



A M O R C

The Rosicrucian Order

MASTER MONOGRAPH

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THE CONCURRENCE

This Week's Consideration of a Famous Opinion



¶ The Rosicrucian student becomes increasingly aware of the resemblance of the main features of the religious life in widely separated races and cults, and recognizes the evidences of their common origin. It is interesting to note this recognition in the writings of mystics of all ages. We quote briefly from the "Retractationes" of St. Augustine, the work of his later years, which represents his mature judgment and a revision of opinions held in earlier formative years.



The thing itself which is now known as the Christian religion existed among the ancients, and in fact was with the human race from the beginning.

—ST. AUGUSTINE, 354-430 A. D.

To the Members of the Esoteric Hierarchy, Greetings!

Continuing our discussion of spiritual and esoteric principles, I want to call your attention to something that may have often puzzled you.

The further you go into the sacred and secret teachings of the Rosicrucians, the more you find reference to the Christ Consciousness and to the symbolism of Jesus Christ. I have on my desk one of the early volumes of the oldest secret books of the Rosicrucians called, The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians. In recent years a reprint of this book was made in the form of a limited edition with hand-colored plates.

The book is not of practical value to present-day students, although it was to students of the 18th century because its symbolism helped preserve the ancient symbols at a time when some of the European Orders were in their inactive cycle and when other forms of preservation of the sacred principles of our Order were not so available. However, this book, like many other Rosicrucian manuscripts, is filled with references to Jesus, his parables, teachings, and principles, and to his life and the ideals which he represented.

If an outsider not connected with the organization were to read this book and others like it, he would gain a distinct idea that the Rosicrucian Order was very definitely a Christian religious movement. In fact, I have heard the uninitiated say that from what they have seen of ancient references in old libraries and in histories and encyclopedias it would appear that the Rosicrucians were extreme and fanatical followers of Jesus, more orthodoxly Christian than any other mystical society.

This idea is incompatible with the fact that the Rosicrucian Order is older than Christianity in its symbolism and fundamental principles, and is universally adaptable to all races and religions. The moment you put Rosicrucian philosophy in a strictly limited Christian classification, the breadth of its application and appeal is lost. In the United States, Great Britain, and other Western-world countries, the idea prevails that they are "Christian countries"; that Christianity is their fixed and definite religion. The truth is that they are Christian by law and principle only, with most of their citizens feeling more or less obligated to become followers of the Christian church.

However, in many other countries, the Christian religion is not nearly so universal as Western-world people think, and is not looked upon as the only genuine or true religion. People who live in Rome are likely to think that Rome is the center of the universe, that everything in and around Rome is perfect,



and that the rest of the world is un-Roman. There are persons, too, living in Chicago who think that Chicago is the center of the universe. They view everything throughout the world from the Chicago point of view. The same has been said of Boston, San Francisco, and Atlanta. We are told that the Chinese think China the finest country in the world and that everything to be correct must be Chinese. It is only natural, therefore, that people in the Western world should think the Christian religion the one outstanding and genuine religion, and all other systems of religious thought antiquated, pagan, erroneous, or even sinful.

If the Rosicrucian Order were purely a Christian organization, it would mean that in lands where other religions are accepted, Rosicrucians would have to be Christians. This is not true. In Oriental lands there are many highly developed Rosicrucians who are not members of the Christian religion but of some other just as helpful, inspiring, and sound. What, then, is the meaning of so much Christian symbolism in the ancient Rosicrucian teachings? The answer is simple: First, we must make a distinction between the symbols, parables, principles, and ideals taught by Jesus in his lifetime, and the Christian church as it now exists. The mere fact that the Christian religion is divided into many different denominations, forms, methods, and interpretations, indicates that not all of these Christian denominations can be following strictly and rigidly the mystical principles that Jesus taught and revealed.

The history of the Christian church makes plain that most of its doctrines, creeds, ceremonies, rituals, and methods were adopted centuries after Jesus lived. Perhaps nowhere today is there a religious movement that adheres strictly to the spirit, symbolism, and mystical principles Jesus taught and revealed to mankind. Even in his day there were those who tried to modify his teachings, to explain them differently, and who criticized others attempting to do the same thing.

The principles Jesus taught, and the mystical truths he revealed and demonstrated, are as easily acceptable to the Mohammedan or Buddhist who is a Rosicrucian as they are to the Western-world Christian. Before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, before "The Word" was made flesh in his body and personality, mystics of all lands and all religions taught the fundamentals of the Christ Consciousness. We find many references to "The Christus" in mystical teachings of the Orient years before Jesus the Christ was born. In fact, confirmation is found even in the Christian Bible. Are we not told there that wise men from the East followed the star with the assurance that wherever it led them they would find the Messiah? These wise men represented Oriental schools of philosophy—what Christians today would call pagan schools of thought. Yet they were looking, waiting, even praying for the coming of the Christ Consciousness in the flesh. When they saw the star in the East, they knew that the day and hour had come.



Early followers of Jesus were not called Christians; in fact, the term was not used until long after Jesus' time. The Christian Bible expresses in many places the idea that the coming of Jesus was anticipated by devout religious persons in all parts of the world. Further verification of this is found in the fact that one of the first countries in which the Christian teachings and mystical principles were established was Egypt, the land of so-called darkness, the home of a so-called pagan religion.

In that land of darkness, nevertheless, Christian ideas were first centered, the first great missionary work done, and the first great church devoted to the teachings of the Christ principles established. The same thing occurred thereafter in other Oriental lands where so-called pagan religions were strong. The so-called pagan was, in truth, essentially a mystic and from his mystical point of view the coming of Jesus as "The Word" made flesh was not an absurd prediction or an impossible thing, but a long-awaited event.

It is interesting to note that the followers and devotees of these Oriental, pagan religions did not find anything in the teachings, principles, and demonstrations of Jesus contrary to the ideals of their own religions. It was not until centuries later that groups of men began to make dogmas and creeds for a Christian church. These dogmas and creeds have been modified, altered, added to, and subtracted from by groups of theologians ever since, until, today, many of the theological doctrines and creeds adhered to by the Christian church are totally unlike those actually used, spoken of or referred to by Jesus during his lifetime.

The mystics very easily understood what Jesus meant by the sacred Trinity and by the "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." They knew the law of the Triangle and they knew how the Godhead would be represented by the symbol of the triangle or by three. They did not and could not understand, however, other features of the Christian religion added centuries later.

The Christ Consciousness is purely mystical and spiritual and cannot be confined or limited to one church, one system, or one organization. In the Rosicrucian symbolism of the past, therefore, many teachings relating to the Christ Consciousness and the Christ ideals had already been adopted by Oriental mystics before Jesus was born. So well did these mystics know these ideals that when they saw Jesus at work and heard him speak, they recognized him and paid adoration to him, not as the creator of a new church, not as the founder of a new religious system limited and strict, but as the bringer of mystical and spiritual truth to mankind.



In the same way, the Rosicrucian recognizes that the highest form of consciousness that can be developed while he is still on earth is the Christ Consciousness. All conscious-

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ness is a part of the Consciousness of God, as are all wisdom, intellect, power; but when made flesh, it becomes the Christ Consciousness in man. Each individual human being on earth is a representative of that Christhood and has within him a measure of that Christ Consciousness, according to his awakening, development, and understanding. Thus the Christ Consciousness is not exclusively a possession of the present-day Christian church even though some Christian theologians may try to make it so appear.

You will find how true this is by following the lessons that have recently been given to you. In spiritualizing your body and in developing your psychic faculties and your psychic consciousness to the highest degree, you are becoming more and more attuned with the Christ Consciousness and with a better understanding and better view of what Jesus actually taught and said and demonstrated in his lifetime. The Christ Consciousness in man and woman develops a universal love, a universal toleration, and a universal sympathetic understanding that overrides the limiting creeds and dogmas of sectarian religious movements.

This subject is brought to your attention now because it is essential to your fullest advancement as a Rosicrucian. To accept the Christ Consciousness as something peculiarly characteristic of only one individual in the past excludes the mystic from the very goal for which he is expressly preparing himself; but to recognize the Christ Consciousness to be a goal attained by one individual in the past as the natural culminating experience of his mystic practice, places every man on an equal footing in working toward its attainment as the culminating experience of his own mystical progress.

May Peace Profound abide with each of you.

Fraternally,

YOUR CLASS MASTER

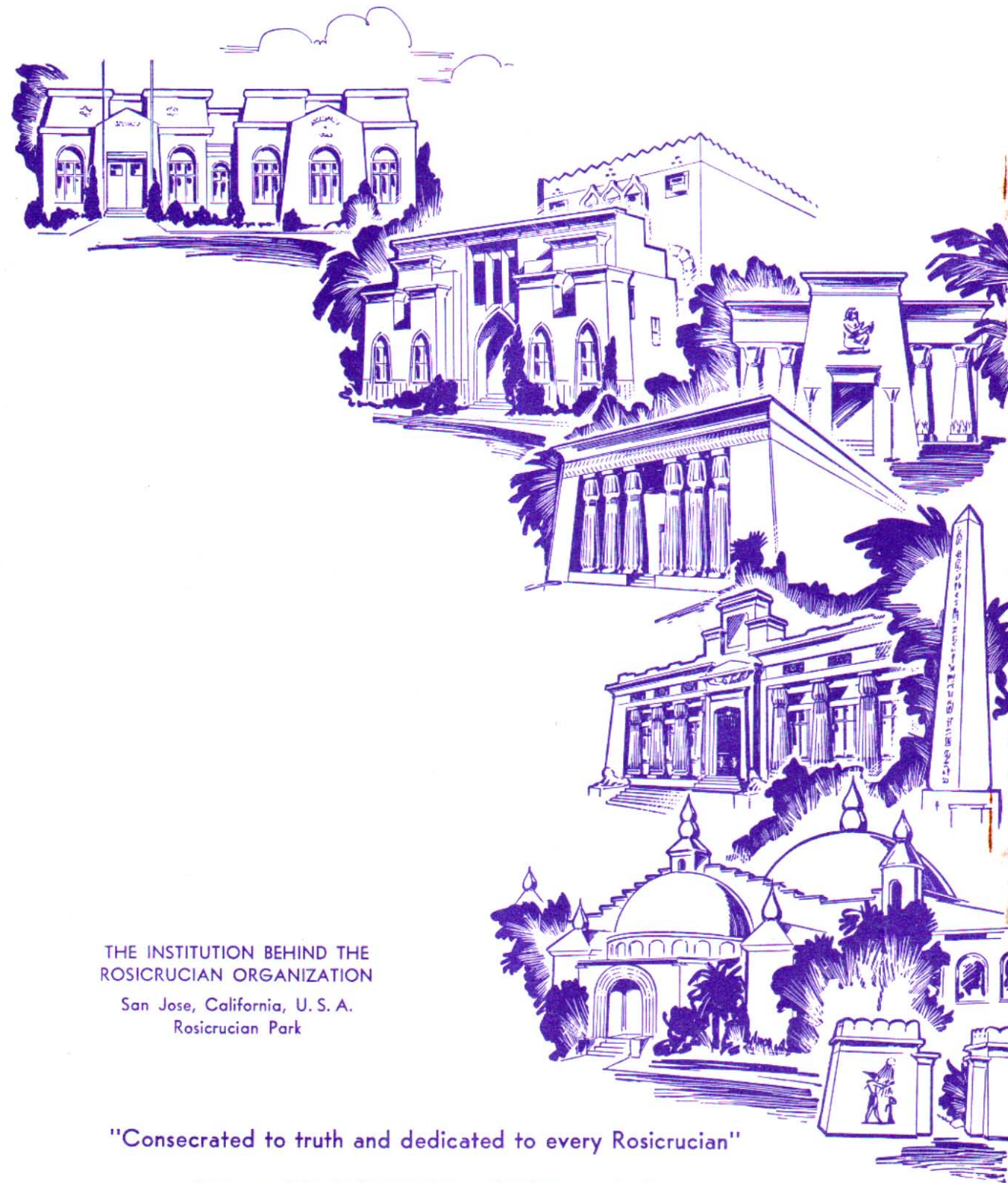


Summary of This Monograph



Below is a summary of the important principles of this monograph. It contains the essential statements which you should not forget. After you have carefully read the complete monograph, try to recall as many as you can of the important points you read. Then read this summary and see if you have forgotten any. Also refer to this summary during the ensuing week to refresh your memory.

- ¶ Reference to the Christ Consciousness and to the symbolism of Jesus Christ is to be found in the most sacred and secret teachings of the Rosicrucians.
- ¶ Such references made possible the preservation of the sacred principles of the Order when some of the European Orders were in their inactive cycle and other forms of preservation were not so available.
- ¶ While it might appear to an outsider that the Rosicrucian Order is definitely a Christian religious movement of an extremely orthodox character, this idea is not compatible with the fact that the Rosicrucian Order is older than Christianity in its symbolism and fundamental principles and is universally adaptable to all races and religions.
- ¶ References were made to "The Christus" in mystical teachings of the Orient many years before Jesus the Christ was born. In fact, the so-called pagan was essentially a mystic and the coming of Jesus as "The Word" made flesh was a long-awaited event.
- ¶ It was not until centuries after Jesus' time that men began to make dogmas and creeds for a Christian church. However, the Christ Consciousness is purely mystical and spiritual and cannot be confined or limited to one church or system. The Rosicrucian recognizes that the highest form of consciousness that can be developed while he is still on earth is the Christ Consciousness.



THE INSTITUTION BEHIND THE
ROSICRUCIAN ORGANIZATION

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