

# What is Scientology?

## (part 1 of 2): The Eclectic Religion



Scientology has been called the world's most significant new religion, and Scientologists themselves claim to draw on 50,000 years of wisdom. However apostates from Scientology claim it is a vicious, dangerous cult masquerading as a religion. No matter which description we choose, the fact remains that Scientology is a controversial, mysterious religious movement, with more than 10 million members in around 160 countries across the globe. In this series of articles, we hope to delve into this puzzling movement, and find the answer to several intriguing questions. Is Scientology a religion or an evil cult? What exactly does a scientologist believe, and how do these beliefs compare to the religion of Islam?

### What do scientologists believe?

The official scientology web site<sup>[1]</sup> states that “Scientology is a religion that offers a precise path leading to a complete and certain understanding of one's true spiritual nature and one's relationship to self, family, groups, mankind, all life forms, the material universe, the spiritual universe and the Supreme Being”. From this we can easily deduce that scientology does acknowledge God, or what they refer to as the Supreme Being.

“Scientology comprises a body of knowledge which extends from certain fundamental truths. Prime among these are, *that man is an immortal spiritual being, his experience extends well beyond a single lifetime and his capabilities are unlimited, even if not presently realised.*” *In this statement we can see that scientologists believe in some form of reincarnation perhaps not dissimilar to the Eastern religions such as Hinduism or Buddhism.*

Scientology further holds humankind to be basically good, and believes his spiritual salvation depends upon himself, his fellows and his attainment of

brotherhood with the universe. This is a very pleasant sentiment, not unlike most of the religions that exist in the world today. The ultimate goal, scientologists say, is true spiritual enlightenment and freedom. This they exhort is achieved by applying Scientology's principles and observing or experiencing the results.

The founder of scientology L Ron Hubbard began his studies of the mind and spirit in 1923, resulting in a 1938 manuscript entitled *Excalibur*. It was in this unpublished work that the word Scientology first appeared to describe what Mr. Hubbard termed "the study of knowing how to know." Hubbard expanded on his studies by writing a manuscript detailing an actual therapy easily applicable to the average person.

The book describing the therapy, Dianetics - the Modern Science of Mental Health, was Hubbard's masterwork and the basis of Scientology. It provides the means by which practitioners discover past lives. Pressing Hubbard's application and research even further resulted in the accomplishment of *exteriorization*—demonstrating the spirit (thetan) is indeed separable from the body and mind.

The official scientology web site states ~ Although Dianetics and Scientology were founded by L. Ron Hubbard, and all the scriptures are solely comprised of his writings and recorded lectures, he nonetheless wrote: "Acknowledgment is made to fifty thousand years of thinking men without whose speculations and observations the creation and construction of Dianetics would not have been possible. Credit in particular is due to: Anaxagoras, Thomas Paine, Aristotle, Thomas Jefferson, Socrates, René Descartes, Plato, James Clerk Maxwell, Euclid, Charcot, Lucretius, Herbert Spencer, Roger Bacon, William James, Francis Bacon, Sigmund Freud, Isaac Newton, van Leeuwenhoek, Cmdr Thompson (MC) USN, Voltaire, William A. White, Will Durant, Count Alfred Korzybski and my instructors in atomic and molecular phenomena, mathematics and the humanities at George Washington University and at Princeton."

The men Hubbard acknowledges are an interesting mix of the great philosophers, thinkers, psychologists and politicians. By perusing the list one is able to see why scientology has been described as a religious philosophy. However, is a philosophical form of psychology really a religion? A clear and workable definition of religion is very difficult to find, however the online dictionary[2] refers to it as "a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs."

Scientology does acknowledge the existence of a Supreme Being although to the uninitiated it seems to lack a clear vision of an afterlife where one is punished or rewarded. It does have a moral code or set of values calling for

universal brotherhood, however instead of ritual and devotional observances scientology has auditing. Auditing is the process of asking specifically worded questions designed to help one find and handle areas of distress often deeply buried in the psyche. Auditing is done with the aid of an E-meter. This is an electronic device that measures electrical resistance and skin conductance. It may in some sense be ritualistic but it is hardly devotional.

According to Rolling Stone magazine Scientology is unique among religious faiths, in that charges for virtually all of its religious services. Auditing is purchased in 12.5-hour blocks, known as intensives. Each intensive can cost anywhere from \$750 for introductory sessions to between \$8,000 and \$9,000 for advanced sessions. Auditing helps a person move through the various levels of scientology until they attain the position of OT or Operating Thetan.

Scientology claims that the term theta describes the life force which animates all living things. This life force, they say is separate from, but acts upon, the physical universe, which consists of matter, energy, space and time (called “MEST” in Scientology). The thetan is what other religions would call the soul or spirit however in Scientology one does not have a thetan one IS a thetan. An OT therefore is a spiritual state of being where one can handle things without having to use a body of physical means. At this level one deals with his own immortality as a spiritual being and is able to study the very advanced materials of L. Ron Hubbard’s research.

Even though there are obvious aspects of spirituality in Scientology opinions around the world differ on whether or not Scientology is a religion. It is legally accepted as a tax exempt religion in the United States of America and after a legal struggle, in 1983, the High court of Australia recognised scientology as a religion. Scientology is not recognised as a religion in France and Belgium and in Germany it is legally a commercial organisation rather than a religion.

In the 2006 exposé of Scientology by Rolling Stone magazine the French sociologist and expert in comparative religions, Regis Dericquebourg, called Scientology’s belief system a “regressive utopia,” in which man seeks to return to a once-perfect state through a variety of meticulous, and rigorous, processes intended to put him in touch with his primordial spirit. These processes are highly controlled, and, at the advanced levels, highly secretive.

Stephen Kent, a professor of sociology at the University of Alberta, in Canada says, with reference to Hubbard’s science fiction writing background, that “Scientologists see themselves as possessors of doctrines and skills that can save the world, if not the galaxy.”

In part two we will travel to a planet far far away to explore the origin of Scientology’s beliefs, and discuss the likelihood of Scientology being either a cult, and or a business often given to criminal acts.

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**Footnotes:**

[1] (<http://www.scientology.org>)

[2] <http://dictionary.reference.com>

## **(part 2 of 2): From Intergalactic Wars to Federal Prisons**

In part 1, a brief overview of Scientology, we learned that across the globe there are various government opinions about whether or not Scientology is a religion. We also explored the basic belief system of Scientology. Scientology is not a Christian sect but does profess to believe in a Supreme Being, Scientologists believe in reincarnation and consider humans to be spiritual beings, and higher states of enlightenment can be attained via a process called auditing. In part 2 we will delve a little deeper and discover the origins of Scientology.

Our motivation for revealing the secrets of Scientology is not to denigrate scientologists or to make a judgement on whether or not Scientology is a religion. Our motivation is only to compare other religions with Islam and to further the command to seek beneficial knowledge before making decisions. Some of the information contained below sounds like a fantasy story however every effort has been made to use only reliable sources. Please bear in mind that the sources used in Part 1 to outline the basic beliefs of Scientology were from official scientology web sites. Now in the second part of the series we will look at the opinions of a growing body of people leaving Scientology and speaking out against their former religion. We will also look at official government and law enforcement opinions and charges.

The story of L Ron Hubbard's life and rise to power is both interesting and colourful and can be found on line at numerous web sites both for and against Scientology. As a university student Hubbard found moderate success as a writer of pulp fiction, publishing hundreds of stories in fantasy and science fiction magazines. After world war 2, where he served briefly as a lieutenant in the Navy, Hubbard met John Whiteside Parsons, a sci fi buff and a founder of CalTech's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Unauthorised biographies link Hubbard and Parsons' with black magic, satanic rites and British occultist Aleister Crowley. Sci-fi writer Lloyd Eshbach who met Hubbard in the late 1940s recalls him saying "I'd like to start a religion, that's where the money is." In 1954 L Ron Hubbard founded the first Church of Scientology in Los Angeles California.

## Once Upon a Time

A long long time ago, 75 million years ago on a planet far far away, but still in our galaxy, there lived an intergalactic warlord named Xenu. He was in charge of 76 planets in this part of the galaxy, including our own planet Earth (Teegeeeack). Xenu's problem was that all the plants he controlled were overpopulated. He needed to get rid of the excess population, so he formulated a plan. The evil plan could also be called Scientology's creation story. This according to countless ex-Scientologists is the first of the doctrines released after paying thousands of dollars to reach level 3 OT (operating thetan)[1] Apparently the knowledge is potentially so dangerous it could kill those not ready to hear the brutal truth.

However because a Muslim has complete faith in God and knows with certainty that there is no god but God, the Sustainer and Creator of the universe, it is easy for us to delve further into the intergalactic story and hear the brutal truth. In contrast to Scientology, there is no secrecy in Islam, no one person is more worthy of being close to God or knowing how to worship Him correctly. Islam is a religion of informed knowledge.

Thus, to continue the story, according to ex Scientologists[2] psychiatrists helped Xenu round up millions of people who were then dumped into volcanoes around the globe and vaporized with bombs. "This scattered their radioactive souls, or thetans, until they were caught in electronic traps set up around the atmosphere and "implanted" with a number of false ideas — including the concepts of God, Christ and organized religion. Scientologists later learn that many of these entities attached themselves to human beings, where they remain to this day, creating not just the root of all of our emotional and physical problems but the root of all problems of the modern world"[3].

Implanting false ideas about organised religion and God seems to be a direct contradiction to the stated Scientology belief in God or Supreme Being. However the real nature of the Supreme Being and the nature of the universe is revealed as a person rises in the ranks of Scientology and undergoes more expensive auditing sessions. In direct contrast Islam was revealed for all people, in all places, and at all times. Social status, or wealth have no bearing on how much Islam a person is entitled to know, nor does the length of time a person has been Muslim.

The Xenu story also helps to explain scientology's deep hatred of psychiatry. Scientologists consider many illnesses to be psychosomatic and don't believe in treating them with medicine, even aspirin. Islam, on the other hand instructs the believers to seek a cure from ill health with God but to take full advantage of medical and scientific methods.



## Battles on Planet Earth

Scientology has been under attack, and accused of criminal dealings almost from the beginning. Rolling Stone magazine,<sup>[4]</sup> in the 2006 article, Inside Scientology revealed and explained the policy known as Fair Game. “...all who opposed Scientology could be tricked, sued or lied to and destroyed. This policy was enforced by Scientology’s quasisecret police force, known as the Guardian’s Office. By the 1970s, among its tasks was “Operation Snow White,” a series of covert activities that included bugging the Justice Department and stealing documents from the IRS. The plan was discovered in FBI raids on Scientology’s Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., offices in 1977, which yielded wiretap equipment, burglary tools and about 90,000 pages of documents. Eleven Scientology officials, including Hubbard’s third wife, went to federal prison for their role in the plot, which led to a 1982 sweep of the church’s upper management.”

In 2009 the Church of Scientology narrowly avoided being banned in France after being prosecuted for fraud, four leaders were given suspended jail sentences. In Belgium, too, Scientology is embroiled in a long criminal investigation. In the same year, the Prime Minister of Australia Kevin Rudd expressed his concern over allegations of “a worldwide pattern of abuse and criminality”.

Scientology has been shut down in Greece, indicted in Spain, restricted in Russia, rebuffed by Sweden’s highest court, expelled from college campuses in Norway, convicted of crimes in Canada and denied status as a charitable organization or a religion in most European countries. High-ranking Scientologists have been jailed in Italy, France and Spain in connection with what were called crimes associated with Scientology practices, and France keeps Scientology on a list of organizations that need to be monitored for cult activity.<sup>[5]</sup>

The church has frequently been accused of breaking up families and preying on the vulnerable and in early 2011 the Huffington Post reported that the Church of Scientology in the USA was under investigation for human trafficking and unpaid labour. However, despite what appears to be overwhelming evidence to the contrary the Church of Scientology continues to describe itself as the religion whose goal is “a civilization without insanity, without criminals and without war, where the able can prosper and honest beings can have rights, and where Man is free to rise to greater heights.”

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### Footnotes:

<sup>[1]</sup> See Scientology part 1.

[2] <http://www.xenu.net> ; <http://exscn.net> ; <http://forums.whyweprotest.net/threads/big-list-of-ex-scientologists-who-have-spoken-out.42319/>

[3] <http://www.xenu.net/archive/leaflet/Xenu-A4.pdf>

[4] Inside Scientology is archived at <http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/news/inside-scientology-20110208>

[5] <http://www.rickross.com/reference/scientology/Scien112.html>