

STA OUTREACH REPORT FOR 6/30/16:

From Bob:

As always, there have been interesting discussions with folks at the plaza during the past two weeks. Last week a man recognized S&H on our display stand and said he had a copy he got from an orphanage in Cambodia. He said he was there on a Spokane church mission dealing with fish ponds. The idea that he (a) found a book in that location, and (b) took it away with him, somewhat strains credulity. But that's what he said. Maybe we need a pop quiz in situations like this to confirm veracity...for example, "What is the page number where you will find the tenets?" (A question asked of me when I wanted to join my first Society in Okinawa.) And so on!

Today, a young man who "has studied stuff like you have here" lingered reading the back of S&H. I asked him what he had studied. He said shamanism and pagan beliefs. We had a short discussion about the idea of a Christianly scientific approach to the reality of life and all things. He seemed interested and said he would read the book to compare his past readings with what this author says. And speaking of authors, probably those of you who have shared S&H in public are familiar with the query, "Did you write this book?" It's always fun to say no, I didn't write it, it was written in 1875 by a woman who began a radical theological teaching/healing movement.

The other unusual event today was a mid-age-range gentleman standing nearby waiting for someone. We fell

into conversation and rather soon I mentioned our display is about Christian Science...to which he responded that he knew all about it, he'd studied it for years, his mother was a practitioner and he'd grown up in the church, but left some years ago. This sort of thing has happened a few times before; my first response is to ask such persons, "Why are you no longer active?"

Tina came along later for her shift and we had a three-way conversation for nearly a further half hour. He is putting the basics of CS into use in his life even though he's had many years (starting from childhood) of medical problems. We enjoyed his tales of how he's coping with some seemingly serious physical issues and we shared our viewpoints in several areas.

But back to the "Why?" question, which is important to all of us interested in the essence and continuity of CS. He answered that question right after the two of us started talking. He brought the answer down to three issues: first, he was cured of several childhood ailments but things got worse over time and did not improve; second, he felt that the same passages from the Bible and S&H were used over and over and over, and it put people into a mental rut; and three, the organization as seen from his family perspective was "too political with too much infighting". Still, he has taken the essence of perfect man along in his journey and faces it all with the sure knowledge of his spiritual identity. Right on.