Religious or spiritual

Religious or Spiritual? Since religion is people's response to what God has done, it can be said that all the people are religious, because everyonehas own reaction to and perception of the universe. Even an atheist can be called religious, since one also has a reaction to God's deeds – not believing in God. Situation with spirituality is quite similar – all the people are in some sense spiritual because it is in human nature to ask oneself about why one exists, for instance. However, spirituality can be external and internal. These are rather different concepts. The roots of external spirituality are in rationalism, while those of internal one are in consciousness. All the people are spiritual internally – again, it is in human nature. At the same time, not everyone can understand and feel it. A common mistake of people is that they seek happiness and communion with God somewhere outside. They try to achieve harmony by means of performing certain actions that they believe are required for achieving inner peace. Such actions may include reading holy books, attending church or praying, among others. However, such actions may not fill the internal emptiness; they are just external manifestations of religion, which cannot replace understanding and fulfilling own spiritual needs. Therefore, important, as for me, is the balance of internal and external spirituality and absence of conflict between inner feelings and their external manifestations (if they are needed). As for me personally, thought theoretically I should consider myself religious, I do not feel so. For some reason I percept religion as an external manifestation of inner spirituality. I percept church as a place, or community, to which people come for communicating with God. As such, church and priests become, in my perspective, intermediaries between God and people. However, I don't believe people need an intermediary, a certain place or a congregation to

communicate with God. I think all this is inside us. However, there might be situations when a person needs the feeling of community. In such cases church or other religious gathering may serve as a factor that gives the person a feeling of belonging, of not being the only one of such a nature. Still, my opinion is that appearance of such situations is an indicator of more developed external, instead of internal, spirituality. Furthermore, though formally I am, just like all the others, a religious person, I cannot accept one particular religion as being the only one that is truthful. The variety of the world's religions gives people, in my opinion, an opportunity to choose which way of spiritual development is more suitable for each one personally. This idea comes from my assumption that the purpose of each religion is guiding and helping a person through life. I might be mistaken, but as far as I know, the core of each religion is bringing up a spiritually rich and harmonious personality. Consequently, there might not be right or wrong ways – each way to growth and development is good for a particular individual.