

The Five Religious Tensions

T Body Physical existence An integral part of natural world	I and The Cosmos	T Soul Spiritual existence A sense of apartness from nature
T Moral Order Do's, Don'ts, Oughts Community concerns	I and The Norm	T Individual desires Wants, Wont's, Why's Self concerns
T Destiny or Fate Another's purposes A puppet or pawn No Control of my life	I and the Riddle of Existence	T Responsible Acts Meaningful acts Free choices In control of my life
T Things aren't right I'm flawed, messed up God is angry with me	I and Salvation	T Things will be better I need change, fixing Need for appeasement
T Infinite Impersonal Power Invisible Realities	I and the Supreme Being	T Finite Personal Weakness Visible Realities

These are "tensions" that humankind has wrestled with throughout its existence. They are religious questions, but also asked by philosophers and artists and writers. Stretch rubber bands between these pairs of nails – you have a tension. Sometimes the answers to resolving the tension suggest pulling out a "nail" at one end or the other. The tensions exist because we are creatures created in God's Image; our relationships damaged by man's fall into sin. Our faith does not necessarily resolve these tensions even as new creatures in Christ.

Mankind expresses these questions particularly both through its religious activities and its arts, but also constantly lives and makes decisions and acts upon them. Since "tension" is the basis of drama, you could well discuss which of these tensions were being pondered by a writer, film producer or artist, a springboard to talking about your faith.