

## What is Special about the Church of Reality?

The Church of Reality is unlike most other religions. The Church of Reality is a forward looking religion that envisions a better future than we have today. Realism is more than just believing in what's real - it's a commitment to the truth and reality the way it really is.

But the Church of Reality goes far beyond just believing in what's real. We are {In:Explorers} who actively seek out knowledge. And to do that we explore the understanding of understanding. We take on the big questions in life. Especially the {In:Sacred Question} - "What is Real?"

The belief system is based on the positive evolution of the human race. That it is the {In:Tree of Knowledge} - the sum total of all human understanding - that separates us from the animals. We believe that our understanding of reality is what defines us as a species and that we improve ourselves through the discovery of new things.

The Church of Reality is more than just a static science book. It's more than just a declaration that reality is real. It is a commitment to a process of learning and to the greater community to create the environment in which learning can occur. It is to accept responsibility for our choices as a species and realize that we can control our destiny and choose our future. We choose to believe that what the human race becomes is important, and that we should apply the principles of Realism to our decision making process.

We explore ethics and morality and law and justices. We explore the questions about what is the best way for people to live. What is right and wrong? What is morality? What Sacred Principles can be declared as universal concepts. We seem to exist - therefore - what are we going to do while we are here?

Reality tells us that this planet is a speck of dust in the universe. There are 100 billion trillion galaxies and there are billions of stars in each one. We are but a speck of dust in the universe. We live for merely a moment of time. We are born, eat, reproduce, and die. This is science and this is reality.

The Church of Reality goes beyond mere science. Science just give us the bleak facts, but the Church of Reality adds color and depth to these facts. It adds the perspective of who we are and what we should do now that we exist.

We are here. We may be insignificant but this is our planet. We are individuals, yet we are connected to each other through the Tree of Knowledge. As individuals we would be no different than most other animal life on this planet. But we as a species have a common knowledge base that makes us a sort of a group life force. Just as bees are individuals, they are also part of a hive. And the bee can't survive without the hive. It can be accurately viewed that the hive is itself a life form made up of bees just like the bee is a life form made up of cells.

The Church of Reality is more than just believing in what's real. It's the exploration of reality by humanity as a whole and a personal commitment to the disciplines of pursuing the truth.

We too are parts of a greater life form. We have communities, countries, religions, political parties, and ultimately, we are one species. The entire human race is part of a "super being" that contains vast stores of information that we all rely on. Almost everything we do is related to things that came from other people. I created nothing in the house I live in. Very little in the world could be considered uniquely mine. This church itself - although it is "my idea" is really less than 1% mine. It is built on our common knowledge. I use language to describe it - words that came from other people. Einstein is long dead - but I can talk about Relativity because his knowledge is preserved. His ideas were built on mathematics that he was taught that was discovered by other people. He built his theories on the foundations of those who came before him.

Thus - the Church of Reality is more than just reality - it's the {In:dharma} of reality realizing itself. It is reality becoming self aware through our act of exploration. It is reality exploring itself through us. It is us - on this planet - with nothing else to do but to expand what we are as a species - as a super being - and to grow that into something better.

Pure reality doesn't care about us. If this galaxy exploded today it would take 2.2 million years before anyone in the next closest galaxy even saw it - assuming that there were anyone there to see it in the first place. But in going beyond pure cold reality the Church of Reality makes certain assumptions that gives reality a religious context. We are exploring reality from the human perspective. We have a will to survive and to grow. We have our selfish perspective that our little speck of dust in the universe is valuable to us and that our survival is important to us, and that our exploration and understanding of the universe is important to us.

So - the Church of Reality isn't just science. It adds the element of humanity. It presumes that we are important to us and that growing is a good thing and that annihilation and extinction is a bad thing. In the universe itself there is no good and bad. There are just rocks bumping into each other and stars exploding. But Realism goes beyond that in that it's about us. Realism isn't just understanding - it's about people understanding together. And since our understanding is collective in nature - Realism is about community, ethics, morality, law, justice, freedom, responsibility, and all of the social issues necessary for the exploration of reality as it really is. The Church of Reality is about us. It is about who we are, where we are going, and how we are going to get there.

Understanding doesn't exist in the vacuum of outer space. Understanding requires an understander, one who understands. There has to be something or someone out there that is doing the understanding. Where does understanding occur? Is it in the mind of the individual? Only partially. Most of understanding is a community effort. I come up with a brilliant idea - the Church of Reality for example. But my idea is based on things I learned from society. So - what do I do with my brilliant idea? I tell other people. I post it on the Internet. I share the idea. If I don't share the idea then the idea dies. Knowledge doesn't live in the vacuum of space - it lives only if it is passed on and stored; it only lives if it becomes part of the Tree of Knowledge. It only lives if our ideas merge into the oneness of human understanding. Only in this is it that who we are - from an intellectual perspective - survives our physical existence.

The Tree of Knowledge goes beyond the sum total of the minds of human beings. Long ago this was not the case. People had to teach knowledge to other people and all knowledge was stored in the minds of those currently alive. If knowledge wasn't passed on verbally, or was not accurately remembered, it was forever lost. Eventually humans discovered writing and knowledge could be stored in books. Inventions like the printing press and transportation made the storage and communication of knowledge far better allowing the Tree of Knowledge to grow more quickly. Now we have telephones, television, radio, computers, and the Internet that have greatly advanced the processes of storing and communicating ideas.

These new tools add to the sum total of human understanding. The Tree of Knowledge goes beyond the sum of all the living brains on the planet. It now includes all books, computers, tape recordings, and communication systems. And it includes the societies that support the technology, who has access, and who can use what. All this adds to who we are as the "understander" of understanding.

Thus - it is the premise of the Church of Reality that there is a super being that is made up of all of us and our devices for the sharing and storing information. It is our premise that we are all part of this vast network of people and machines, and that we are all members working together as one race to improve ourselves. We are the Tree of Knowledge just as bees are a hive. And the hive is not just the some of the bees - but it is the hive structure itself and it is the honey.

And just as the hive includes the honey, the Tree of Knowledge includes not only the people, but also our houses, roads, bridges, airplanes, cars, computers, networks, books, countries, governments, religions, schools, hospitals, communication satellites, money, power distribution, dams, lakes, boats, trains, trucks, the things that make life work for us. And we are all part of that from the smallest villages to the vast cities.

But - who controls the super being - or does it control us? By the way - I am not referring to God here. Who decides what will be next? The premise of the Church of Reality is - we do. We believe that we as individuals can make a difference. Will our future be happy and prosperous? Or - are we heading for ultimate destruction or a hideous future where we become slaves to the machines we build - assuming the machines don't exterminate us. Some religions envision Armageddon. What will our future be and who will decide it?

The Church of Reality takes the position that our future depends on individuals making the right choices for the right reasons. We believe that we are ultimately responsible and are for the most part in control of our future. We believe that it is our responsibility to be responsible. It is up to us to decide how we are going to make decisions. To decide that we have an obligation to choose to choose rather than let things just happen. And that the process of making those choices should be done based on reality and not mythology. We believe that if we choose wisely we are far more likely to have a better tomorrow than if we choose poorly.

In order to choose wisely we have to be able to know how to be wise. We need to explore better ways of doing things and have some principles as to what better is. We need a sense of community and of purpose. The Church of Reality provides purpose to reality. The purpose is the Dharma of the Church to do the doing and know what needs to be known. In order to guide us, we create the {In:Sacred Principles} that define the concepts for which the Church of Reality is guided. These principles define our purpose and our method for achieving that purpose and provide a framework to accomplish the dharma of the church - which is the pursuit of reality by the human race.