

An Introduction To Spiritual Christianity

5. Redefining Our Sensory World

Video 1 - The Objects Of The Projections Of The Mind

Introduction

In heaven, what is experienced by angels as their outer sensuous world are the effects of the interior condition of the thoughts and desires that form their mental state. This insight allows us to understand rationally why, in that world, space has no reality independent of a mind as its producing cause. What angels experience as space is understood as a representative image of the state of their affections. Space as something existing independently in an outer world is simply an appearance. This isn't just true of space but is also true of all objects of the senses that make up the angelic world which are, in fact, situated within the mind itself.

Spiritual Objects and Affections

The sensory objects of angelic consciousness manifest the states of their own minds or the quality of the love they have for heavenly uses. These objects are spiritual which is to say they are conceptual or mental being projected onto the sensory plain of the mind. In the teachings for Spiritual Christianity it states that the whole spirit of man is affection and thought from that affection. So it is, in its teachings the mind is clearly identified with the spirit. This being the case means that when it is said that all things in heaven, even the very bodies of angels, are spiritual, what's meant is that all the objects of their senses and their very bodies themselves are representative effects of the states of their minds.

Appearances of Space and Time

These appearances are purely mental or spiritual in origin, with no cause outside of or independent of the mind. The mental basis for space and time is equally applicable to all the objects of the senses that exist in the appearance of space and, endure in the appearance of time. They are all creations of the Divine life as it is received into the wills and intellects of angels, bringing forth to view a representative sensory world. Angelic consciousness intuits the meaning of this

world of representation as something corresponding to their states of mind and the progressive changes those states undergo.

Implications for the Natural World

Our everyday experience of the natural world suggests that material bodies exist independently, outside the mind, and that sensations are effects arising from those external bodies. However, this assumption isn't necessary; the mind can create vivid, lifelike appearances without requiring a separate physical space. Essentially, the mind can simulate an external reality, providing a convincing appearance that both mind and body inhabit a distinct space.

Conclusion

The understanding that the outer sensuous world in heaven is a reflection of the interior conditions of the will and intellect provides profound insights into the nature of reality. It reveals that what we perceive as external space and time are, in fact, projections or appearances generated within the mind. This perspective not only clarifies the nature of heavenly experiences but also offers a deeper understanding of our own experiences in the natural world, where appearances of space and time are similarly rooted in the mind. This realisation bridges the gap between the spiritual and natural realms, emphasising the unity and coherence of all creation under the influence of Divine laws that govern every level of creation.

Video 2 - The Mind's Creation of Sensory Experiences

Introduction

In the spiritual world, the sources of sensation cannot be found in any supposed bodies existing in space because, in that world, there is no space in which bodies could exist. The existence of spatial bodies depends on the existence of space. Since space does not exist in the spiritual world as it does in the natural world, neither can spatial bodies exist there. This interconnectedness of space and bodies in the natural sense is absent in the spiritual realm.

Dependence of Spatial Bodies on Space

For spatial bodies to exist, space must exist. This fundamental premise highlights the impossibility of traditional physical bodies in the spiritual world, where space as we understand it does not exist. In the natural world, the existence of material

bodies is predicated on their occupation of space. However, in the spiritual world, this spatial occupation is replaced by an appearance of space that looks as if it is external to the mind but is, in fact, within it.

Generation of Sensory Images

The images themselves in the spiritual world cannot be generated from external sources in the way that science postulates the generation of sensory imagery in the natural world. Science often explains sensory experiences through physical influxes that affect the organs of sense, creating images and perceptions in the brain. However, in the spiritual world, the bodies of angels, which include their representative organs of sense, are spiritual. These bodies are representative appearances that correspond to the internal powers of the will and intellect which are purely mental realities.

Spiritual Bodies and Sensory Perception

In the spiritual world, therefore, the objects of sensation can have no other source or seat but in the mind itself. The bodies of angels, being spiritual, are not physical entities but are manifestations of their internal states. These bodies and their sensory organs represent the spiritual and mental faculties of the angels. As such, the sensations experienced by angels are direct reflections of their mental states and are not derived from external physical sources.

Conclusion

Understanding the nature of sensation in the spiritual world illuminates the profound differences between spiritual and natural experiences. In the spiritual realm, sensations are inherently tied to the internal states of the mind, with no need for external physical bodies or spaces to generate these experiences. This perspective underscores the mental basis of space and the psycho-spiritual origin of sensations in the spiritual world. The natural mind's conclusion that space and bodies in the natural world are interdependent does not apply in the same way in the spiritual world, where all sensations are known to be rooted in the mind and its internal faculties.

Video 3 - The Differences In Natural And Spiritual Perception

Introduction

In the spiritual world, every sensuous object is created as a result of the Divine life acting through the wills and intellects of spirits and angels. The Divine life of love and wisdom inflows into the minds of angels and spirits from which is created a representative world of sensory objects that reflects the recipient being's psycho-spiritual organisation. The affections and beliefs of the receiving mind determines what is presented as the outer perceptible world.

The Unity of Sensuous Qualities

The mind combines different sensory inputs - sight, touch, smell - into a single, cohesive object. For instance, we perceive a flower through its visual appearance, texture, and fragrance. While we typically think of the flower as a separate, physical entity existing independently, a spiritual mode of thought shifts the focus from the flower itself to the mental structures and processes it represents.

Perception in Natural and Spiritual States

In both natural and spiritual states of being, the object of perception remains the same. Although the flower appears to exist outside of us in physical space, it actually exists within our senses. The qualities we perceive—such as sight, touch, and smell— while appearing to be properties of an object in an external world are sensations that are only present in the mind. It is the strength of this appearance that leads to a belief in the reality of an external space independent of mind.

Differences in Perception

The spiritual mind, enlightened by Divine truths, understands that space and time are states of the mind. Objects, therefore, exist within the sentient faculties. In contrast, the natural mind believes in a material world distinct from sensations. This natural perspective holds that sensations of the external world are mere transcripts of a material reality, transmitted through the senses to the brain.

The Assumption of External Transmission

Natural thinking is convinced of the actual existence of matter and the correctness of their assumption that sensory imagery is transmitted from the external world. This belief persists despite the fact that the only evidence supporting it is found in the images themselves, which appear solely within the sentient faculties.

Conclusion

The evolution of sensuous objects in the spiritual world reveals a profound distinction between spiritual and natural perceptions. In the spiritual realm, objects are recognised as relating to states of the mind, created by the interaction of the Divine life with the wills and intellects of spirits and angels. In contrast the natural mind perceives reality in purely material terms, holding that the cause of its sensations are the result of external stimuli making impressions on the brain through the body's sensory organs. This divergence underscores the fundamental shift in understanding that occurs when transitioning from a material to a spiritual worldview, where reality is no longer seen as external, but as an expression of the inner life.

Video 4 - The Material World Is Unnecessary For Sensation

Introduction

The nature of reality and sensory experience has long been debated. While naturalists attribute sensory experiences to a material world external to the mind, spiritual perspectives offer a profoundly different understanding. This exploration delves into the angelic sensory experience, revealing that an external material world is not a necessary condition for generating sensuous experiences. Instead, it highlights the integral role of Divine influence and internal states.

Beyond Materialism: The Mind's Capacity for Generating Sensuous Experience

The human mind's constitution reveals that a material world, as conceived by naturalists, is not required to produce sensuous experiences. Naturalists assume that sensory properties originate from matter in an external spatial world, entering our awareness through sensory organs. However, this perspective is constrained by their narrow interpretation of sensory data, overlooking alternative explanations for the mind's sensuous experiences.

Angelic Sensory Experience

Angelic sensory experience mirrors that of the naturalist in its appearance of space and time within the images existing in their sentient faculties. These objects of sensation appear as external to them as if they had a substratum of matter in an external space for their support. However, angels, being wiser than humans, perceive that this support is a mere appearance and that the genuine substratum that underpins all is the inflowing life of Divine love and wisdom.

The Source of Sensuous Experience

Angels understand that the support for their sensory experiences lies within them. The light of truth reveals to them that the Divine Substance, the source of all existence, is the sole support of their being and every object, both mental and representative. It is this Divine Being who, in accordance with the states of the angelic mind and their reception of His Divine love and wisdom, imparts the living appearance of an outward world with all the sensuous properties of matter.

Conclusion

The perception of a material world as a necessary condition for sensory experience is a limitation of the natural mind. Angels, with their deeper understanding, recognise that their sensory experiences are supported by the Divine Being within them. This spiritual insight reveals that the appearance of an external world is a manifestation of internal states, governed by Divine influence. Thus, the naturalist's conception of a material world is not essential for the generation of sensuous experiences, as these are ultimately rooted in the Divine interaction within the mind itself.

Video 5 - The Connection Between Natural Objects And Spiritual Causes

Introduction

From a spiritual perspective the natural world is a theatre that represents the spiritual world. Every detail of sensory experience corresponds to spiritual realities reflective of the Lord's kingdom and its opposite. Through the teachings for Spiritual Christianity, we gain insight into the intricate relationships between the material and spiritual, where sensory experiences are shaped by the states of mind and the affinities of love and thought. This journey into the world of spiritual to natural correspondence reveals the profound connections that underpin a spiritual understanding of reality.

The Appearance of Motion and Space

In the spiritual world, the action of mind upon mind creates in the sentient faculties the appearance of a change of place. This concept may seem strange to those unfamiliar with life in the spiritual realm, where space time only exist as

appearances representing states of consciousness. From the teachings for Spiritual Christianity we have the following statement, "These states produce in the external faculties a completely living appearance of progressions and motion." This can be found in the work Heavenly Secrets paragraph 5605. This appearance is as real and living as the sensation of life being our own, even though, in reality, life inflows from the Lord as its one and only source. This highlights the profound difference between how reality is perceived in the spiritual world and what the natural mind supposes reality to be.

Sensory Objects in the Spiritual World

Even though in the spiritual world the relationship of sensory objects to the inner states of mind from which they originate is intuitively perceived, they lose none of their sensory objectivity. Yet, they are objects within the mind, truly existing within the sentient faculties of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. And while they may seem distinct, they are actually effects produced by the affections and thoughts active on a deeper level of the mind.

Perception of Causes in the Natural and Spiritual Worlds

To think naturally is to attribute the existence of sensory objects to physical causes separate from the mind. As a result, the connections these objects have to mental qualities of love and thought go unnoticed. And even if these deeper meanings are taught, the natural mind will still struggle to appreciate them or perceive the underlying causal nature of goodness and truth and evil and falsehood, in producing the objects of the sensory world. Yet, this understanding this is essential if the symbolic nature of the Word is to be grasped, as it explains why natural objects embody specific corresponding spiritual meanings.

Example of Correspondences: The Ox

By way of example, consider the spiritual meaning of an ox, a frequently occurring object in the Bible as well as in the spiritual and natural worlds. In the Word there is a commandment that states that if a man's ox harms another's ox and it dies, they shall sell the living ox and divide the money. Exodus 21 verse 35. Spiritually, this signifies the destruction of a good affection by another opposing affection. In the spiritual world, an affection for natural goodness, when exhibited in an animal form, appears as a gentle ox. The affection is the cause, and the animal appearance is the effect. While this relationship of cause to its effect is clear in the spiritual realm, it not so clear when it comes to the natural level of existence.

Misunderstandings in the Natural World

To a natural mode of thought, a gentle ox is not seen as the representative sign of a good affection because the natural world isn't understood to be an effect of spiritual causes. The natural mode of thought, thinking in terms of space and time, struggles to understand how a beast can signify an affection for goodness. Where the natural world is not held to be an effect of spiritual causes but only of natural causes, then any reference to the spiritual world in explaining natural phenomena would be inconclusive and regarded as fallacious.

Correspondences and the Holy Scripture

The doctrine of correspondences in Spiritual Christianity is essential for understanding the spiritual meaning of the Word and the idea that all of nature serves as a symbolic representation of either the Lord's kingdom or its opposite. The reality of the correspondence between the natural and spiritual worlds becomes clear when we realise that these worlds are created according to the same laws by Him who is beyond space and time. Although the natural mind may perceive different laws at work, when we are open to spiritual principles, we see that the inherent logic, especially concerning the letter of the Word and natural phenomena, stems from their being representative expressions of the states of the wills and intellects of sentient beings.

Conclusion

In conclusion, understanding the doctrine of correspondences reveals that the natural world is a reflection of deeper spiritual realities, where appearances of motion, sensory objects, and causation in the spiritual world mirror our inner states and affections. This perspective illuminates the symbolic meaning of the Word and the natural world, grounding them as expressions of Divine law that transcend time and space. Recognising these correspondences invites a fuller comprehension of spiritual truth and a more profound interpretation of Holy Scripture.