

Search for Answers – Part 1

The search for answers, or A way forward out of today's many crises.

Hello and welcome to this mini broadcast.

This subject is indeed very complex and extensive because man's entire activity can be characterized as a continual search for answers.

The multiple paths along which this search has been conducted have appeared to complicate matters.

Therefore, in trying to broach this topic, one must be very humble, careful, and clear as to the tiny section about which one is talking.

The intricate nature of the subject also suggests that it is best if the material is broken into segments, to maintain a flow that will help maintain a focused discussion.

The title of this write up has already given us one area of searching with which practically the whole of mankind is engaged in one form or another. We refer here to the many crises today to which mankind is frantically trying to find answers, but which seem to have multiplied into numerous facets that have also grown exponentially over the last 100 years.

Perhaps, it will help to set the stage for our analysis if we first start with a brief review of the evolution of some of the crisis that modern man is now grappling with.

Overview of the buildup to where things stand today.

Until the 19th century, most crises tended to manifest as inter-country conflicts, with occasional flare ups of internal crisis. But these were soon brought under control by the powers in charge.

From the late 19th to the early 20th centuries more vigorous and violent upheavals erupted in many countries that were not as easily crushed as previously. Notable among these are the class struggles, which appeared as labor movements in Western Europe and North America, The Marxist revolutions in Russia and China, as well as the struggle for women's voting and property rights, in Europe and North America.

These were soon followed in the 1950s by crises marked by struggles for group rights, including, independence from colonial rule and the fight against discrimination based on race, religion, color, and gender.

Even religions were not immune from these upheavals, as congregations demanded greater say in the way the affairs of the religion were conducted. The results were drastic changes in traditions that had endured for centuries. And so, today, we have ordination of women priests, changes in liturgy, changes in the relationship between the clergy and the laity, and even a shift in the focus of some religious organizations, from an afterlife to a more earthly orientation. All these in response to the demands of the congregation.

By the 1990s other crises emerged, marked by the virulent struggle for individual rights, defined as the right for anyone to choose how they wish to live their lives. This new crisis is marked by debates about gender roles, gender identity, children's rights, animal rights, etc.

While these crises were still spreading around the world, the environmental crises emerged in the form of global pollution and climate change, which some scientists say will lead to longer and more destructive weather and climate patterns, as well as having serious effect on agriculture, food supply, and the eco-system.

As if that were not enough, we are now faced with depletion of the earth's resources, and human overpopulation of the planet.

Needless to say, these developments are confounding and putting fear many. There is growing and frantic search for answers by means of the orthodox and unorthodox.

The number of expert opinions, research findings and books, with which we are bombarded is a clear expression of this overt and covert search for guidance, on so many fronts.

However, in our age of competing and conflicting doubts, opinions, and conclusions, it is almost impossible to find a single “answer” to any of these socio-political crises.

Even the search for answers has introduced its own confusion, marked by growing debates over the notion of absolute truths versus individual reality, or shades of truth.

How can we possibly find a way to solve a crisis, when we cannot even arrive at a common agreement of the cause of the problem, or the solution to the problem?

In segment 2, we shall examine in more depth the now popular concept of individual reality and its contribution to the crises