

## Inclusive and exclusive definitions of religion – can you tell the difference?

We propose that religion be defined as a system of beliefs about the nature of the force(s) shaping man's destiny, and the practices associated therewith, shared by the members of a group. (Lenski 1963)

This is an ----- definition because

A religion is: 1. A system of symbols which acts to 2. establish powerful, pervasive, and long-standing moods and motivations in men by 3. formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and 4. clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that 5. the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic. (Geertz 1968)

This is an ----- definition because

The set of beliefs which postulate and seek to regulate the distinction between an empirical reality and a related and significant supra-empirical segment of reality; the language and symbols which are used in relation to this distinction; and the activities and institutions which are concerned with its regulation. (Hill 1973)

This is an ----- definition because

It is in keeping with an elementary sense of the concept of religion to call the transcendence of biological nature by the human organism a religious phenomenon. (Luckman 1967)

This is an ----- definition because

An institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings. (Spiro 1966)

This is an ----- definition because

**Religion is a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggles with the ultimate problems of human life. (Yinger 1970)**

**This is an ----- definition because**

Religious culture is that set of beliefs and symbols (and values deriving directly there from) pertaining to a distinction between an empirical and super-empirical, transcendent reality; the affairs of the empirical being subordinated in significance to the non-empirical... [Religious action is] action shaped by an acknowledgement of the empirical/super-empirical distinction. (Robertson 1970)

This is an ----- definition because