

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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Q.: What is the difference between Theosophy and the Assembly of Man?

A.: Theosophy means Divine Wisdom. *The Century Dictionary* says in part: "Most philosophical systems start from phenomena and deduce therefrom certain conclusions concerning God; Theosophy starts with an assumed knowledge of God, directly obtained, through spiritual intercommunion, and proceeds therefrom to a study and explanation of phenomena." It is distinguished, among other things, by its want, more or less conspicuous, of dialectical exposition. *Baldwin's Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* says: A stage into which philosophic reflection passes when its primary data are God and an organ through which He is revealed or mystically intuited."

With these definitions the Assembly is in perfect agreement, but not necessarily with certain interpretations and details of it as taught by some Theosophists. Even as Christianity is divided into its sects, so does Theosophy stand divided, and the Assembly finds itself more in alignment with those teachings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge than with certain others. Assembly teachings lean toward logical analysis, appeal to reason and attempt to lay a foundation for understanding rather than the giving of factual data, and usually only such facts are presented that can be adequately documented. The Assembly holds to no dogma, seeks the highest truth and aims at utilizing this knowledge in aiding mankind to resolve its problems, know enduring happiness and complete understanding, and bring man back to his true reality.

Q.: What is the need for a group like the Assembly? Why can it not combine with similar groups? In fact, what is the need of forming any groups? Cannot one learn from books, occasional lectures, etc.?

A.: There are advantages in working as a group. The teaching is not haphazard, but organized, and assuming the leadership is reliable, correct guidance will be given. This is important, for not all metaphysical literature is of a lofty nature or even correct, and can often dangerously mislead or confuse one. Proper guidance from one of wisdom will give the student training according to his personal needs and understanding, for what is good for one may be harmful to another. Unless the student has attained to a high degree of discrimination he should have wise personal guidance, most especially in things of a metaphysical nature. Also, he will have the protection of the group, and as a member of a group can benefit from the combined strength of all members, thus accomplishing much that cannot be done singly.

Just as the needs of various individuals differ, so are there groups to fill these various needs. What is enlightening to one may be barren to another. One may seek a personal God, another an impersonal one; one arrives through the path of the heart, another by the mental path, and some seek a balance of these two, as the Assembly offers. Some prefer to sit on the sides and just watch,

others want to live it; some seek for purely selfish reasons, others for the good of all creatures. The Assembly will satisfy some of these groups but not all. And if all thought alike there would be no challenge, and philosophy and religion would tend to crystalize and growth would stagnate. There is another advantage of group membership over individual seeking: there are teachings one may never find in books, teachings that cannot or may not be printed; but have been handed down through the centuries from Guru to Chela when the Chela is ready to receive it.

Q.: Is there something unique about the Assembly of Man?

A.: The Assembly does not aim to be unique or different or original. It maintains the highest standards and seeks to teach understanding and wisdom most especially, and prefers that all powers should come as a by-product of these attainments. The Assembly welcomes all visitors to its open meetings, and many who have come out of curiosity have stayed on to become pillars of strength in the Work. Membership demands honesty, sincerity and high integrity, a genuine seeking after truth, a sense of compassion, and a reasonably high intelligence. The Assembly is a school with graduated courses, the climb becoming steeper as it goes higher, and graduation comes only with Liberation, or attainment of the Christ-Consciousness, whether it take a few years or many lifetimes.

Rarely can one attain to Realization without the aid of a Guru. He is able to give wise instruction and training and sets an example for the student, but more than this, He offers a field of induction necessary for the Transformation. As our students know, our Yogagnani has Himself attained to this Christ-Consciousness, or Divine Revelation, and can offer this field of induction. Also did our Mother Sherifa attain to a very high level of consciousness and has given us the benefit of It. If this group is unique it is because of the quality of its Revered Leaders. A group is not a necessity if a disciple is fortunate enough to have a personal Guru, but these are rare Beings, especially in the Western hemisphere. A group led by an Enlightened Guru is doubly fortunate.