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[Religion](#)



## Introduction

Religion in itself is the faith of the presence of a supernatural being.

However, Karl Marx looks at it in a slightly different way. He states that it is a tactic to oppress the have-nots in the society. According to his understanding, it is a haven for the poor that they can find a hope for the future. Karl Marx viewed religion as a way of society stratification in terms of the have and the have-nots. He argued out that the people who throng to the various religious entities do so not to seek for spiritual nourishment but as a way of seeking for refuge, shelter, or help (Fisher 39). He asked Christian leaders to evaluate whether he was saying the truth or not.

## Question 1

What does William James mean by speaking about the essence of religion in terms of "pure ideas"? About "remoter facts"? Where do these ideas come from and what is their relationship to the "Sacred Reality" described in Mary Pat Fisher's *Living Religions*

Pure ideas according to William James come in a variety of sorts. In an extraordinarily concise way, William James starts with the way the human brain developed. He argues out that the human mind natures a habit, which with time comes to be an extremely powerful idea that masses can follow. When this is done repeatedly, it forms a way of life for the people. The habit gets so much into an individual and forms part of their subconscious mind. The subconscious then gets individuals to start having emotions. People react in this manner to different circumstances. James-Lange took up the same way of thought. He supported this fact in his theory of emotions (James 239). He noted that reaction does not come as a perception to something

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but instead everything is stimulated by the body's thought-pattern. This is likened to a comedian who cracks a joke.

The actor uses a certain language that creates a joyful mood. The audience once they have listened to him, they import this and laugh afterwards. The laughter brings the joy. These pure ideas thought by William James emphasizes that habits and emotions causes an individual to query their selves as to why they are inclined to a certain belief. He also mentions an "empirical me", that is concerned with matters such as self, household and ownerships. The sub-conscious, spiritual-self and character also lies under this (Fisher 44). Therefore, William James studied the human being's way of thought and concluded that these traits are the ones responsible for different personalities within an individual. The "empirical me" can be socially complicated in such a way that the different personalities will be associating the individual to different attitudes as they interact with other people.

The obvious fact states that the individual is solely responsible for himself through the various types of people he thinks they exist. There those people who are tender-minded. Such individuals are who interpret the society as something, which they can decipher. In fact, at some point he states that the baby's brain is usually so confused when it gets into the world. This confusion depending on the way the mind thinks will make the baby find it either as tender-minded or tough-minded. The second category, which is tough-minded, looks at the society as something too complex to understand (William James's essay, para. 3).

When compared to Mary Pat Fisher "sacred reality," she explains that it is more or less the same thing. Mary Pat Fisher quotes Mircea Eliade and states that "human nature is sacred and desecrate". The mind is the one <https://assignbuster.com/free-creative-writing-on-william-james-questions/>

responsible for shaping the person's perception to religion. Whether it is accepted or not, some societies have problems distinguishing between sacred and desecrate. Mary Pat Fisher also focuses on other forms of sacred realities. She mentions the immanent perspective, transcendent and the idea of the sacred being. The various forms of the human perception of God are also mentioned. These are under the idea of sacred being (Fisher 52). They include theistic, monistic, and nontheistic. As seen, Mary takes a detailed view of man's perception of the world relating to things that they cannot explain. She is focused more on the spiritual direction than William James does. On the other hand, William James deals more with the habit of an individual and the bias in viewing the world a certain specific way.

## **Question Two.**

In "The Reality of the Unseen," William James tries to develop a definition of religion through experience. Why is this important, according to William James? How does it change things?

William James indicates that the human mind is complicated in such a way that there is more belief in the things that are unseen than the ones seen. Therefore, there is a higher propensity to the spiritual world that is unseen. William starts by explaining that we give more reverence to the things themselves rather than their origin in the conventional way that we see things (James 241). This is manifested in the manner with which people deal with religion. He goes on to illustrate that in a normal setting people will associate themselves with things like justice, pleasure of sight and niceness (William James's essay, para. 7). These things cannot be visualized. He adds on to state that the mind is such that it cannot decipher concrete realness.

At this point, it can be seen clearly that he tends to define religion according to the experience he has obtained through life. He talks of “ something there” which he described as a thing that is found much in a person. The person cannot comprehend what it is made of (Fisher 72).

James Williams talks of an understandable sense of reality that comes with a certain spiritual presence. The presence is exceptionally strong that he compares it to God. He suggests that the mind controls them on instances where people appreciate the presence of God. This is not true. According to William James, it is indispensable for people to understand the cause of an indescribable presence around them (James 253). When this is clearly understood, he believes that a conscious place and the physical thing cause the presence and an attitude from the person brings about a feeling of self.

## References

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Fisher, Mary Pat. *Living Religions-Western Traditions*. Prentice-Hall, 2003. Print

William James's essay: *Reality Of The Unseen*. Retrieved from Oct 30 2011 from <http://www.readbookonline.net/readOnLine/52119/>