

An Introduction To Spiritual Christianity

8. The Relationship Between Man, Mind and Body

Video 1 – The ‘Man’(homo) Means The ‘Mind’

Introduction

The relationship between mind and body is a perennial question in philosophy and spirituality. In Spiritual Christianity, this relationship is understood through a specific lens, where the terms "man" and "mind" are essentially synonymous. This perspective, which sees the body as an emanation of the mind, offers a compelling alternative to purely materialist viewpoints. We will investigate this unique understanding and its implications for how we perceive human existence.

The Interchangeable Use of "Man" and "Mind"

In the teachings for Spiritual Christianity, the terms "man" and "mind" are used synonymously. This interchangeable usage underscores the core belief that a human being's essence resides within their mind. The mind is considered the defining characteristic, shaping a person and making them truly human.

The Body as a Reflection of the Mind

Angels perceive the human body and its senses as real because they understand it to be a manifestation of the mind's state. To them, the body isn't simply a sensory entity, but a representative emanation of the mind that is specific to its uses and tendencies, including inclinations towards certain evils.

The Natural Mind's Perspective

Conversely, the natural mind, which has its understanding grounded in sensory and material conceptions, doesn't perceive the body as real in this spiritual or representative sense. This form of mind views the body as merely an aggregation of material atoms, intricately assembled and somehow connected to the mind in a way that defies comprehension. This materialistic outlook creates a dualistic understanding in which the mind and the body are seen as fundamentally distinct entities with no inherent relationship between them.

The Dangers of Materialistic Reasoning

This dualistic perspective forces the natural mind to grapple with two seemingly disparate elements; the powers of the mind and the physical aggregation of atoms. The absence of a rational connection between these elements can lead to even more reductive reasoning, with some even attributing to atoms of matter an innate ability to organise themselves into a being capable of thought and will. This descent into materialistic thought further obscures the true nature of the body as a reflection of the mind.

Conclusion

Understanding the body as a representative emanation of the mind offers a deeper insight into the human form. This spiritual view recognises the body not merely as a collection of atoms, but as a real form intimately connected to, and reflective of, the mind's state. By aligning our perception with this understanding, we bridge the gap between mind and body, perceiving them as harmoniously interconnected rather than separate entities.

Video 2 – The Spiritual And Natural Minds' World

Introduction

The human mind, a complex and multifaceted entity, operates within two distinct yet interconnected realms: the spiritual and the natural. This exploration delves into the duality of these two forms of mind and examines how natural language, being immersed in concepts of space and time, struggles to capture spiritual experience. We will consider the roles and characteristics of both the spiritual and natural minds, clarifying terms like "superior" and "inferior" to avoid hierarchical misinterpretations.

The Inherent Limits of Language

Human language, by its very nature, has limitations. Grounded in the concepts of space and time, it often struggles to express the subtler complexities of the mind. This reliance on spatial and temporal references restricts our ability to fully articulate and understand the nuances of spiritual and mental experiences.

Understanding "Superior" and "Inferior" Minds

When discussing the spiritual and natural minds within the framework of Spiritual Christianity, terms like "superior" and "inferior", "higher" and "lower", or "internal" and "external" are often used. However, it's important to understand that these terms don't imply a rigid hierarchy, as if one is inherently "higher" or "lower" than the other. Instead, they refer to the respective roles and the inherent dignity of each. The spiritual mind is considered superior due to its capacity for profound insights and its connection to higher truths. The natural mind, while not inferior in value, is focused primarily on material and sensory experiences.

The Dual Nature of the Mind

Every individual possesses the potential to develop two distinct forms of mind: the spiritual mind and the natural mind. These two minds allow us to access two separate spheres of thought, aligning us with the perspectives of either spiritual or natural beings. The spiritual mind engages with higher truths and more profound realities, while the natural mind interacts directly with the physical world and our immediate sensations.

Two Worlds: Sensation and Thought

The sensations and experiences associated with each form of mind are generated by the will and the corresponding thoughts. In the natural mind, we inhabit the natural world. This world is largely shaped by material and sensory experiences, reflecting the state of these natural minds taken collectively.

Entering the Realm of the Spiritual

Likewise, the spiritual mind gives rise to the spiritual world which emerges from the characteristics that define spiritual thought. It's a realm where the thoughts and perceptions of those who inhabit it, align with deeper truths unbound by the limitations of space and time that constrain the understanding in the natural world.

Conclusion

The concept of the dual spiritual and natural minds provides a powerful framework for understanding the breadth of human experience. While human language often struggles to fully capture the depth of spiritual realities, recognising the distinct, yet interconnected, nature of these two minds allows for a more comprehensive understanding of our existence. By nurturing both the spiritual and natural aspects of

our minds, we can bridge the gap between the material and spiritual worlds, enriching our understanding and experience of life.

Video 3 – Connecting To The Spiritual World Within Us

Introduction

This exploration delves into the fascinating relationship between our natural and spiritual thoughts, and how these differences affect what we perceive. We'll uncover why those in the spiritual realm can remain unseen, not due to distance, but because of fundamental differences in how they think. By examining the interplay between these two realms of thought, we'll discover how aligning ourselves with higher spiritual truths can transcend the limitations of space and time, opening us up to a deeper connection with the spiritual world within us. This is a journey into understanding perception, reality, and the profound connections that bind us to something beyond the everyday.

Perception and Invisibility

The thought and speech of natural and spiritual beings are inherently different and imperceptible to each other. This divergence in modes of thinking is the reason why spiritual and natural beings cannot see one another. It is not a matter of physical distance but rather the fundamental differences in their cognitive processes. Space and time, and all that they encompass, are outcomes of the respective states of thought in both natural and spiritual realms.

Swedenborg's Experience

A memorable account from Swedenborg's Conjugial Love 326 highlights the phenomenon of his spiritual sight being opened. Swedenborg describes an encounter where someone expressed surprise at his appearing and disappearing. This fluctuation occurred due to shifts between natural and spiritual thought. Spiritual thought, driven by spiritual affection, can manifest external presence, with the speed of this manifestation depending on the absence of those factors in love and thought within the mind that obscure spiritual realities.

Universal Law of Life

This experience underscores a universal law of life: that spiritual and natural states of life can align when the thoughts that are related to space and time are removed. Thus, even in the natural world, there are those who can meet and experience a spiritual sphere of connection despite the differences in their unique life conditions and history.

Distinct States of Thought

Further evidence that the natural and spiritual worlds are essentially distinct states of thought can be found in how a person perceives nature and its relations. When one understands nature and its phenomena not as external entities but as effects created by the Divine Life through the interaction of spiritual and natural thought, a transformation occurs. Such a person becomes visible to spiritual beings whose thoughts align with this higher perception. Conversely, when one reverts to the fallacies of natural thought, they become invisible to these spiritual beings.

Conclusion

The interplay between natural and spiritual thought reveals a profound truth about perception and reality. The natural and spiritual worlds, though seemingly separate, are deeply interconnected through the modes of thought that give rise to their respective phenomena. Swedenborg's experiences found in the teachings for Spiritual Christianity illustrate that by aligning our thoughts with higher spiritual truths, we can transcend the limitations of space and time, fostering a deeper connection with the spiritual realm.