Overcoming Spiritual Myopia: A View Toward Peace Among the Religions

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Suggested Discussion Questions

Chapter 2

- 1) Why do you think all different cultures since the beginning of recorded history sought some type of religious or spiritual connection?
- 2) Do you believe religions should be able to change over time, as new information comes in?
- 3) Why do you think some books were removed from the Bible under the Emperor Constantine?
- 4) How did Christianity become so focused on specific beliefs when the original faith in Jesus' time was more centered around a way of life?
- 5) Technology – the printing press in the fifteenth century and the internet today – tends to “democratize” information (make it increasingly available to the average person) Is this a good thing or a bad thing?
- 6) Are you inclined to think we still live in the time of modernity, or can you see how we are moving into postmodernity?
- 7) Do the societal changes postmodernity is bringing us give you hope or cause fear?

Chapter 3

- 8) Had you ever heard of the general concept of Spiritual Development Theory – in any format or terminology or through the work of any theorist?
- 9) Does the spiritual development concept bring you hope, or cause fear?

Chapter 4

- 10) Consider each element of spiritual myopia – personification, literalism, fundamentalism, triumphalism, spiritual blindness, binary logic and the need for certainty. How does each of these hold people back from greater spiritual perspective?

Chapter 5

- 11) Have you had any experiences with people of other cultures that led you to question the religious or cultural ideas you grew up with?
- 12) Do you believe all cultures since the beginning of time formed religions for similar reasons? Is there a universal need within humans to connect with something greater? What does that say about religions that claim their beliefs were divinely revealed?
- 13) Is the interfaith movement a positive development or is it causing confusion and weakening long-standing religious traditions?

Chapter 6

- 14) Does the Unitive level of spiritual development mean anything to you? Does it interest you to learn more about it? Can you see it playing out in certain individuals with whom you are acquainted and in various elements of society?
- 15) Why do you think you don't often hear explicit messages about the Unitive level of faith?
- 16) The idea of one's worldview expanding to include ever more of the universe is a simple, yet elegant concept. Why does most of our culture seem designed to keep us from recognizing universality as a spiritual goal? Why does most of society ignore spiritual development principles?

Chapter 7

- 17) Do you believe humanity is growing through stages similar to the individual spiritual development stages? What type of things could you do to get more information about it?

Chapters 8-10

- 18) Can you see evidence of Harvey Cox's "Age of the Spirit" coming into play in recent years? Can you see backlash elements trying to hold it back?
- 19) What causes backlash against human cultural (and religious and spiritual) progress?
- 20) Do you feel much of our society still suffers from spiritual myopia? Is overcoming spiritual myopia a good thing?
- 21) Do you suffer from spiritual myopia? What might you do to help overcome it?
- 22) What can you do to help our society overcome spiritual myopia?
- 23) If you had to come up with your own "bigger story" about religion and spirituality, what would it be?
- 24) How can overcoming spiritual myopia lead to peace among the religions?