

than in receiving help himself; one who is ever ready to sacrifice his own pleasures for the sake of other people; and who loves Truth, Goodness and Wisdom for their own sake, not for the benefit they may confer – is a Theosophist.”

To elucidate the definition of Occultism she explains, “It should never be forgotten that Occultism is concerned with the *inner man* who must be strengthened and freed from the dominion of the physical body and its surroundings, which must become his servants. Hence the *first* and chief necessity of Chelaship is a spirit of absolute unselfishness and devotion to Truth; then follow self-knowledge and self-mastery. These are all-important; while outward observance of fixed rules of life is a matter of secondary moment.”

And as a warning, she describes the consequences of prematurely approaching the study of Occultism. If one is not entirely pure, or has not conquered the lower self with the higher it will only exacerbate ones base desires and intentions. What should come from a place of spiritual altruism degrades into astral attachments. Black magic and sorcery, even unintentionally executed selfish willpower, often becomes the result. And so the student sees a much broader necessity for Theosophy in human evolution. All spiritual beings over the course of their evolution, lifetime to lifetime, will learn the universal tenets of Theosophy one way or another. Organizing the tenets into a system and a doctrine is a way to get everyone to grow up spiritually more quickly and benevolently.

## To Imagine a Theosophical Society without Occult Teachings

Even though the Theosophical Society is not even 140 years old at the time of this writing, it could be said that the keeping of history and historical records is a fervent pastime for some of its members at all stages of its development. And what good fortune this is so, not only because twists and changes occur so frequently in the Theosophical Society’s progress, but because much of what is advised by its leaders requires a great deal of context to actually apply.