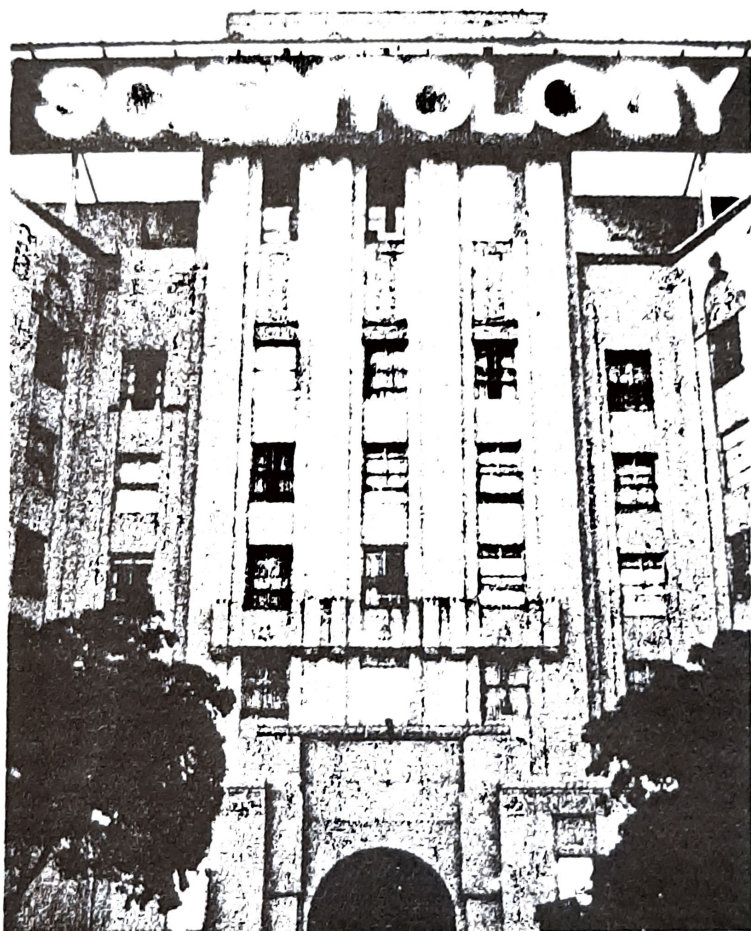


CHALLENGING SCIENTOLOGY WITH THE GOSPEL.



Scientology is one of those new religions of the 20th Century that saw a gap in our society and tried to fill it. The Church was founded by L. Ron Hubbard (b. 1911, d. 1986) in 1954 after a successful career as a science fiction writer of the 1930's and 1940's. It seems that he saw his career as a science fiction writer coming to a close. Time Magazine reported that in 1949, while Mr. Hubbard was speaking at a writer's convention in New Jersey, he reportedly said, "If a man really wants to make a million dollars, the best way would be to start his own religion."

Mr. Hubbard's first book to be used for a religious application was published the following year under the title, Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health, 1950 edition. With the help of celebrities such as John Travolta, Joe Namath, Karen Black, jazz artist Chick Corea, and others, the book has been well promoted, claiming sales of over 10 million copies. Some critics of Scientology, though, have had a difficult time distinguishing between Mr. Hubbard's science fiction career and his writings as a religious "messiah."



L. Ron Hubbard gone underground
in New York City, 1973

In general terms, the system of Scientology dogma is not easily put to paper in a synchronized form. This is mainly due to the prolific hand of Mr. Hubbard while he was head of the Church. He wrote over 100 books under the Church's auspices, along with an almost endless stream of inter-staff communications numbering into the thousands of pages. Many of these highly esoteric writings have never been seen by the public's eye.

I have read about 75 of Mr. Hubbard's books and a file drawer full of the esoteric writings. It has astounded me at times, while I have been doing research, that highly intelligent people, many with doctorate degrees, have embraced these writings like a Christian clutches to the Bible. Yet I must remember that when it comes to the understanding of spiritual truth, the warning of the Bible has never sounded a clearer message, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) My position is that no matter how far-fetched a religious scheme seems to be, the people involved in it still need to be looked upon with compassion as lost souls for whom Christ died. It is appropriate to mention here that Scientology claims to have 6 million adherents.

In examining their beliefs you will be introduced to words not found in a common dictionary. The first principle taught to the Scientologist is the you are not your body. According to them, you are a Thetan. A thetan is a spirit-being (similar to the soul) which has supposedly existed for some 300 trillion years. The thetan has spent most of these years entering bodies, only to die and reenter another life-form elsewhere in the universe.

The problem for the Scientologist is that each past life had aberrative experiences, called Engrams, which attached themselves to the thetan, like barnacles to a ship. The presence of these engrams is what makes the individual react so overtly in society, so the natural solution is to have them removed. This is the second problem. The only way to have them removed is through Scientology "auditing" and technical courses. These can become very

costly, sometimes into the tens of thousands of dollars. Once the engrams are totally removed, then the thetan is pronounced "clear," which mainly gives two beneficial rewards. The first is that the Scientologist can now walk around on this earth as an O T (Operating Thetan). Being an OT gives the Scientologist access to total recall of memory and control over Matter, Energy, Space and Time (MEST). The second benefit of being clear means that you are now free from the endless cycle of birth and death (reincarnation).

This summary, as complicated as it may have sounded, is the simple version, but not oversimplified. Scientology takes volumes of literature to expand upon this by telling how there are "implant stations" on other planets, like Mars, where the thetan must go after the death of a life-form. Once there, the thetan must wait to be "zapped" down to another body. Thetans supposedly recall everything from life on other planets to life on earth as a clam, bird, pillhead man, and finally the human race. Scientology also addresses many of the issues of why we are like we are on earth. It is all due to past engrams. Mr. Hubbard gives examples in his writings such as the reason why people smoke cigarettes is because they recalled seeing volcanoes at one time, belching out their smoke. The reason that some people are vegetarians is because they got tired of being eaten by other animals in past lives. The riddance of engrams has become so involved for the "pre-clear" (the person not yet clear), that many times the removal of engrams will cause the Scientologist to sneeze, cough, sweat, vomit, urinate or have a bowel movement. Removal of engrams may take years.

More directly, what do the writings of Scientology say about the Bible and Christianity? Many Scientologists will say that Scientology does not define God. We should look at it from another position; do their writings deny the God of the Bible? To this we can answer, Yes. The Bible clearly teaches Monotheism, that there is only one True God (Deut. 6:4; Isa. 43:10, 44:8). Furthermore, God abhors the teaching of polytheism, that many gods exist (Josh. 24:23; Judg. 10:13; 1 Cor. 8:5-6). In Scientology we find the teaching of polytheism is embraced, "There are gods above all other gods, and gods beyond the gods of the universes." 1

The God of the Bible is a Personal Being consisting of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. His awesome majesty ordains our worship. His personal attention and loving-kindness invites our prayers. In contrast to this, Scientology has no Trinity to worship or to offer prayers to. "The curse of the past," writes Mr. Hubbard, "has been a pretense of knowledge. We have had a worship of the fable. We have had prayers sent up to a myth." 2

Mr. Hubbard had no few things to say about Jesus Christ either. Basing his claims upon unnamed sources Mr. Hubbard states, "It is believed by many authorities that Jesus was a member of the cult of the Essenes, who believed in reincarnation..." 3 Yet when we examine the Bible we find that Jesus was known to have lived in Nazareth all during his life, visiting Jerusalem every year (Lk. 2:39-42). As for the idea that Jesus believed in reincarnation, we find the opposite in His teachings. He separated Himself from all others by stating that He was the only one who

preexisted, "You are from beneath, I am from above. You are of this world, I am not of this world." (John 8:23) So, man did not come from some implant station on another planet, he is from this world. The human race began here on earth with the creation of Adam.

Mr. Hubbard's loss of respect for Jesus Christ is evident in placing Jesus at a lower level than what Mr. Hubbard himself was, or to what other Scientologists can obtain. He wrote, "Neither Lord Buddah nor Jesus Christ were OT, [Operating Thetan] according to the evidence. They were just a shade above clear." 4 Then Mr. Hubbard defied Christ and the cross by calling them a legend and implant in preclears, "You will find the cross as a symbol all over the universe, and the Christ LEGEND as an implant in pre-clears a million years ago." 5 The Bible condemns Mr. Hubbard's teachings by stating, "Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is the antiChrist who denies the Father and the Son." (1 John 2:22).

Man, according to Scientology, is "Basically Good." Mr. Hubbard rejects the concept that man is evil, "It is despicable and utterly beneath contempt to tell a man he must repent, that he is evil." 6 When we look to the Bible we find that Jesus not only called men evil (Matt. 7:11), but "Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent..." (Matt. 4:17)

In reference to the before mentioned Scientology belief that "you are not your body," this is only partially true by Biblical standards. James 2:26 tells us that the body without the spirit is dead. The composition of man, from the creation of Adam in Genesis, requires a body as well as a spirit for him to be a living soul, Genesis 2:7.

Salvation, according to Scientology, is to be released from reincarnation, "...personal salvation in one lifetime [is] freedom from the cycle of birth and death [reincarnation]..." 7 Salvation, according to the Bible, is to apply faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 4:10-12). The sacrifice of Jesus Christ cleanses us from our sins if we believe upon Him, (1 Jn. 1:7; Rev. 1:5).

Reincarnation is a doctrine rejected by Jesus and the inspired words of Scripture. Jesus taught that He alone is from above (Jn. 8:23) and that we are from this world. He taught that we all die only once (Lk. 20:36) and that there is no return to earth after death (Lk. 16:27-29). The book of Hebrews (9:27) says, "It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgement." If reincarnation were true, then why would the Eternal God (Phil. 2:6-8) come to earth as the man Christ Jesus (Col. 2:9), be born of the virgin Mary (Matt. 1:18), live a perfectly sinless life (Jn. 8:46), die for the world's sins which He did not do (Jn. 1:29), resurrect [instead of reincarnate] on the third day (Jn. 2:19-21), show Himself alive with irrefutable evidence (Acts 1:3), ascend into Heaven (Acts 1:9), promise to return (Matt. 24:30), to judge the world (Jn. 5:22), and give a resurrection [instead of reincarnation] life to His followers (Jn. 6:39-40)? The whole message of the Bible takes a stand against the doctrine of reincarnation.

I had the rare opportunity of challenging the president of the Church of Scientology, Mr. Tom Paquette, on a radio talk show, December 11, 1987. The host of the show, Bill Moran, called me in advance and asked me if I would like to

go on the air with Scientology's president, Mr. Paquette, (who is a former Catholic). I agreed to do it. The following excerpts are from the show.

We will begin with Mr. Moran's first question about Christianity to Mr. Paquette. Mr. Moran asked, "Can you be a Scientologist and still be a Christian? Do you believe in Christ as the Supreme Being?"

Mr. Paquette's answer was delicately worded, "I have a belief in that direction. There are other people who come into Scientology who would not say that. That is fine. Scientology is what is known as a pan-denomination...our basic thrust...is to help the person become clear." Notice here how Mr. Paquette never answered the question about whether Scientology teaches Christ as the Supreme Being.

Mr. Moran allowed a caller from Long Beach, California to go on the air. Her name was Betty and she was an Ex-Scientologist. She quickly laid to rest the question about Scientology holding to a belief in Jesus Christ. She said that Scientology taught that Jesus Christ was "an implant ...in other words, an improper belief, and, in fact, did not exist. There was never such a thing as Him being crucified and that Heaven and Hell are just figments of peoples imagination, which was implanted years and years ago."

Regardless of the well known quotes to support what she had said (like the sources which we quoted earlier), Mr. Paquette attempted to make it sound as if Scientology did not teach what she had said about Jesus. He straight out called her statements false. He went on to say that "this is not the thing that Scientology addresses."

Mr. Moran shortly introduced me to Mr. Paquette. I read a statement from the Ceremonies book for the Church of Scientology, which said that all men have the right to counter the opinions of others. In my next statment I told Mr. Paquette why I counter his opinions.

He tried to smooth out our doctrinal differences by saying that we "have a lot in common." Continuing his thought, he picked up on morality and said that we have to be responsible and take a stand against immorality.

I agreed in part with him but only far enough to add that immorality was the very reason that I stand against the teachings of Scientology. The practices of their Church leadership is one of the immoral problems that we must face. In defence of my statement I quoted an article from Time Magazine, January 31, 1983 where several of the leaders of Scientology, including Mary Sue Hubbard, the founder's wife, had all been indicted, convicted and some were sentenced to prison terms. All of this was because their leadership practiced immoral acts such as the "breaking in of the Justice Department, Department of the Treasury and the IRS." Their immoral and unethical practices included premeditated criminal actions. I told him that, "I do not see how a Church, such as the Church of Scientology, can say they're promoting morality when they have such unethical and immoral practices."

He admitted that these things had ocured and he actually said that Mary Sue Hubbard, and the others, were very seriously immoral. To quote him, "These people did have very serious moral problems. They basically faced up to the law."

I rounded, "Let me back it up by saying that all of these people in Scientology were OT level. These were operating thetans. They were past the stage of clear...

These people were already supposed to have existed above these things. The were supposed to be the exemplar of what your philosophy had already mentioned...that man is basically good. My challenge to Scientology is that they are the epitome of man's evil. They aren't doing the practices of good which they claim is the foundational doctrine of their Church...If these people are the leadership of the Church and they are corrupt, then you cannot expect anything else. Jesus said, 'A student is not above his teacher.'" [Matt. 10:24]

Mr. Paquette interrupted at this point and attempted to side-step my comment by saying that it was a thing of the past, although he never dealt with the main point that these people were supposed to be beyond such overt action.

Mr. Moran took a telephone call from a lady named Anne. She was also a former Scientologist. She abruptly challenged Mr. Paquette on the way that he tried to avoid answering the direct questions concerning Jesus Christ. She knew L. Ron Hubbard personally and had worked aboard the ship that he had lived on most of his final years. She quoted from the same Scientology sources that we have in this article, demonstrating that Scientology does in fact address Jesus, but He is held in low esteme.

The next caller was a man named Jim from Eagle Rock, California. He also was an Ex-Scientologist. He began his statement by confirming everything that I had said to Mr. Paquette. The program ended shortly after that, which was most unfortunate because we had many other things that we would have liked to have asked Mr. Paquette.

I would like to see this happen again, but it does not seem likely. In the past, Scientologists have refused to go on a public forum with me. I am thankful for the rare opportunity of challenging the Pharisees of our day, no matter what false belief system the are in.

Every Scientologist needs to hear the message of the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. They can leave behind their works of trying to get out the a hypothetical past life and turn to the cross of Christ instead. Scripture triumphantly tells us, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9)

¹ L. Ron Hubbard, Professional Auditor's Bulletin, #130 (All of L. Ron Hubbard's writings and copyrights are owned by the Church of Scientology, Los Angeles, California).

² L. Ron Hubbard, Scientology: A New Slant On Life, page 52.

³ L. Ron Hubbard, Scientology: A World Religion Emerges In The Space Age, page 15.

⁴ L. Ron Hubbard, Certainty Magazine, Vol. 5, No. 10.

⁵ L. Ron Hubbard, Professional Auditor's Bulletin, #130.

⁶ L. Ron Hubbard, Professional Auditor's Bulletin, #130.

⁷ L. Ron Hubbard, Scientology: A World Religion Emerges In The Space Age, page 16.

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