

Does Maslow's Hierarchy fit into a Christian Stance?

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Maslow is very well known for his pyramid of needs. His pyramid is broken down into five categories. The five being physiological needs, safety and security, love and belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization. All these sections correlate to the things that satisfy human needs, and what humans desire for themselves. Human beings have needs and that is not questionable. As people our necessities rely on food, water, love, and security, but that doesn't mean that all needs align with God. The question that is asked is whether these categories align with a Christian perspectives, and whether the needs that fill each section align with how Christian view perspectives or if they align with a worldly view?

Maslow's Pyramid Vs Christian Perspective

Physiological needs vs Christian Perspective

On the bottom of Maslow's pyramid there is the section called physiological needs. These needs are referred to as the basic needs that humans rely on daily. These needs include air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing, and lastly reproduction. A worldly person would say that these are the basic human needs, but this is where they are broken down. Of course human beings need water, air and food. Without those things, we surely won't survive the everyday tasks of this world. Human life depends on these necessities because without these things "the human race or human society will just die or go into extinction without the human basic needs in the society" (Aruma & Hanachor 2017). The basic needs are essential to life, this is particularly why God made them for human society. The air humans breathe, the food that is grown and made, all contribute to the survival and reproduction of humanity. Additionally, the clothing that is made is a basic need for humans because it helps us with covering ourselves and even protecting our

bodies from certain temperatures. Then comes shelter where humans use it to rest and also to protect themselves from the weather. All that is essential to humans and their needs contributes tremendously because without these basic necessities we would all die. Physiological needs like Sleep, food, water, air and shelter are all necessary as seen, but the one thing that can be discussed in further detail that contributes in a wide range to the human race is reproduction. Reproduction is essential towards society because it is how the population prevents itself from dying out, but one could argue that this may not really be a necessity. God left sex in the human world to reproduce and use it as a form of bonding, but this is seen within marital relationships. Sexual relationships between two people who are married revolve around the Christian perspective, and how they perceive reproduction in their beliefs. In non religious perspectives, sexual relationships between two people do not follow those morals of waiting for marriage and then reproducing. This would all depend on what viewpoint reproduction is talked about. If it is talked about outside context on marriage then it falls into worldly views, instead of Christian views.

Safety Needs vs Christian perspective

Maslow's second layer into his period is called safety needs. This section of the pyramid describes what human beings need in order to feel safe and secure. The things listed in this section are personal security, employment, resources, health, and lastly property. One could agree that all these things help humans function and have some sense of security for themselves. Employment being an essential thing that falls into a Christian perspective. Resources can be added into this because employment helps with resources. In the very first chapter of the Bible, there is this Bible verse that specifically says that working is essential to getting some of the needs that humans need. Genesis 3:19 says this very thing. By the sweat of our brows, we will

eat our food. Humans work to supply for their needs. These needs are shelter, clothing and food. All these are discussed in the first section of the pyramid but without employment it is very hard to maintain some of the basic needs that are listed within the first section of the pyramid. Health is also a major factor within this pyramid. Having good health does align within a Christian perspective. In the aspect of health the Bible makes it clear that humans must treat their body with the utmost respect for the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. All beings regardless of religion, want to be healthy. Health is important in order to function the way we do. Without health in all aspects it is hard to function and complete the day to day activities. Personal security is also among this section of the pyramid, this aspect does fall into the Christian perspective. When one is secure in themselves, they know their strengths and weaknesses well. They also have a positive view of themselves. They also set realistic expectations and goals for themselves. They also communicate assertively and they can handle criticism. A Christian has should have a positive view of themselves, and they should be secure in themselves as well. A Christian person believes that they come from the highest, so that means in believing that they are worthy of all good things that come their way.

Love & Belonging vs Christian perspective.

Love and Belonging is the third aspect on the pyramid. It contains the following which are friendship, intimacy, family, sense of connection. Love and feeling accepted is something that human society does crave. This category does fall into a Christian perspective because love and belonging are part of a Christian way of life. A Christian person believes that the people in their life and their community are essential in their spiritual growth. The reason for this is because they believe that God has given them that rule. In the Bible it states to love thy neighbor like one loves themselves. This is why this section does fall into this perspective. Friendships, marriages,

and family make us feel loved. These are super important to us, they make us feel whole. “The more family emotional support people receive, the more satisfaction there will be of their physiological, safety-security, belongingness, esteem and self-actualization needs” (Taormina & Gao 2013). This is why having a good support system when things are rough is essential to every being. It also does give us a sense of love and acceptance. Now all this depends on the relationships we have because sometimes we tend to not have the best relationships with others. If it falls into the category of if this relationship brings the individual closer to God or not.

Self-esteem vs Christian Perspective

Self-esteem is important when it comes to us as human and how we see ourselves. This part of the pyramid has things such as respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, and as well as freedom. This part of the pyramid does align with the Christian perspective. The reason for this being is because Christians believe that God wants us to see ourselves the way he does. Such as daughters and sons of the Highest Being. Our self image is important not just because one may be religious but because it is the way we present ourselves to the world. It is the way we live life and it determines what kind of life we want as well. That is why self-esteem is very important. This could fall into two categories though when one might have too much or one may have too little self-esteem. Having a balanced self-esteem is what falls into the Christian perspective.

Self-actualization vs Christian perspective.

According to Maslow, self actualization is the desire to become the most that one can be. As humans we want to be the best version of ourselves because when achieving this it helps us feel fulfilled and it brings us happiness to see all the things we accomplished throughout the course of our lives. The question is if it falls into that Christian perspective. One could say yes, it

does because God wants us to be the best possible version of ourselves. While that is not something to disagree with because God does want us to flourish and live a fruitful life. It doesn't necessarily agree with it all the way. While living a fruitful life is a blessing, a Christian takes a different stance to this. The blessings in one's life are given from God. He is the one who provides that loving family, that job, that house, that partner and so on. One's ways may be selfish when trying to accomplish the best version of themselves. "Jesus Christ makes it even more clear by advising his disciples to not be concerned with food, clothing, housing, comfort and money when doing his father's work" (Pfeifer 1998). This shows that Christians lean into believing that God's ways are higher, his plans are higher than what we can imagine. Meaning that we shouldn't worry so much about fulfilling our needs because God will provide what is necessary for each being.

What about including spiritual needs?

Maslow's pyramid is great to say the least. It can be a guide or a blueprint to living a fulfilling life but this goes out to the individuals who don't believe in Christianity or any religion for that matter. What about the folks who need to fulfill their spiritual needs? "... Maslow's needs pyramid does not take into consideration fulfilling certain types of needs which are important to many people namely, spiritual needs, which are important to all people of different religions and spiritual beliefs" (Gayed & Gayed 2018). Those who feel the need to fulfill their spiritual needs in order to be the person they desire to be, need another section in the pyramid. The pyramid is a guide and it is understood each person takes the pyramid differently but for those with spiritual needs there isn't anything. A Christian perspective would add God into this pyramid. It would add the need of needing God in order to fulfill the best version of themselves. A Christian perspective would intertwine God into all the sections. Starting from the first section

to the very top section of the pyramid. Christians wouldn't fully depend on themselves when it comes to fulfilling their needs. The reason for this being is because a Christian perspective understands that God will provide the things necessary in order for them to live a fulfilling and happy life. "For Christians there are several issues with Maslow's theory of motivation" (McCleskey & Rudell 1970). Folks who believe in their spiritual needs would definitely need to change up the pyramid to their way of life. Maslow's pyramid is a secular solution to life's challenges. This is why folks who want to use the pyramid as a guide should add more in depth if they have spiritual needs that they feel that need to be met.

Conclusion

Maslow's theory overall is not a bad one at that. He places many things that we as humans feel we need. He broke them down into a hierarchy of needs. One thing to add from a Christian perspective is that God should be intertwined between these sections when it comes down to fulfilling our needs and goals in life. A Christian perspective won't put as much emphasis on trying to fulfill these needs themselves because they will believe that God will provide the necessary for them. Although all these aspects of the pyramid are good, they don't all align with a Christian perspective. Some of them do but not all of them do.

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