

Scientology Religion By Lafayette Ronald Hubbard

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Introduction

Scientology is a religion introduced by Lafayette Ronald Hubbard in 1952. The basis of this religion was developed when Hubbard introduced the concept of Dianetics and published a book about it. The Scientology religion states that human beings are immortal and hold a spiritual self; their capabilities are unlimited, and the scope of their capabilities extends beyond a single lifetime. Unlike other religions that are based on faith as the very base of the religion, Scientology provides the option of accepting the belief by personally experimenting and observing concepts of the religion. According to Hubbard, the concept of Dianetics is to bring happiness to people and solve mental problems. The concepts of irrationality, hate, war, criminology, and insanity were major focuses of this book. Hubbard claimed he had a solution to emotional and psychological illness; he launched the book "Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health" along with another publication, "Science of Survival," where he presented his concept as a religion and publicly declared it to the world. The religion currently holds over a hundred churches in almost all states of America, and it is named the "Church of Scientology." The latest American Religious Identification Survey provides the total number of Scientologists present in the world to be 25,000, and all of them are located in America. This essay will describe the history of the Scientology religion, its sacred writings, beliefs, practices, rituals, and worship, as well as its concepts about family and society (Hall, 2014).

Discussion

The concept of Scientology fits the definition of religion as it contains all three essential components for a religion to be accepted as a religion (Kent, 2015).

1. Belief in something absolute or an Ultimate truth about the world.
2. Religious worship, practices, and rituals follow this ultimate reality.
3. A population of believers who hold this belief.

Historical Overview

The religion of Scientology came into existence in 1952 through the efforts of L. Ron Hubbard. Hubbard dropped out of college at an early age and later joined the naval forces. During his service in the Navy, he became interested in the Naval Psychiatric Care Department. This motivated him to find

a cure for the human mind's problems and proposed spirituality as an answer to these problems. The psychometric illness and emotional imbalance became a cause of the religion of Scientology, which Hubbard tried to prove in his book "Science of Survival". This book, along with one on the concept of Dianetics, became the first guide to religion. After gaining popularity for the concept of Dianetics and Thetan (a spiritual being who controls the body), Hubbard decided to present the concept of Scientology as a religion. Overcoming the setback that initially didn't allow him to publish his book, as he got financial support, he wrote a letter to publicly declare it as a religion. After completing the legalities, he set the foundations for the Church of Scientology, which became the official center for preaching and ceremonial activities of the religion.

Sacred Writings

Scientology takes help from various texts and scripts, such as the writings and lectures of its founder, L. Ron Hubbard, on the subject of Dianetics and Scientology. These scripts include 2,500 lectures and about 100 films, making the largest number of writings on the topic of spirituality and life. A major portion of these writings is the Scientology bulletins, known as "Hubbard Communications Office Bulletins," which are collections of books published publicly. The beliefs of Scientology can be found in these eighteen books and 280 lectures that are present in every Church of Scientology all over the world. A small portion of the script by Hubbard is kept secret. These scripts are the most advanced discussions on spirituality, and according to Scientologists, these concepts are only for those who have developed an understanding of the concept of spirituality.

Beliefs

The religion of Scientology is based on the belief that human beings are immortal and have capabilities that are infinite and beyond the scope of a single lifetime. Its main belief is that man can use psychological technologies to understand his true self. Scientology holds the belief in the presence of God but includes no details or creed related to Him. As this religion is based on personal experimentation and analysis to believe the truth about the religion, its followers research the importance of belief in God and come to their own analysis of whether to believe or not in God.

Worship, Rituals, and Festivals

Worship in Scientology religion is not a must like it is in most religions, and most of the religious activities are based on rituals and celebrations. The religion has some important rituals that are followed on specific occasions. These rituals are mostly practiced on occasions when a Scientologist is born or dies and whenever he needs to be purified. The practice of auditing is followed when a person needs to remove painful memories and experiences by increasing his spiritual abilities. Similarly, the birth ritual is followed whenever a new baby is born in a Scientologist family. This practice follows

complete silence whenever a baby is born, both by the mother and the nurses who conduct the delivery. The reason behind this silence is not to scare the child. The death rituals are practiced believing that the spirit has now left the body and is now preparing for the next phase of existence. Some other rituals, like Sunday celebrations, the creed of total freedom, and Scientology, are some other occasional rituals followed by people, but their presence is not obligatory (Rothstein, 2016).

Family and Society

The concept of having family and relationships is not strict in Scientology, and good behavior and relationships with family are encouraged in the religion. Practicing religion while having nonscientologist family members and keeping in contact with them is not discouraged, and people can continue their family operations. The church of Scientology also encourages good relations with the family and even participates in and resolves issues between families and relations. The church also tries to resolve issues in families that are not Scientologists.

The believers of Scientology have a mindset that encourages them to be an active and helping part of society. Religion encourages good actions and positive parts to be taken in favor of society and allows them to participate in society's benefits. The church encourages its followers to get involved in activities that are beneficial for mankind and are aimed at the betterment of society. Many references in the Hubbard literature and religious books of Scientology state methods by which people can work for the good of society and propose new ideas to decrease threats to the world.

Conclusion

The Scientology religion, though, has faced a lot of criticism and negative feedback from religious researchers around the world, and its followers are still less in number, but the most positive aspect of the religion is that it encourages the betterment of society. Irrespective of the religious belonging of every person, the church of Scientology welcomes everyone who does their best to solve conflicts and issues between families and provides their best solutions to avoid conflicts among people. Analyzing the practices and values of the religion, Scientology can be followed not as a religion but as a way of improving life in society.

References

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