

Thelema specifically embraces all forms of sexual identity, orientation, exploration, and expression that is in line with the Will of the individual. Thelema is a way of life that very explicitly encourages people to be what they are sexually, not to live up to some standard whether dictated by religion or society. We do not view any particular gender identity or sexual orientation as more natural or as superior in any way. The best identity is the one that most clearly and fully is an expression of your nature.

Thoughtfulness and the Rejection of Blind Faith

Thelema inspires free thinking, skepticism, and the use of the SCIENTIFIC METHOD over blind faith. Thelemites do not believe something “just because” or since someone said so. This is why Thelema is often thought of as a Gnostic religion. Gnosis is Greek for “knowledge” and therefore Thelemites are expected to accept beliefs only through their own direct experience. A Thelemite does not want to have faith in God—they want to know God (and eventually come to know themselves as God).

Independence and Liberty

Although most Thelemites recognize that everyone is intrinsically interdependent, Thelema requires that one aspire to self-reliance and a sense of personal responsibility for one’s own actions and well-being. Deeply embedded within Thelema is the value of Liberty—to make one’s own choices about your life, including career, sexual partners, and creative expression. Very importantly, Thelemites strive to avoid interfering in anyone else’s process of discovering and expressing their own Will, recognizing that this only leads to confusion and disharmony.

Thelemites promulgate the Law, but do not convert. Practices such as proselytizing and conversion are strongly discouraged within Thelema, since Thelemites hold that interpretation of *The Book of the Law* is a task strictly for the individual. At the same time, many undertake the duty of promulgating the general principles of Thelema (as in this pamphlet), thereby spreading the Law of Liberty. The object is to inspire others to acknowledge their own unique Will and then to discover and express it.



A quote from a Thelemic Holy Book

Light, Life, Love; Force, Fantasy, Fire; these do I bring you: mine hands are full of these. There is joy in the setting-out; there is joy in the journey; there is joy in the goal. Only if ye are sorrowful, or weary, or angry, or discomforted; then ye may know that ye have lost the golden thread, the thread wherewith I guide you to the heart of the groves of Eleusis. My disciples are proud and beautiful; they are strong and swift; they rule their way like mighty conquerors . . .

DO WHAT THOU WILT SHALL BE THE WHOLE OF THE LAW

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THELEMA:

THE LAW OF LIBERTY

Is it a religion? a philosophy? a collection of mystical practices? a system of post-modern ethics?

Decide for yourself . . .

“There is religion in Thelema for those that require it. There is also freedom from religion in Thelema, for those that require it.”

THE GOAL OF THELEMA:

To help you realize your *True Will*
(the innermost spark of divinity inside you that holds your life’s purpose)

on your own terms,
in your own unique way,
bowing down to nobody in the process.

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“Every man and every woman is a star.
Every number is infinite;
there is no difference.

LOVE IS THE LAW, LOVE UNDER WILL



Visit our website: ThelemicUnion.com

“The wickedest man in the world?”

Thelema was created by Aleister Crowley (1875-1947), a prolific writer and poet, world traveler, mountaineer, chess master, mystic, magician, drug pioneer, and social provocateur. Some of his excesses were due to his upbringing, but he also used the shock value as a teaching tool – to convey that one shouldn't live one's life solely by satisfying the expectations of others. Crowley's own life serves as both encouragement and caution for modern Thelemites.



THELEMA is a modern manifestation and expansion of the ancient notion of *Will*. The word appears in the Bible in several passages exemplifying divine will, such as the Lord's Prayer: “Thy Will (*θέλημα*) be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). To Thelemites, the chief expression of this idea is “DO WHAT THOU WILT.” This is not interpreted as a license to indulge every passing whim, but rather as the divine mandate to discover one's *True Will* or true purpose in life, and to accomplish it.

The core of Thelemic metaphysics and ethics is founded upon a small book written in Cairo, Egypt in 1904 by Aleister Crowley while on honeymoon with his wife, Rose. Called *Liber AL vel Legis* or *The Book of the Law*, it was eventually to take center stage in Crowley's development of his entire spiritual system. Crowley claimed he was dictated this book by a being called Aiwass, whom he later referred to as his Holy Guardian Angel (or “Secret Self”). Crowley's development of Thelema was heavily inspired from many other sources including Francois Rabelais, Eliphaz Levi, Friedrich Nietzsche, as well as various Buddhist, Hindu, and Taoist sources.

Although much is written about it, Thelema ultimately has no precise definition, leaving it largely up to the individual to interpret. It is, however, possible to identify common principles that are generally accepted within the larger Thelemic community.

True Will must be discovered

Crowley, like many spiritual teachers, recognized that one's Will is generally buried beneath a thick layer of what can be called individual ego – the conscious sense of “I” that feels separate from the Universe and is a complex mix of beliefs, values, and norms derives from socialization. A Thelemite is therefore one who seeks to break through one's habitual “programming” in order to reconnect with the Secret Self, becoming aware and manifesting one's true, unfiltered nature. This challenging, life-long process is called the Great Work. The techniques used to accomplish this task often fall under the general term *MAGICK*, and traditionally include practices such as meditation, invocational ritual, and astral work. In more recent years, Thelemites have been starting to include many other “non-occult” methods to accomplish the Great Work, including psychotherapy, hypnosis, isolation tanks, and more. In the end, it is up to the individual to find the doorway to their own inner self.

Human Divinity

Thelema utterly rejects the notion of original sin and states, rather, that we are all divine in ourselves: “Every man and every woman is a star.” As such, Thelema rejects the idea that emotional states like guilt, shame, and pity could ever be considered virtues, and instead recognizes positive virtues such as courage, honor, strength, and beauty. Thelema also does not recognize any personified source of “evil”, such as the Judeo-Christian Satan. Rather, Thelemites are encouraged to discover their own divinity, as well as their personal sense of right and wrong, based on both rational thinking and through their experiential apprehension of their True Will.

Love & Sacred Sexuality

Thelema—which is Greek for Will—is often paired with *Agape*, the Greek word for Love. Love, from a mystical point of view, is the drive to achieve Union, thereby losing the sense of ego-individuality and separateness. This theme of union of opposites is repeated extensively within Thelema, and is considered to be a key to accomplishing the Great Work. This is shown in a core expression of Thelema from *The Book of the Law*: “LOVE IS THE LAW, LOVE UNDER WILL.” Thelema recognizes that the fundamental nature of the Universe is creative, which is reflected and embodied in the act of sex. Consensual lovemaking is considered to be a sacrament, and can even be used for personal devotional or transformational rites. By extension, the absolute freedom for all consenting adults to engage in sex as they Will is an important cultural element within Thelema.

Tolerance

The fundamental Law of Thelema is “Do what thou wilt” which is a radical exhortation for each individual to explore and express their true nature, whatever that may be. Fundamentally, we as Thelemites uphold everyone's right to be who they are. This involves a revolutionary form of tolerance or acceptance of diversity. Thelema itself is partially the result of a syncretism of many religions and philosophies. It says in *The Book of the Law*, “Aum! All words are sacred and all prophets true; save only that they understand a little.” We can also find reference to Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Egyptian, Greek, Hermetic, Buddhist, and Hindu ideas within *The Book of the Law* itself, let alone the other Holy Books and writings by Aleister Crowley. This speaks to Thelema's ability to appreciate the truths that are held by the various ideologies across the globe and throughout history. Our eclectic syncretism is not arbitrary though insofar as everything revolves around the core of “Do what thou wilt”: threads are gathered from all corners of human existence to be woven together through the harmony expressed in the word of the Law that is Thelema. We say: “Man has the right to live by his own law—to live in the way that he wills to do.” We are radical in our acceptance of others as they are, however they may think, speak, or act, yet we also take up arms against dogmatism, prejudice, and superstition that impede the full expression of humanity's liberty.