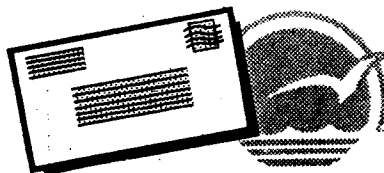


Clearwater Sun

Thursday, September 6, 1984



Letters to the Editor

On Scientology

Editor:

Scientology is basically an applied religious philosophy. Scientology traces its religious roots back 2500 years to a man named Gautama Siddhartha, better known to the Western world as Buddha. Buddha was concerned with increasing the individual's awareness of himself or herself as a spiritual being. He achieved this increased awareness for himself and devoted the remainder of his life to helping others achieve the same state. In Scientology today, we have an extension and expansion of Buddha's work with the added exactness of the Western scientific method. Mr. Hubbard's research has centered on developing counseling methods that free an individual's attention from the material aspects of existence and allows that person to rediscover the spiritual aspects of his or her life.

As Scientology's religious roots are in the Eastern tradition, the practice of our religion has its unique

aspects. Eastern religions, by and large, believe that the Kingdom of God lies within the individual. That is, the knowledge of oneself as a spiritual being is resident within the person although largely or completely hidden. The Eastern religions provide training and advice to the individual that allows him or her to conduct an inward search to recover this knowledge. Western religions are "revealed" religions. That is to say, the Knowledge of God and of oneself as a spiritual being comes from the Books of the Bible, the Prophets and the life and teachings of Jesus, and is communicated to the individual from an external source. Scientology takes the Eastern approach pioneered first by Buddha and helps the person to conduct his or her own inward search to recover the knowledge of themselves as a spiritual being. Our counseling and training remove the barriers to this knowledge, inherent to one degree or another in each of us. Thus, the focus of our religion is not in the communal forms of worship, although we do have Sunday services and other types of group worship. The emphasis in Scientology is on the individual counseling and training that assists the person in the recovery of knowledge of himself or herself as a spiritual being.

Since such an inward search is, by its very nature, individual, we are not a doctrinaire church. There is no requirement that anyone adopt or give up a particular belief system to participate in Scientology counseling or training. We give the person the responsibility for rediscovering his own unique spiritual identity, and charge him or her to live according to that identity. Many of our members, in

Clearwater as in other places, attend another church of their choice in addition to participating in Scientology counseling and training. Their exposure to Scientology many times increases their reality and awareness of their innate spirituality in their own religious setting outside of our church.

Our church believes that man is basically good, although he sometimes acts badly. This non-optimum behavior comes from a person's desire to survive (a basic purpose of almost any living being) and is influenced by certain past experiences where that person had to choose a course of action and may have misjudged (and thus acted badly). Scientology counseling straightens all this out for the individual and frees the person to act more ethically and rationally as a spiritual being, and thus increases his or her survival potential. A society composed of individuals who are more ethical becomes, itself, also more ethical. Thus the overall situation in the world improves.

Scientology provides the only road to total freedom for the individual. It can change conditions in a person's life for the better and has done so for millions of people across the world.

I hope this provides some idea of the religious basis for our church and its practices. We are more than happy to show anyone the Fort Harrison and describe the basic tenets of our church and let them see for themselves what we are doing in Clearwater.

RICHARD HAWORTH
Church of Scientology
Clearwater