

## Fundamental Concepts of Realism

A good place to start in understanding our religion at this point is to read about {In:How we are Different} than other religions. This will give you an overview of what we are and what we are not. The Church of Reality is more about what we do than what we believe in. Some religions only really require that you believe in what they believe in. Likewise the Church of Reality starts with a commitment to believing in reality as it really is. But that is just the starting point. The commitment to the pursuit of the understanding of reality is the first of the {In: Sacred missions}. There are many others.

If what you believe in is real, then Realism is not a threat to your religious beliefs.

In addition to believing in reality, we evangelize reality. Our world view is that every time the word reality is used the world becomes a little smarter. The word Reality is our {In: Sacred Message} and whenever people discuss reality that's {In: Communion}.

Humans understand reality collectively as well as individually. One doesn't build a Mars lander in their garage and launch it from their back yard. We do this as a community. And when we look out across the Martian landscape we, as the human race, share common eyes that allow us to look at Mars collectively. It took the work of millions of minds working across thousands of years to create the technology to allow us to understand the reality of Mars together. We in the Church of Reality recognize the vast amount of common knowledge we understand together. It is our collective understanding of reality that allows us to understand reality individually. We refer to this common knowledge as the {In: Tree of Knowledge} which represents the sum total of all human understanding.

Our mission as Realists is to care for and to grow the Tree of Knowledge. Our religion is more than just the statement that we believe in everything that's real. Our mission is to realize that our understanding of reality is limited and that we must always work to increase our collective understanding of the universe. So as we take from the Tree of Knowledge as a basis for what we know, we also give back to the Tree through {In: Intellectual Tithing} where we share with each other and future generations what we've learned. Our mission is not just to understand but for understanding itself to grow so that the universe can better understand itself through humanity.

Because we are committed to the task of increasing the understanding of reality, and because we understand reality collectively, with every generation building upon the knowledge of the previous generation, the human race must evolve forward and continue to progress. That is why we consider the future to be our {In: Sacred Direction}. We are a forward looking culture who dreams about what we can become and are committed to getting there. This leads to the first of our {In: Sacred Principles} -- The Principle of {In: Positive Evolution} -- and it becomes the basis for our {In: Sacred Moral Question} "What is good?"

Is Reality part of your life story? Where does Reality fit into your belief system?

To that end we issue the {In: Sacred Challenge} to inspire people of other religions to not run from reality but to embrace it and to join with us in recognizing the pursuit of reality as it really is as a good thing. We challenge the world to embrace the future the way we do and to share our values for the progress of humanity towards a brighter future. We wish to {In: Unite Religion and Reality} and invite you to join us in that cause. We are {In: Activist} and it is our mission not just to talk about it, not just to believe in it, but to actually make it happen.

The Church of Reality is based on a number of {In: Sacred Principles}. We are a {In: Doubt Based} religion. We require that everything be tested. Our world view is that truth is purified through scrutiny and that's why we have the principle of {In: Scrutiny and Doubt}. We identify ourselves as {In: Explorers} rather than {In: Followers}. Our moral compass is based on the {In: Positive Evolution} of humanity. In order to accomplish that we believe that we need to have a strong functional society based on {In: Freedom}, {In: Courage} and {In: Honesty}. We have developed a {In: Realist Culture} to help us define who we are as a people. We have a strong sense of {In: Self Ownership} that combines giving us the {In: Freedom}

and {In:Responsibility} to control our own {In:Life Story} and take charge of our individual lives and our role in existence.

The Church of Reality is an {In:Inclusiveness 'Inclusive Religion}. Everyone is welcome. In our religion everyone has equal rights no matter what race your are, what gender you are, what your sexual preferences are, or the geography of where you were born. We don't demonize others. Our view is that people are basically good and we believe in {In:Original Virtue} rather than original sin. We see ourselves as one people, one planet. We are environmentalists. We believe in personal choice and personal responsibility. We admire attributes like {In:Curiosity}. We are a people who want to know everything. We want to understand it all. We have a quest for knowledge. And not just any knowledge but about reality as it really is.

We don't know if there is some sort of grand purpose in our existence. We don't know if reality has a purpose. But it is what we don't know that makes us want to know. We are different from other religions in that it is OK for us to not know everything. We are a {In:Humility 'Humble} culture because we understand that this planet is but a speck of dust in the universe. We are not a religion that has all the answers. We don't have a supernatural leader who has all the answers. We don't have an afterlife to offer people in exchange for their loyalty. Nor do we have any deities to fall back on in troubled times. We have to do the hard work for ourselves. We have to figure it out on our own. We have to make it happen.

The Church of Reality is a {In:Monorealistic} religion in that we believe there is one reality that is the sum of all realities that are actually real. We don't believe in "this reality" and the "next reality" or that reality itself changes to match what you want to believe in. We don't play games with terminology to try to sneak something in that wouldn't stand up to scrutiny.