

Theosophical approaches to Christianity

Introduction: Theosophy, far from being inconsistent or incompatible with the Christian Way, is in fact its other side. Theosophy merits consideration by all who wish to make their Christian faith both more intelligible to their minds and more alive in their hearts. It agrees with St. Paul that Christ is within us. It teaches people not to leave the religion in which they have heard God speak but, rather, to live it more fully and perceive it more clearly.

The emphasis in Christ's teachings on the love of God and of one's neighbor is also echoed by Theosophy. That love is not an emotion or a sentimental affection. It is rather what is called in Greek "agape," a recognition of a greater Reality in human experience and a concern for the welfare of others. In Theosophy it is called "altruism," a recognition that, as we and others are ultimately one, their good is also ultimately ours.

Those who take their stand in the eternal verities, on the inner or hidden aspect of Christianity, are like the man in the parable who "had the sense to build his house on rock" (Matthew 7:24). Such people can view without alarm the shifting sands of criticism and doubt that arise in each new age. Storms may come, winds may blow, but the house stands, for its occupants are no longer in bondage to the letter of the law. They hold to that hidden spiritual foundation of which external facts are but the sign and symbol. In possession of the Divine Wisdom, they know the truth that makes us free.]

Christianity, numerically the world's largest religion, and modern Theosophy have had a complex and sometimes troubled relationship. The Christian faith was and is the natal religion of the great majority of Western members of the Theosophical Society (TS) from the generation of the Founders to the late twentieth century. But many came to Theosophy through a process of questioning, or even rebellion against that faith. Some were of no faith or, increasingly, have been raised in Theosophy or some other spiritual alternative. Other Theosophists, both Eastern and Western, were never