



### Why have I become a member of the Theosophical Society?

- “In the beginning I was a bit anxious to become a member, and perhaps limit myself to any spiritual organisation. My experience in the Theosophical Society is quite different. I have become close friends with people with a similar broad spiritual view of life, and the meetings keep inspiring me in my own spiritual path. I feel I am not alone in my spiritual journey and this experience has enriched my life.”
- “Within the Theosophical Society I have found true spirituality, moving beyond the dogmatic approach of most of the churches.”
- “The Theosophical Society has brought me many great insights into profound concepts of evolution and a deeper meaning in life. Although we study together, in the end I am quite happy to find things out for myself.”

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# Theosophy

## In a nutshell

## Seeking Truth Only

This leaflet may be your first encounter with theosophy or the Theosophical Society. In the present time, many religious institutions and their traditional values are losing their attraction for modern man. Many are now searching for new ways of spiritual growth and development and for a deeper meaning in life. Theosophy is this search itself.

Those interested in theosophy are united by a common search and aspiration for higher truth or *divine wisdom* in their lives, not by a common set of beliefs. Truth can only be explored in total freedom, progressing along one's individual spiritual path.

## Spirituality Independent of Organized Religion

There is a clear difference between religious institutions and the living experience of a spiritual mind. In many religions the inner search for "divine wisdom" has become infertile. Those interested in theosophy like to think that each religion is derived from the same universal source, and to a certain extent reflects the light of the eternal divine wisdom.

This is the usual interpretation of the motto of the Theosophical Society: "There is no religion higher than truth". Those theosophists who do follow a certain religion like to explore its hidden or *esoteric* wisdom. They tend to see theosophy as an opportunity for inner development and finding deeper meaning within their own religion.

## Bringing about Real Change

The TS was founded in 1875. Its main goal for its founders was to bring about a change in the dogmatic and materialistic mindset of humanity at that time. Many of its ideas have been incorporated in our culture since its establishment. Nevertheless, theosophy is now more important than ever. The challenges humanity is facing today can only be understood rightly through a clear insight in the interaction between the spiritual and material worlds, resulting in a fundamental transformation of our minds and actions.

According to their individual preference, theosophists study works of different spiritual traditions from both East and West. Studying without practice in daily life is like planning a route that is not being followed, whereas practice without clear concepts is like a journey with no direction. Theory and practice are always somehow interrelated. It is sometimes said that theosophical work implies meditation, study and service.

## Basic Propositions

Theosophy cannot be studied or practiced together with others fruitfully, without agreeing upon some basic principles. These are not intended as dogmas, but as common ground upon which we can build together.

1. One **absolute principle** is the eternal source of all life, matter and consciousness in the universe. This implies an absolute unity that underlies the phenomenal world and expresses itself through each individual.

The word *God* is usually avoided in theosophical work, as it often leads to confusion and misunderstandings.

2. **Spiritual evolution** explains how the eternal principle manifests itself periodically, in cycles of expression and retraction. Studying the laws of these cycles allows us to live in harmony with nature.

3. The **fundamental identity of all individuals with the absolute**, each soul being like a spark of the universal fire in its journey through the cycles of incarnation. Brotherhood of humanity is a practical consequence of this fundamental identity, as formulated in the first object of the Theosophical Society. In *meditation*, being perfect silence or stillness of the mind, we can experience this fundamental unity.

## The International Theosophical Centre

The International Theosophical Centre (ITC) in Naarden aims to be an active and inspiring spiritual centre, contributing to the service of the world and the uplifting of mankind in particular. The ITC invites people at the Centre to work on the process of human regeneration through personal transformation.

This leaflet aims to give you a short view on theosophy. In case this has generated your appetite, you are invited to take a look at this web site:

 [www.itc-naarden.org](http://www.itc-naarden.org)