

# An Introduction To Spiritual Christianity

## 7. The Material World Is Not As It Appears

### Video 1 – What Is Real And Not Real?

#### Introduction

We often assume that what we can see, touch, and measure with our senses is the ultimate reality. But what if there was a deeper, more fundamental level of existence beyond the physical world? This exploration delves into the nature of spiritual reality, challenging our conventional understanding of what is "real." We'll examine how the spiritual world is perceived, how its reality differs from the material world, and how our perspective shapes our understanding of truth itself. Prepare to consider a reality not based on physical perception, but on the very order of creation and our capacity to perceive it accurately.

#### The Nature of Spiritual Reality

The spiritual world is a realm of pure, elevated thought, originating from angelic minds. It's also a world of symbolic representations where every object corresponds to an aspect of the perceiver's mental state. Unlike natural thought, which assumes that physical objects exist independently of a spiritual or mental cause, a spiritual perspective understands that all sensory experiences are ultimately rooted in the mind. Those in the spiritual world experience the principles of Order and Correspondence operating in a dynamic and immediate way: as the inner states of will and intellect in spiritual beings change so, the objects perceived without in their sensory world also transform. These objects, while appearing to exist externally, are actually within their minds, constantly adapting to perfectly reflect their evolving mental states.

#### Defining "Real": A Spiritual Perspective

The terms "real" and "non-real" are used here to highlight a philosophical difference between a spiritual and a material view of existence. From a natural, sensory-based perspective, "real" means what we can see, touch, and directly perceive. Love, for example, or other intangible feelings, are considered less real than a physical object. Therefore, the spiritual world – with its objects that only exist within the sphere of mind – is often deemed less real than the so called tangible

objects of the natural world, which are assumed to be independent of a spiritual or mental cause and fixed in space.

### Common Misunderstandings About Reality

Many people struggle to see the spiritual or mental world as real, and even fewer recognise that our minds or spirits are more fundamental than the images presented to our senses. This misunderstanding arises from a limited, materially focused understanding of reality where what is real is understood solely in terms of what presents to the physical senses.

### A Spiritual Definition of Reality

From a spiritual perspective, our perception of reality can be defined by the alignment between the true order of creation and our correct understanding of that order. To make this alignment possible, Divine revelation provides us with truths that counteract the powerful influence our senses exert over our minds. The closer our understanding aligns with what genuine truths teach, the more our minds are illuminated. Thoughts that accurately reflect this order are considered genuinely real and truthful. Our comprehension deepens and expands as our minds are increasingly receptive of heavenly wisdom.

### The Limitations of Natural Thought

Natural thought, based on the appearances of the physical world, lacks this harmonious alignment. Drawing conclusions from appearances often leads to faulty assumptions, and these assumptions, once reinforced by reason, solidify into entrenched falsehoods. Consequently, natural thought, relying solely on sensory perception, diverges significantly from the true nature of reality as illuminated by a genuine spiritual understanding.

### Conclusion

In essence, understanding the spiritual world and its definition of reality challenges the primacy we often place on sensory experience. True reality, from this perspective, is not about what we can touch or see, but about the alignment between our minds and the underlying order of creation. By seeking truth through spiritual revelation, rather than simply relying on the sense based appearances of the physical world, we can move beyond the limitations of natural thought and grasp a deeper, more authentic sense of reality. This journey of understanding

invites us to reconsider what we perceive as "real" and to embrace the transformative power of spiritual wisdom.

## Video 2 - The Light Of Life

### Introduction

At the heart of our understanding lies a fundamental question: how do we perceive the world around us? Are we merely observers, processing sensory information through a lens of physical limitations, or are we capable of a deeper, more profound connection to the reality that underlies existence? This exploration delves into the very nature of our perceptions, examining how our connection (or disconnection) to the Lord as the inner "light of life" shapes our understanding of the world and our place within it. We will consider the subtle ways in which the prevailing tendencies of materialism and genuine spirituality influence not only our intellectual pursuits but also our very sense of reality, revealing the profound implications of how we choose to perceive the universe and our place within it.

### Connecting to Inner Light

Our perceptions gain genuine vitality when they are linked to the Lord who is the "light of life". The strength of this connection is facilitated through our understanding of spiritual principles when these are integrated into our life. The degree to which this understanding is actually aligned with what is good and true determines the degree to which we are able to perceive the true nature of reality. Conversely, if our perceptions are disconnected from the light the Word provides, or if our judgements do not align with the laws of spiritual influx then they can't convey a true image or reality or be considered truly alive.

### Ennobling or Corrupting Influences

Every pursuit, be it intellectual or practical, can be either ennobled or debased; be true or false; real or unreal. The prevailing tendency towards either a material or spiritual concept of reality has a profound influence on every area of knowledge. If materialism dominates, it corrupts every pursuit it touches. This manifests itself in distorted theology that multiplies gods and renders their attributes in a simplistic, sensual way. It also manifests in Pantheism, which deifies nature by placing God within it, and in the reduction of the Christian God from a Divine Human Being to a mere "thing" amidst other things. Furthermore, it pervades flawed philosophies of

mind, misapplied science and distorted notions of what is honourable and admirable.

### The Power of a Spiritual Outlook

Conversely, if a spiritual view of life is the prevailing tendency, it illuminates every form of knowledge with its pure light, bringing it under the influence of higher truth. This transformation, however, is not instantaneous. Spiritual truth may be understood intellectually long before it is consistently applied. Belief does not automatically translate into coherent thinking that consistently aligns with those beliefs.

### The Struggle for Consistency

One may acknowledge that all things are created through the influx of spiritual life into the mind, yet still subconsciously think as if this influx was external and influenced by physical processes. Our thoughts may initially bear the mark of our convictions, but rarely are we fully consistent in aligning our thinking with truth. Over time, the truth can seem to fade subtly from our minds, and we revert to thinking in terms of physical space and time, treating them as the primary reality. In doing so, we fall prey to the subtle fallacies that generate a purely natural way of thinking about life.

### Conclusion

In essence, the quality of our perceptions hinges on our relationship to the "light of life" within us. When we allow the wisdom of spiritual truth to guide our understanding, we illuminate not only the world around us but also the very depths of our own minds. Conversely, when we become ensnared by the limitations of materialism, we risk distorting our perceptions, falling into a web of flawed understanding that can permeate every aspect of our lives. The challenge, therefore, is not simply to acknowledge spiritual truth, but to allow it to consistently shape our thoughts, thereby escaping the subtle sway of physical fallacies. The journey to truly comprehending the world requires a constant striving for this consistency, acknowledging that the truths we hold dear must become the very fabric of our understanding if we are to move beyond mere intellectual assent and into a truly enlivened perception of reality.

## Video 3 – Receptivity To The Light Of Life

### Introduction

How we perceive the world profoundly shapes our understanding of reality. This exploration delves into the distinct ways in which spiritual and natural minds experience existence, focusing on the transformative power of the Lord in the mind as the “light of life”. We will examine how receptivity to this Divine illumination reveals the true nature of things, contrasting the genuine perceptions of heavenly beings with the illusory experiences of the natural mind conditioned by space and time. Through this comparison, we aim to understand how a deep connection to the Divine Life is essential for accessing true reality and transcending the limitations of the physical world.

### Receptivity to the Light of Life

Within the spiritual and celestial realms, the reality of all things is directly proportional to the degree that minds are receptive to the “light of life”. This Divine light illuminates the purpose and creation of all things, enabling heavenly beings to perceive them as they truly are. It is through this illumination that a deeper and more authentic understanding of existence is made possible.

### The Nature of Spiritual Appearance

When spiritual beings integrate the truths of Divine revelation into their minds, their sensory experiences are transformed into genuine and meaningful appearances. Unlike the natural mind, which is limited to superficial observations, a mind formed by Divine truths looks beyond mere appearances to perceive the underlying reality they represent. The natural mind, lacking awareness of spiritual realities and not receptive to the “light of life,” mistakes appearances for intrinsic realities, failing to grasp their deeper significance.

For angels, the sensuous objects that appear as if they exist in space, along with the changes that give the illusion of progression through time, are only superficially similar to those perceived by natural minds. This is because spiritual beings experience space as a representation of their affections – an inner state projected outward. Similarly, what appears as time or progression to them is, in fact, changes in their understanding of spiritual truths. The “light of life” within the spiritual mind prevents these beings from interpreting objects solely on the basis of their superficial appearance. Instead, this Divine light enables them to see

beneath the surface, accessing a deeper, more significant reality that transcends the limitations of physical perception.

### Eliminating False Perceptions

Within the spiritual mind, the erroneous ideas of an external space or independent time cannot take root. All traces of the non-real are completely obliterated, as if they had never existed. Spiritual beings cannot think as those within the natural world do without falling from their heavenly state. This is because in this state, all thoughts participate in heavenly truth, giving life to the representative world of heaven by being connected in their perceptions and affections with the Divine Life. This connection to the Divine prevents the penetration of false assumptions and ensures their perception is pure and untainted.

### Distinct and Separate Thoughts

The distinctness of thought produced in the various heavenly realms is so complete that these thoughts share nothing in common with each other or with the natural world, except for the basic sensuous images upon which they are all based. This distinctiveness demonstrates the profound difference in perception between the natural and spiritual minds, highlighting the unique and elevated nature of spiritual cognition. It underscores the variety and richness of spiritual reality, as each realm perceives and expresses truth in its own way.

### Conclusion: A Realm of True Reality

Ultimately, the reality experienced by spiritual and celestial minds is a direct consequence of their receptivity to the Lord as the "light of life". This Divine illumination unveils the true nature and purpose of all things, transforming superficial appearances into authentic realities. Unlike the natural mind, which is often susceptible to false perceptions, the spiritual mind transcends the illusions of space and time, embracing a profound connection with the Divine Life. This connection cultivates distinct and elevated thoughts, ensuring that the spiritual world remains a domain of genuine reality, far removed from the fallacies that shape the perceptions of the natural world. This highlights the transformative power of Divine light in shaping perception and understanding, creating a vast gulf between earthly and heavenly experiences.

## Video 4 - Escaping The Illusion Of Independence

### Introduction

At the core of our experience lies a fundamental tension between the world as perceived through the senses and the underlying spiritual reality. This discourse will investigate the pitfalls of relying solely on sensory impressions, revealing how such reliance can obscure the true nature of existence, even for beings of a spiritual nature. We will explore how aligning our perception with the 'light of heaven' can bring a greater, albeit imperfect, understanding of reality.

### The Peril of Sensory Thinking in Spiritual Beings

If angels and benevolent spirits were to be guided by their sensory impressions, thinking in terms of space and time, they would perceive and believe they possessed a life separate from the Divine Life. This illusion would arise because that separateness is how things would appear to their senses. The connection to the Divine Life is not something that can be seen or felt through the senses; therefore, the natural mind struggles to understand, or even accept, that such a connection and dependence exist.

### The Dominance of Sensualism

When sensualism dominates both the will and the intellect, an inherent desire emerges for all power to originate and centre within the self. The self becomes the god of the sensualist, leading to the delusional belief that their conscious life is self-generated and self-reliant. This fosters a profound aversion to the idea that life is continually derived from another source and is not inherently one's own.

### Dialogues with Sensual Spirits

In the teachings for Spiritual Christianity, sensuous spirits were shown that believing in external space offers them no advantage. The same objects would be experienced regardless of that belief, and their sensory consciousness remains unchanged, whether it be derived or underived from another. By acknowledging life as derived, they would align their thoughts with what is true, moving away from the delusion that arises from drawing conclusions from the fallacies of the senses, conclusions that are unreal and lifeless.

## The Distinction Between Real and Unreal Worlds

This distinction between the real and unreal worlds constitutes the core difference between the spiritual and the natural worlds. The spiritual world is real because it appears to heavenly beings exactly as it is: the product of a convergence of spiritual or mental causes. These causes consist of interconnected minds, all harmoniously receptive to the One Divine Life.

Conversely, the natural world is unreal because the natural minds perceptions are shaped by the fallacy of sensory appearance. As phenomena, both worlds appear external to the thinking individual, yet one is real, and the other is not. In the real world, the light of life is not dimmed or extinguished by the deceptive light of the senses because it is governed by the spiritual truths of the Lord's Word.

## Insight on Reality

The teachings for Spiritual Christianity explain that we can give reality to the objects of this world's light by allowing the light of heaven to illuminate them. This does not mean that the natural flow of human thought can be permanently altered, as such a transformation would equate to entering another life, what the natural person terms death. However, it can be altered to the degree that the objects of this world's light can adequately and correspondingly unite with the states of mind associated with the light of heaven.

## The Imperfect Nature of Conjunction

The level of this union may be limited and far from perfect. We may not be able to perceive truth as a continuous, unbroken stream of light, or to think purely in a spiritual manner. Living in the natural world, we remain subject to natural states of mind and so can only ever catch fleeting glimpses of the reality that truly is. Despite these constraints, our imperfect insight into truth can reassure us that thinking in this way is to intellectually engage with the spiritual world, giving reality and life to what would otherwise remain lifeless and unreal.

## Conclusion

Understanding the difference between sensory and spiritual perception is essential. The spiritual mind perceives reality through the light of life, revealing the true nature of existence. In contrast, the natural mind, dominated by sensualism, remains trapped within delusion. By aligning our perceptions with spiritual truths and allowing heaven's light to enlighten our understanding, we can begin to



perceive reality as it truly is, albeit imperfectly. This alignment not only enriches our intellectual experience but also brings a deeper, more profound sense of reality and vitality to our perceptions.

## Video 5 – Seeing The World As Angels Do

### Introduction

This exploration delves into the nature of perception and reality, contrasting the comprehensive understanding of angelic minds with the more limited and often illusory perspective of the natural human mind. We will consider how angelic intellects perceive the relationship between inner states and outer objects, and how this differs from the natural mind's experience of space, time, and sensory perception. Through this comparison, we aim to illuminate the distinction between natural and spiritual understanding, ultimately revealing a path towards perceiving true reality.

### The Profound Insight of Angelic Intellects

Angelic intellects, owing to the purity of their affections and the corresponding clarity of their rational perceptions, possess a remarkable and comprehensive understanding of the relationship between their internal worlds of love and thought, and the external objects that enter their awareness. This insight is immediate and unforced, allowing them to grasp both their own states of mind and those of others. Everything that presents itself to their senses is understood as a representative expression of these inner states.

### The Spiritual Underpinnings of Angelic Thought

Their thoughts immediately connect with the spiritual causes and purposes these representations signify. Only these causes and purposes stimulate their intellects. No natural relationships, which are mere appearances, can obscure the brightness and beauty of their perceptions. Instead of being deceived by the illusions of appearances, a realm of spiritual realities is revealed to their reason. They perceive sensory objects as manifestations of relationships within the living forms of mind. Thus, they see things as they truly are, connecting them with the Infinite and Eternal Lord as their ultimate cause, making them truly alive. Unlike those who are naturally minded, whose thoughts are often clouded by the fallacies of space and

time, angels are incapable of such thinking, for the light of truth is ever-present in their minds.

### The Illusory Nature of Natural Perception

Natural perception, being inherently illusory, tends to absorb the mind, hindering its ability to perceive the connections between sensory objects and the diverse, often conflicting, aspects of human consciousness. Consequently, these connections must be learned by rote. Thinking in terms of space and time, the natural individual lacks any true understanding of their deeper meaning. Even those with partially awakened spiritual awareness rarely grasp this significance. This deficiency is an inevitable consequence of a mind employing both natural and spiritual ways of thinking.

### The Gradual Illumination of Spiritual Correspondences

As spiritual understanding dawns within the mind, early mistaken impressions must be corrected. The linking of objects perceived by natural light with the states of mind belonging to the light of heaven occurs gradually. The degree and quality of this linking determines how clearly the truth of correspondence can be perceived. The mind, now instructed by spiritual insight, realises that the physical world, with its material structure of aggregated atoms, was, in its previous understanding, unreal because it was contrary to true reality. These objects, and the space in which they were thought to exist, are now seen as the effects of spiritual or mental causes, not as causes themselves.

### Recognising the Source of Life

Through the eyes of spiritual reason, it becomes clear that the existence of the world has nothing to do with any inherent power within matter. Its continued existence comes from the Lord, and its preservation is a constant act of creation. No longer a slave to sensory impressions that falsely suggested his thoughts and affections were separate and independent from the Divine Life, the enlightened individual now cherishes the understanding that all conscious experience – whether sensory, volitional, or intellectual – flows from the Lord. This life, received finitely and imperfectly by created minds, is distinct yet not separate from the Divine Life.

### Beyond the Limits of Sensuous Experience

The enlightened individual no longer seeks the causes of their sensations beyond their own conscious mind in a static world of space. They no longer naively assume that the Creator is personally present in every part of that space to carry out His works, as is suggested by a materialistic view of reality. They recognise that there can be no external space and independent time, and that God does not exist in one without also existing in the other. They are convinced that such independent space and time are unreal conclusions of the natural mind, which, being contrary to the truth, renders the physical world unreal.

### Discerning Through Spiritual Light

Imagining God filling the natural universe with His personal presence and co-existing within natural time only adds to the number of illusory appearances. The truth is that all things in heaven, or to spiritual and celestial minds, are real to the extent that their minds are receptive to the light of life. This light provided through genuine spiritual concepts, reveals the purpose of various objects brought into existence and their creation, converting instinctive perceptions into genuine appearances. Unlike the natural mind, which perceives through false appearances, the spiritual mind perceives objects as they are, making them truly real. This mind connects these objects with the Infinite and Eternal Lord as their source, thereby bringing them to life.

### Conclusion

This exploration of spiritual and natural perception reveals the vast potential for growth in our understanding of reality. While the angelic mind operates with an innate clarity, those, subject to a natural mode of thinking, are on a journey towards unveiling the spiritual truths that lie beneath the surface of their everyday experiences in the world. By striving to connect with our Divine source and nurture our spiritual reason, we can move towards a more profound perception of the world and our place within it.

## Video 6 – From Shadows To Living Truths

### Introduction

We often perceive the world around us as solid, separate, and readily understood. But what if our everyday experience is built upon a fundamental misinterpretation, a kind of shadow play? This exploration delves into how the light of our everyday understanding can lead us astray, and how the illumination of a higher perspective can reveal the true, living reality that underpins our existence.

### The Misinterpretation of Natural Light

The things we perceive in the light of this world, everything that shapes our conscious thoughts and experiences, are filtered through the natural mind. This includes all objects within our spatial awareness, viewed under this same light. However, without the illumination of a higher light, these interpretations are prone to error. People tend to believe the appearance that their lives are entirely separate from the Divine Life of the Creator, and they perceive their world of space as existing independently of their own mind. These perceptions are the result of natural thought, viewed through the natural lens of this world's light.

### Correction through Heavenly Light

However, states of thought belonging to the light of heaven can correct these errors of the natural mind. As these higher perspectives take hold, the objects of our natural perception become real and alive. The light of heaven reveals that, despite what appearances may suggest, a person's life, be it their will, intellect, or sensations, is not their own. Instead, this life flows continuously from the Lord. This inflowing life, when received imperfectly by finite minds is distinct from the Divine Life, according to the principles governing the relationship between natural effects and their spiritual causes. These spiritual causes are revealed and manifested through our sensations of objects arising in the field of our sensory awareness when those objects are seen in the higher light spiritual truths provide.

### Transformation into Living Realities

When these truths are acknowledged, the objects of nature are transformed in our minds into living realities. They become connected to the “light of life” and no longer seem to be something they are not. They are no longer the lifeless and unreal shadows they appeared to be when viewed solely in the light of this world.

This transformation occurs because the higher light of heaven corrects the misinterpretations produced by the light of natural reasonings.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the light of heaven provides a profound correction to the natural mind's understanding of reality. By recognising the continuous flow of Divine Life and the connection between natural effects and their spiritual causes, the objects of nature become true representations of living spiritual realities rather than lifeless and unreal shadows. This higher perception aligns human thought with the true nature of existence, revealing the interconnectedness of all things created by the Divine.

## Video 7 - Finding The Divine In the Everyday

### Introduction

It is a common, yet inaccurate assumption that those focused on spiritual matters dismiss the material world as illusionary or unimportant. This is far from the truth. This exploration delves into the contrasting perspectives of those who are spiritually minded and those who hold a strictly materialist view, revealing that both acknowledge the reality of the physical world, though their interpretations of its origin, purpose, and essence differ dramatically.

### Acknowledging the Material World

The material world, comprising everything we perceive through sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch, is self-evidently real and undeniable. To affirm its existence is simply to recognise that the objects of nature are indeed tangible things that we sense in various ways. To doubt their existence would be tantamount to doubting our own sentience.

### Diverging Views: Spiritual versus Material

Spiritual individuals do not question the existence of the material world any more than materialists do. However, their understanding of its nature diverges significantly. The materialist often posits a realm beyond their immediate experience, populated by a substratum of matter. From these imagined entities, they construct a theoretical world, often including a concept of God as nature that they then revere as an idol of their own making.

### The Spiritual Understanding

In contrast, those guided by a spiritual perspective connect their experience of the natural world with the spiritual world and through that, to the Lord as the light of life residing within their minds. They perceive, within their minds yet distinct from them, the Divine Love giving rise to every good affection of their will, the Divine Wisdom inspiring every elevated thought, and the Divine Agency creating space, time, and the vast universe of nature within the most external faculties of the mind. They recognise the Divine as the One Essential Life of all things, the very Being of beings, infinite yet unconfined by space, and eternal, existing outside the limitations of time.

### Conclusion

Therefore, the spiritually minded do not reject the material world. Instead, they perceive it through the illuminating lens of Divine wisdom, recognising the interconnectedness of all things with the Divine. This understanding transforms the material world from a mere collection of lifeless objects into a vibrant, living reality, imbued with meaning and purpose. Viewed this way, the material world becomes a representative manifestation of the Divine's infinite and eternal presence, linking all aspects of existence in a harmonious and meaningful whole.