

The Search for Spirituality
Amidst the Artificial Realities of
Global Materialism

digital
spirituality

christopher j patton

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The Search for Spirituality Amidst the Artificial Realities of Global Materialism

By Christopher J. Patton

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Christopher J. Patton
Faith in the Future Foundation
P O Box 6384
Minneapolis, MN 55406

<http://www.digitalspirituality.org>

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Preface

A Personal Preface

From my earliest memories I have sought to do what is right and good. I wanted to be good, to learn from others and avoid painful mistakes and suffering. I never wanted to hurt or harm anyone, or almost any thing.

Truly. I'm not making this up. From the eyes of my childhood I saw beauty everywhere until I discovered evil. With evil comes suffering, which so violently tears joyous life from the souls of humans and beasts. All life struggles, in vain, for we all suffer unto death. Mortal necessity forces us to feed upon one another. Some do so with victorious relish. Death comes to all eventually. And that's the rub, because the "eventually" part obscures consequences and transforms lies into seeming truth. The fact is that we can never escape death, so then what?

Back to my youth. So I had decided that I wanted to be good, to be different, to find the better way. But before I found it, I encountered perilous agony in the frustrations of life experiences alien to my desired intentions. I found that others suffered from my existence and that I had both fears and lusts unwanted. I embraced comfortable lies, promises of divine power and assured immortality in some form of spiritual continuity, but I live in a material world of injustice and inequality when it comes to the distribution of wealth and power. Is there a natural balance to mortal life that reduces these socio-economic and political characteristics of mortal life? What role does globalism play in all of this?

Life is intrinsically unfair and difficult. Truths I accept. Life in this materialistic socio-economic system often means that my gain comes at someone else's pain. Something in me could not ignore the potential consequences of a complex system of exchange where my good fortune was necessarily paid for by others. This observation ran contrary to the fundamental ethical principle of life in which, "what goes around comes around." In other words, if others had to lose in order for me to win, then one day I would lose - perhaps permanently. How should I live now, in this modern age of seemingly endless struggle, suffering and challenges in hopes of a future, more idealistic one?

"Why?" I asked. Why am I alive both to observe and to experience this mystery called consciousness or life? What purpose is there to it? What need? Or is it all just chance occurrence so that the only reality is what we personally think and seem to experience?

What Impossible Frustration!

I became despondently depressed with my existence as a youth. When I became an adult, instead of getting better because now I could live by my own rules, it only got worse. It got worse because the harder I tried to make things right, to become the good I wanted for myself and others, the more pain and suffering I caused in my own perceived life and in the testified experience of my cherished others. The more dearly

something good was desired, the more tortured was my soul as I lived in the hell of my own creation - a hell amidst a wondrous world that seemed to mock everything about me.

Oh yes, certainly there were victories where it seemed that good was executed enduringly well, at least for awhile. Nonetheless, any good seemed an illusion, or at best a half truth that was inexorably and inextricably bound to some evil consequence or ego-centered attitude of prideful self-sufficiency. Good bound to any pride at some point suffers damage and inevitably must collapse. In my personal life, some collapses took a decade to become obvious. In the broader affairs of this world, history is witness to numerous collapses, and biblical prophecy predicts that the largest one is yet to come – probably just around the corner!

Just as life is inexorably and inextricably bound to death, so good is to evil, but the lie is long in its uncovering. And when it is finally and usually forceably revealed for what it is, we do our best to avoid seeing it, admitting it or doing something about it by humbly submitting to death's demanded change in our present life. We aren't willing to give up our desires, our fancies or our secret pleasures of lust and sensual surfeit.

In desperation I submitted a bit a time, here and there, grudgingly it would seem in retrospect, to the truths found in the Word of God, a Word that had been around me all of my life. It was a Word more elusive the keener I sought for it, so I first looked elsewhere for a little plainer explanation of what was so elusive. When I did, I found plenty of people offering an innumerable and confusing array of answers containing promises of spiritual enlightenment and power to control the persons and circumstances around me to my everlasting benefit. In other words I found illusions for sale as proffered answers to my torturous soul.

These esoteric teachings from east and west, often rooted in antiquity and re-discovered by applied pseudo-science, were and are everywhere for sale. The higher the price you pay, the more rapid will be your descent into destruction because the measure of your desperation is mirrored in the price that you are willingly to pay as paced by your ability to pay it. The destruction you descend to is the void of identity nothingness, the nirvana of suspended consciousness that comes from angelic theft of your life and being, which is the power of free will fabricated into your identity, released to you at birth from the foundations of God's Creation. (Please note: My reference here is to the God of the Jews, to the Almighty of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, renamed Israel. Now this is something one who is not Jewish, such as myself, must accept. The level of difficulty accepting this varies from people to people, person to person, and ironically may be most difficult for the Jewish people themselves.)

By the way, thieving angels are called demons. The main thing is that you should not look to purchase or acquire a spirituality that is promised to operate at your direction and desire, or one that will - in any configuration - impart some measure of control to selfish fulfillment. Such a spirituality will gradually destroy you until you reach the point where there seems to be no hope of escape.

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This is the promised nirvana or elevated consciousness emptied into the wholeness of all, the void, the nothingness of supposed ecstasy that comes with a bliss that is really a burning so searing that time stands still and consciousness with it, dead and unchanging, frozen in an eternal instant of pain without the popularly pictured repetitious interactions of convivial sins of lust and their demanded punishment with torment. The real Hell is not a night club for Satan's fiendish cronies as they inflict unpleasant horrors on others. No, the Devil and its demons will likewise be put on eternal fire ice inactive and unconscious, shut down apart from God in tortured state akin to an age-lasting burning that will be outwardly manifested by a lake of fiery brimstone at the time of the Last Judgment.

Such is the end of the search for spirituality for those who choose the way of the the spirit of hidden knowledge, who seek power over good and evil, who battle "evil" to enforce their own definitions of "good" in the name of "God," who pursue a false love's lusts, or who live for the fleeting fame, health and wealth that can be had in this age of temporal trial.

The way of escape from death by annihilation and spiritual confusion I found is shared here within. With it I offer my understanding of the spiritual chains and traps that are set to attract and capture us so that you may avoid them.

Christopher J. Patton
June 11, 2001 (revised a bit for clarity on 12-16-2007)
Minneapolis, MN

Our Basic Premise

The physical universe extends into the metaphysical realm as one fabric of reality or ultimate truth. Only reality's material dimension can be explored by science because scientific instruments cannot detect or measure the spiritual dimension. Thus, God's revelation of the spiritual relationship to the material as recorded in the Bible is essential to unlock the mysteries of life.

Because it is the Word of the Creator, the Bible is congruent with the laws of the natural universe as well as being an integral part of it. The words and structure of the Bible are interwoven within this single fabric of reality so as to reveal the scientifically undetectable aspects of time and eternity. The contents of this book are drawn from cultural observation, analysis and inductive reasoning in light of biblical revelation. The author believes that his observations are tested through humanity's collective experience. The degree of their accuracy will be finally determined when each of us faces or encounters ultimate reality.

Since the material world images the spiritual, we can explore ultimate reality with the Bible and science to guide us. The test of our grasp of ultimate reality is revealed in a comparison of our proposed picture of God's Plan for Humanity by comparing it with how the present transforms prophecy into history. For all of humanity, the interim crucible that will test each individual's, each religion's, each society's, each nation's and the global collective's beliefs about the ultimate reality of divine eternity is the Apocalypse, Last Days or Great Tribulation of the Bible.

In Jesus, God personally confronts each mortal with physical trial and spiritual testing with divine love and grace, where accepted, so that each person may become a saint, defined as one conformed to God's image as expressed in the Son and transformed by the perfect working of His Spirit.

What is Faith in the Future Foundation?

Faith in the Future Foundation provides insights into how and why the world is as it is from an integrated perspective of science and spirituality. In our pages you will find solutions that you can apply to your own life now and faith in the ultimate outcome of the world's current trajectory towards increasing political and economic oppression of a global supercultural based on materialism and spiritual confusion. While the short term future looks ominous, there are a number of sound reasons for hope. We do not give up the fight: we endure and continue in confidence.

To most people, what is referred to as "Christianity" seems irrelevant to our modern world. Despite that understandable perception, we believe that the Bible has the answer to the big questions of life when it is unlocked by insights from natural science. By integrating scientific observations with a better understanding of human history, Faith in the Future Foundation offers you valuable educational tools in your search for spiritual meaning and purpose - for your own life and that of the entire planet. We pray that this support will encourage you towards living a life now that bears abundant fruit in the lives of your family and friends, as well as helping you along on your own journey into an eternity joyfully spent with the Creator who defines true love.

The foundation is not related to any Christian denomination or church. Hence, our Statement of Faith is simple. How each of us puts the principles below to work in his or her personal life varies. Life is a growth experience that occurs at different rates of consciousness and behavior modification. The most important thing is to be on the only guaranteed spiritual way to a good eternity, which is based on these points:

- The Bible is God's word or testimony, the divine revelation of His will and purpose for life. It is the written expression of His Spirit.
- Personal faith in Jesus the Messiah and obedience to God's Word, according to one's understanding, is the only way to receive the Holy Spirit of God, who is the presence of the Father and the Son in the believer, creating a new life that will last for eternity.
- The Holy Spirit is required for continued growth in spiritual matters such as overcoming sin (a changed life today) and a better understanding of the Bible.

Faith in the Future Foundation considers itself a delivery service for the good news of God's coming kingdom without respect to persons or organizations.

Faith in the Future Foundation teaches that a believer's "citizenship is in heaven." The directors do not endorse or support any political party, military operation, forced conversion or change of religious or philosophical beliefs, national entity or any activity that seeks to bring bibli-

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cal prophecies to pass in this world and time. God is Almighty and able to bring about His prophecies without dependence on human works. He alone can judge the mortal heart and determine a person's spiritual condition and future in eternity.

You may contact us by mail at:

Faith in the Future Foundation
PO Box 6384
Minneapolis, MN 55406

Online at: <http://www.faithfuturefoundation.org>

Christopher J. Patton, President
Faith in the Future Foundation
March 21, 2007

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The social, cultural, theological and spiritual commentaries represent the best efforts of the author to express their views and perspectives on the Bible in the context of historic and prophetic time, but the information presented in these books is not intended to constitute and should not be taken as any type of financial or legal advice.

First of all, I am only human and may be wrong when it comes to the specific facts and dates that someone might use in financial speculation, for example. My methods of researching and understanding of the biblical texts are founded on some basic assumptions that are either only discernable spiritually at this time or may turn out to be incomplete.

Secondly, I am not in a position to and do not intend to offer any type of advice about the legal and material affairs of any other person's life. That is for each of us to do responsibly for ourselves as God leads us.

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Introduction - A Lost Sense of Life Balance

Is this what I spend all my time working for?

Is that how you feel at the end of the day, week, or even on the trip home from a vacation spent in "paradise"?

If you didn't need the money, how would you spend your time today? This month? This year? Why would you do that? Perhaps you'd search for that missing someone or something to make your life more fun or meaningful? Which is, after all, only to say "more full of purpose or meaning"?

Welcome to Club Humanity! You are not alone, and what's encouraging is that even many businesses are waking up to the fact that people, all people including the CEO and you, have personal worth and meaning needs beyond corporate vision conferences and mission statements.

The millennium is yet young, so it is certainly permitted to do a little ruminating on your own life and the future of the world. Really almost any time is a good time for a conscious review of one's place in our ever-changing world. Besides being an excuse to party and celebrate, symbols of renewal can inspire us to reach more deeply within ourselves and test the waters of our souls. We allow ourselves the luxury of asking, "What do I really want out of life? Why am I here now, doing what I'm doing? Is this how I want to spend the rest of my life? How will this relate to others?"

As survival goes global, materialism increasingly drives the values of human civilization into one huge profit seeking system of interlocking supply chains expressed in posted and purposed mission statements dedicated to feeding this unleashed maw of international consumer consumption. You get the point. There are many ways to ask the same question, but the important thing is that the start of a new year, a new millennium, or even a new day seems to be an appropriate time to reflect on the meaning and direction of life.

When I write about "life," I am including our individual experiences of reality as well as the lives of others, and so I write for an earth-full of humanity. I write from a systems perspective that attempts to view our endangered globe as an integrated whole encompassing the welfare of an ecologically vibrant environment - as well as the healthy political, economic and social relationships between peoples and nations.

So where's the spirituality? What is spirituality anyway? Vegetarianism with flower scented candles and oiled back-rubs? In other words, "Where's the beef" in being?

Superficiality may sell beyond all records with a pleasant feeling for the moment, but it does not satisfy anyone for long. Unless they're brain dead. I mean really, life should be more than a bigger paycheck or higher profits, right? Money in hand is important, but I think most people

will readily agree that there is more to life than the amount of cash available. There is at least how you spend it, for example.

The Role of Family

As I discuss purpose in life, simplifying focus requires me to limit references to the very important but generic joys and responsibilities of family, which should be at the no-brainer level when it comes to matters of importance in any culture. Family is obviously important because we all come from one kind or another. Exactly which kind varies by individual circumstance as well as by culture. How a society defines what a family is and/or how it should be structured and run definitely transitions into spirituality.

Since I cannot engage this question of family structure too deeply in this book, which primarily takes a high level, systems view of societal and individual interactions, I recognize that the personal challenges faced by family life confront us with spiritual issues. I believe the structure of the universe is intentional and so is our birth into families because living in them necessitates decisions about how or even whether, we grow and develop as persons.

If you do not have a natural family, then you have already experienced part of the Enemy's plan to destroy humanity. People who suffer from a destroyed or absent family look for a new one. They become adopted into some sort of family or family-like structure, such as a gang. It seems to be a social necessity for most. Living in close proximity with familial others plainly, and often painfully, reveals our spiritual inadequacies, capabilities, opportunities and perspectives. (I define "familial others" as those with whom we have dwelt for an extended period of time as measured in multiple years. Obviously, circumstances may also exist in which one's biological or birth family cannot know much about a person due to psychological, social or geographic distance.)

Many people successfully hide from themselves, but one can't hide from his or her family, if there is one in the traditional sense. If we are not blessed with a healthy family context, then we should try to create one out of persons known and lived with because family issues force us to come up with answers, motivations, reasons, or purposes from our spiritual sides. Much of our spiritual experience and growth takes place in a family context because no one knows us for better or for worse. Our family members usually know us as well as one can know another person. Consequently, a healthy family life always forces us to be at least somewhat honest about ourselves.

Self-honesty is the first step in any spiritual or personal growth program. Honest objectivity (as much as possible) about ourselves is very difficult to approximate without the help of others. So it really helps to have the eyes of our family members - from the youngest to the oldest - as an interactive third party mirror to our own reflections. Family is not the only outside-of-self point of reference: other social groups may influence our beliefs and concepts of ethics and morality, too. But family relationships are the ones we can least ignore because they have the most direct bearing on who we are and how we experience our daily lives.

My Purpose

My purpose for this relatively short literary effort is to help you to become spirituality oriented towards understanding the basic principles that impart transcendent meaning to every day life, especially in today's modern, multicultural secular society of global consumer capitalism. As one who has long sought to understand the world into which he was born, I write to you as an individual who hopes that my observations about life will help and/or challenge you to meaningful growth. I certainly do not have all the answers.

As a child, I met a lot of nice people, and I just couldn't understand what all the unhappiness and misery was all about. Where did it come from and when?

Like you, I didn't ask to be born, and I certainly didn't select my parents, community, or nation. I arrived in wonder with a question from the consciousness of my crib, "What am I here for?" And at about eight to ten years of age I would ask myself, "Why is such a beautiful place as the earth so embroiled in such problems between mostly nice people?"

Even as a very young child I was conscious of historical context. Part of the reason is probably because I am that way and partly because I was born shortly after the Second World War. I grew up in the years of General become President Eisenhower with everyone still talking about the war from heroic movies to veterans kibitzing before and after marching in local parades, where I used to tromp along in a Boy Scout uniform carrying one of those flags. The space race took off, and nuclear bomb shelters sprouted up everywhere. The Cold War did not seem "cold" at all.

As a teen, we in the USA had the riotous sixties of race wars, the Vietnam War, idealistic communes and liberation armies, as well as the more universal generational rebellion in rocking psychedelic sexual and social mores. The sixties also saw the beginnings of modern environmentalism, consumerism and the unraveling of traditional religious structures towards a kind of spiritual free-for-all as Eastern philosophies and religions competed with the over-promising Christian evangelists of the fringe.

Specific "ism" didn't matter - all seemed to be on the make for fleecing the ingenuous in exchange for uncertain enlightenment. Science saved humanity by putting men on the moon. High Technology discoveries and achievements together with the Great Society redistribution of wealth became the nation's secular materialist answers to all sociocultural problems. In other words the United States embarked on a crash dash of cultural change to survive the perpetual struggle between persons and peoples to see who was "King of the Mountain" on each of the multitudinous heaps of humanity piled up on this globe.

The seventies to early eighties brought the United States to some rather extreme, but understandable, heights of political and economic disillusionment with the Nixon administration. In him all politicians became crooks. Concurrently, there arose an oil-driven inflation crisis concomitant with a massive decline in corporate profitability consequential to the old paradigm of "make more of it and they will buy it." The loss

of business profitability propelled a dramatic rise in unemployment as companies took high risks or sought increased efficiencies in order to survive.

Gold-backed currency was given the kiss of death as the dollar went unlinked. Super leverage to capitalize on inflation created ephemeral wealth in hard assets, only to be stolen away by the raging highs of even the most prime of interest rates as the Federal Reserve under Chairman Volker raised them to over 20%. Income tax rates were also very high. In those days it was obvious that everyone in debt worked for the IRS and the bank. The rich got obviously richer, and the poor got obviously poorer.

The electorate rebelled against this "Misery Index" of high interest and tax rates so that the bulk of the eighties to '92 brought the "Feel Good about America" revolution. It also saw, or even caused, the end of the Cold War as the "Evil Empire" of Eurasian communism imploded, bankrupt from overspending in an armed race with the US for global hegemony. The slightly more ethical greed of market capitalism proved itself more efficient than the false communalism of socialist idealism interpreted and distributed by the corrupt greed of a totalitarian oligarchy in a Russian Empire called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR or Soviet Union for short).

Global Materialism

The nineties overtly enshrined materialism as the foundational principle of American inspired Globalism. Progressive international civilization has embraced the doctrine that "greed is good" as long as it is acquired by the accepted rules of fair trade. "Fair" is explicitly and implicitly understood to mean increasingly distributed as a result of an expanding economic web of free market consumerism.

As we progress into the twenty-first century, an altruistic humanism has been politically woven into the accelerating economic integration of nations. Mass media propagates promises of a worldwide democratic experience of improved human rights as defined by the United Nations Charter of Human Rights. Furthermore, the leaders of our planet are forging regional (and ultimately international) trade agreements.

Economic cooperation mandates political accommodations; therefore, political and business leaders have willingly sacrificed national freedoms in order to participate in dreams of an ever-expanding wealth derived from ever-enlarging and prospering markets. By expanding prosperity to all nations, the internationalists contend that war will become unthinkable: who would want to kill their customer? In a global economy we are all plugged in as customers of each other in an almost incomprehensibly woven web of interdependencies.

Global commercialism threatens spirituality as actually practiced by humanity. With the spread of global materialism, spirituality has become attenuated, enfeebled and compromised as impractical, sentimental or irrelevant to our modern life of rapidly advancing scientific technology with its "killer" applications to products and services distributed in a highly competitive global market.

To a materialistic philosophy of consumerist self interest, price is king, created demand is the vision, and elasticity is its messiah. Structurally, everything becomes a commodity, including labor, human body parts and soon-to-be-born persons. Each recognized unit or subunit has its price and by its living commodity price we rationalize and adjust the relative values of our ethical and moral principles.

So where to now? The twenty-first century has barely begun, and I read that some prognosticators predict a return to spirituality. But just what is spirituality? What does the future hold? Will we listen and learn from prophets, or continue to follow profits? And if we find something spiritual, is it truth or lie? Reality or delusion? Personally serving or universal? From the traditional sense of the word, is there anything that can even be defined as truth?

Primarily due to neglect, these ancient questions have languished in a downward spiral towards the impotence of declining relevance by a hi-tech civilization lived at the Internet speed of life. Spirituality has been eaten up by philosophical skepticism, psychiatric practice and by evolutionary social and biological theories. Spiritual complacency becomes common due to the illusion of record-breaking prosperity. These and other factors meld to manifest massive, mind-boggling cultural confusion experienced at a rate and scope of change unprecedented in human experience.

Living in a secular (read pagan) culture as found in the West, the biggest obstacle in searching for true spirituality is the general bias against the spiritual dimensions of life in all of its material manifestations. Society rebels *en masse* against any potential submission of an individual's will or control over one's life – no matter how illusory such control may be. Modern man tries to control the world around him by the acquisition and application of knowledge – specifically scientific knowledge of the materially physical universe. The idea is that if we follow the rules, then we can control the results – even to the attainment of an eternal mortality – by a brain transplant into a new bio-body, if by no other means. But deep within each of us remains a fear of judgment, a fear of death that demands devotion to the internal drives of self-preservation and, usually by practical social extension, to an external authority. Hence we have the urge to express our individuality, but we also accept the limits to that expression in order to remain members of desired or default social groups.

Again, My Purpose

My purpose is to share with you some of my own reflections on spirituality as an encouraging stimulus for you to reflect on life's meaning. I take a systems analysis approach derived from my study of literature, religion, philosophy, history and cultural development around the world as viewed through the lenses of my personal search for spirituality. Even at its best, I admit in advance that this effort must be incomplete by design, but it does contain principles that you can broadly apply in your own search to understand what is going on in the world. Of course, the objective of searching is to integrate valuable discoveries

into your personal life with some promise of improvement if not the attainment of peaceful revelation.

I learned some lessons the hard way, and I would spare you some sorrow, if possible. The information in the following pages could potentially revolutionize your daily life and hope for the future. Less optimistically, I can still write with confidence that you will find this book different from anything you have read to date, and I believe your spiritual search will be safer and more rewarding from reading it.

Some of what is marketed as spirituality is bunk; some of it is very dangerous to your happiness and liberated life enjoyment. I will address some of these cautions later. Since materialism is currently ascendant, I believe that our conscious decision to focus on or to exercise the positive life enhancing, but not power for power's sake, spiritual dimension of life helps us to achieve a more equitable balance in the whole experience of transcendent reality now.

Before I get too far into this text, I want extend honest thanks to professors at The Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where I earned an MA in the Archaeology of Israel and Prehistory of the Old World. Studies of a different character towards an MBA degree at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, focused on international/intercultural business. Business and management issues have contributed significantly to the perspectives expressed here.

Perhaps I owe the most to the staff and my students at Cardinal Stritch University and Bethel University, who have given me the opportunity for live interactive discussions on a wide range of topics as structured in the class syllabi. These classroom exchanges and dialogs have helped me to learn how to more simply express some of the complex ideas covered in these pages, though I still work to improve on that.

Regardless of the above, I must take full responsibility for what is written here even as I admit to have learned from many. I give credit to others where I remember it. May God bless your own journey towards spiritual meaning and fulfillment!

Chapter 1 - What Is Spirituality?

In this overview of the search for spirituality, I do not want to isolate any one social theory or group of people. I wish to take a broad approach to spirituality drawn from the perspective of western civilization that also includes valuable insights from the East. I use principles that apply beyond western culture since I address many universals that are a natural part of human life. Yet, the basic hypothesis I explore here is that spirituality is both something apart of as well as reaching deeply into or beyond the humanly natural way of living. It is the something sought for to satisfy the elementally deep yearnings hidden in each human heart around the world.

This book presents a personally integrated synthesis of what I have learned about life and its relationship to spiritual reality. I realize that millions believe that the words "spiritual" and "reality" cannot be put together. Their bias *a priori* causes them to operate and process life without recognition of spirituality as something that might exist independently of human fabrication, whether that fabrication is considered to be a product of individual emotionalism and/or some form of social group think such as the varied religious institutions found in cultures around the world.

I will not be able to overcome the objections of someone demanding proof from within the current limitations of scientific instrumentation or who rejects the principle that reality beyond the physical may be probed using the tools of reasoning. I will not try to prove everything that I infer from the evidence I have observed, borrowed from others and/or experienced personally. In addition, I realize that though my conclusions are stated factually, many of them cannot be verified in this life or dimension. Just like you, I will need to die in order to experience what happens afterwards, if anything. A number of people believe that they have solid personal experience with what comes after death, but I have some cautions concerning this evidence, which I will discuss later.

Reason is a viable tool for probing spirituality because the human mind naturally includes spiritual capacities beyond the limitations of scientific instrumentation. I address this capacity repeated within the context of what I term Natural Spirituality. In other words, people are naturally equipped to perceive and interact with at least one dimension more than science can measure, replicate and describe. This makes the human mind the most appropriate, and probably only, instrument available for exploring a spirituality that incorporates scientific observation and laws into a metaphysically extended conceptualization of ultimate reality. I state these biases up front. I also strive to make my biases openly admitted without burdening the written discussion between us with an intellectualized fog of philosophical arrogance and purposed obfuscation to hedge my bets.

Throughout the history of humanity's multiple experiences in cultural development, the mentally different ones among us have often been associated with the spirit world. In the early tribes and urban centers,

people who exhibited traits of what's defined today as mental health problems (up to and including medically certified insanity) were often viewed as bearing the deviant qualifications required of a society's prophets, seers or religious representatives to the holy or unknown spirit world around us.

Consequently, a large part of the difficulty of beginning and continuing any spiritual quest today is this heritage that associates spirituality with human oddity. The fact that spiritual matters are different from ordinary life means that spiritual people are expected to be strangely different from normal people. There could be nothing further from the truth.

A Scientific Method

Today, most accept that the natural environment originally inspired a great deal of what has been taught as spiritual knowledge. Logic presents an explanation that, out of scientific ignorance, early men and women sought spiritual reasons for natural phenomena that either scared them, left them in awe or that provided them with survival sustenance. This association rightly or wrongly continues into modern times, but the inspiration for the search has understandably changed with the times.

The fact that the scientific method has produced rationally researched explanations for much of the natural universe that was previously understood poorly has tended to obscure rather than elucidate spiritual questions. Our scientifically oriented western values have in effect shoved the case for spirituality further to the fringes of respectable society. For example, many human mental conditions previously viewed as spiritually enabling are now attributed to genetic malfunction, to infectious or degenerative disease or to some chemical imbalance of the brain's necessarily essential neural transmitters. While these factors account for some of the evidence for a metaphysical dimension of experience, they do not discount the superabundant testimony for the human experience of the spiritual that has been accessed and understood by billions of people over the ages. I believe that these mountains of testimony exist because the human mind comes equipped with a spiritual dimension or component that cannot be directly detected, described, measured and analyzed by scientific methods.

Because of the traditional association of spirituality with mental and/or social deviance the biased perspective of modern cultural mores does not encourage one to explore spiritual issues with any sense of confidence. To science, the spiritual realm does not exist: there is a materially measurable, observable and repeatable physical explanation for everything. The obvious result, of course, is that spiritual matters have been generally devalued to an equality of irrelevant emptiness that is allegorically aligned with ignorant myth. In the materialist philosophy, spirituality is only an existentially perceived reality and not transcendental, absolute truth. It may be emotionally satisfying, but it is otherwise impotent and irrelevant to an exploration of an integrated, universal reality.

The search for a truly spiritual dimension of life must carefully evaluate the evidence experienced and presented by others. We must agree

together that calling something a spiritual phenomenon or fact does not make it so. Also, simply because a phenomenon or class of information may be unknown or known, explained or unexplained by scientific investigation does not automatically qualify it to be assigned to the realm of the spiritual or metaphysical. Something that is not scientific is not automatically spiritual, and something that is spiritual is not automatically unscientific. Thus, broad human experience most simply defines spiritual truth and substance as the reality encountered beyond the boundaries of the five senses of humans and the four dimensions of space-time. Metaphysical reality also encompasses that which cannot be understood through the current capabilities employed by scientific research for a secularly rational explanation of the non-material spiritual realm of the universe.

Spirituality Defined

To begin with, let us define spirituality as any actuality that is found to exist and extend beyond the capable detection of the biological five senses of man that it is not limited or bounded by the four dimensions of space-time. Whereas the physical realm of the universe is bounded by the above definition, the metaphysical is not. Therefore, spirituality is a metaphysical actuality encompassing that which cannot be fully understood through the current investigative capabilities employed in studying the material realm of universe, which includes both the physical universe and the metaphysical. Alternatively, we humans have referred to these two realms within the continuum of ultimate reality as the natural and supernatural – granted that a number of psychospiritual systems do not consider mortal life in the flesh, or perhaps even the material universe, to be a part of reality.

In the final analysis I believe that there is no confrontation or mutual exclusivity between good science and true spirituality. There is some overlap in their study since science is definitely used to explore spiritual phenomena. If the spiritual realm is indeed a true reality and not pure imagination, then at some point we will find a unification of the fields of natural science and supernatural metaphysics. Later in this book, I discuss some of these overlaps and apply them to the socio-spiritual and psychospiritual phenomena (or problems) of human life.

In my self-explanation of a unified universe of science and metaphysics within the western Judeo-Christian tradition, I hypothesize that the natural border between the two is the speed of light. Based on Einstein's work, the speed of light seems to be the defining variable of the fourth dimension, which is time. Thus, it is also the border of eternity, which is a universally attributed characteristic of the spiritual. Light is a universal symbol of the spiritual. Almost every culture links light to spiritual goodness and associates darkness with spiritual evil. The Bible, for example, states that God is light. In the verses below, the divine nature of Jesus is called the "Light."

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.

He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light. There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-14)

Statements equating God or the spiritual with light are more than symbolic. They project a literal truth that may be understood from a scientific as well as a theological perspective. Assuming there is a Creator, such a being must be more than anything created, so God is not quantified or bounded by the metaphor or by the actuality. The Greek connotations of "Father" as "Source" become illustrative of this point. In some sense, all of the universe must have been sourced from somewhere, or it has just always been. This fact is the inspiration for pantheism, but God as being an everything abstraction is not the only answer. The personness of the Creator does not need to reside in, be composed of or be totally defined by the creation.

Thus, the physical characteristics of light in its full spectrum of electromagnetic energy provide many, deep insights into the nature of God and the heavenly realms. Just as one form of light energy extends and overlaps into the next as bounded by frequencies and wavelengths, so the metaphysical dimensions extend and overlap with the physical. Just as some instruments can only measure certain segments of the light energy, just as our eyes only see the narrow bands we term visible light, one may rationally extend dimensions beyond the speed of light – beyond the reach of our best scientific instruments – and conceive of an increasing power beyond the boundaries of time called eternity.

When the metaphysical realm of the divine is literally understood as being and extension of the electromagnetic spectrum or light, then spirituality becomes digital because light is digital. Thus, Digital Spirituality is a conceptual approach to understanding the nature of things that unifies the universe as one congruent fabric of ultimate reality. There is a metaphysical continuation of what science can observe and measure in the physical realm as the electromagnetic spectrum or radiation. This means that energy levels of light exist beyond the speed of light observed. For example, my inventor friend Herbert Stollorz theorizes that the rainbow includes 5 bands of colored light visible to metaphysical beings in addition to the 7 bands we can see in the physical realm. He

has designed a number of hi-tech devices, many of which work with the electromagnetic spectrum and some of which are incorporated into particle accelerators or "atom-smashers."

Comparative Structure of Reality					
		Mystics' Seventh Heaven	Bible's Third Heaven	12 - God's Throne of Eternity	12 Dimensions / String Theory / Energy Levels
Reality Continuum	Metaphysical Realm	6	Bible's Second Heaven or the Fallen Angelic Dominion. Good angels must battle their way through this to reach humanity.	11	
		5		10	
		4		9	
		3		8	
		2		7	
		1		6	
Light Speed/ Life Force Boundary - 5					
Physical Realm		Bible's First Heaven of the Physical Universe	4 - Time		
			3 - Height		
			2 - Width		
			1 - Length		

These energy levels make up the eleven dimensions of reality postulated within the academic world of quantum physics by the string theory of everything. All of reality emanates from the twelfth level, the Father Source of All called God. Each of these eleven dimensions represents a descent in power intensity or frequency from the presence of all to the absence of all. If left alone, the universe would gradually cool to absolute zero and cease all activity according to the Second Law of Thermodynamics. The mysterious Black Holes also present the vortex of nothingness as a negative magnet to what has emanated from the start of the universe usually referred to as the Big Bang.

Therefore, the spiritual realm may be briefly summarized by stating that spiritual entities such as God or gods, angels and demons are from the parallel dimensions of the universe that can be found to exist beyond the speed of light. Many call it heaven; others consider it a parallel set of realms. Perhaps it is both and more. Physicists theorize that the multiple dimensions co-exist in an interactive gestalt structure. Subatomic particles seem to disappear from space-time's 4 dimensions and then reappear. Where do they go? It is similar to electromagnetic energy emissions that radiate across the spectrum, emitting power at all bands from infrared through visible light to ultraviolet. To all of this physical science, we need to add free will. Human beings co-create reality by their individual and collective power of decision as exercised.

What we think, say and do has impact across the spectrum of physical and metaphysical reality.

Illustrating the application of the first hypothesis, one would say that God and the righteous angels live in heaven but visit this world. When they do so, they cause disruptions or warps in the natural laws of the material universe. Some of these irregularities are referred to as miracles. Due to their rebellion, the Devil and the demons have been consigned to this temporal realm, being expelled or "fallen" from the "heaven" beyond light's speed yet they still "vibrate" at or beyond light speed and so retain their metaphysical composition and supernatural capabilities. Thus, to a human being's natural senses, there is no observable way to differentiate between a righteous or a rebellious angel - both could appear as light at manifestation but never fully materialize in substance.

Jesus made this distinction in describing His appearance to His disciples after His own bodily resurrection:

See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch
Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones
as you see that I have. (Luke 24:39)

The digital nature of light being on or off, white or black, present or absent, inspires the calling of this integration of everything, Digital Spirituality. Light is digital by design and in function. Its physical digital properties and behavior has become the foundation of many modern technological marvels in the world of nuclear science, medicine, computers, communication and entertainment. Because light is digital, it can be mapped and regulated through binary mathematics where each numeric place is either on or off, present or absent. Simplified, this is accomplished by power being present or absent, full or null, yes or no, a source or a drain (sink). Light breaks down further like a decision tree because the null force of the dark or black energy is stable or neutral. Similarly, the nucleus of an atom is made up of positively charged protons and neutrally charged neutrons. The neutrality of the null or off position means that it is composed of equally powerful positive and negative charges.

In the Bible, God possesses eternity in a state of pure and undefiled love. As Creator, he is the ultimate source of all light and power. He is "on" or "yes" - otherwise known as the "fullness of the presence." The other spiritual power is the "off" or "null" - the lord of the dark light, which itself is composed equally of an indivisible mixture of good and evil. In other words, the dark light is itself digital, being the next step down in the energy hierarchy.

Balanced to nothingness, this spirit of light and darkness cyclically powers the material universe. Known as the life force, it is commonly symbolized by the female-male, dark-light, yin-yang. Since fallen angels have been cut off from direct access to the eternal light of God's throne in heaven, they need to get power through some indirect source or "black" light, being defined as consuming and absorbing light into a metaphysical void analogous to astronomy's black holes. To the mortals in the material dimension the light side of the life force or dark light looks the same as the light of God, which is the structural basis of all spiritual deception.

No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds. (2Corinthians 11:14-15)

Thus, God represents an autonomous, independent source of light, while angels are dependant on an external source of power. The obedient angels absorb "good" or "white" spiritual light directly coming from God's presence and rebellious angels tap into that power indirectly through the life force, which comes from God in some way. The operational survival of fallen angels obliges them to steal the "black or dark" aspect of light energy's spiritual derivative in the universe of space-time, which is also the spiritual spark that empowers biological life. The life force is the spiritual essence that makes the difference between life and death running in parallel with what can be observed and known about life's metabolism by using scientific instruments and methods.

Evil and Good Defined

That which steals life from another is evil. It is evil whether the theft is one of property or of the life force. The spiritually predatory activity of depleting the "light" side of the life force in both human and beast exacerbates negative, depressive or rebellious feelings, illness, and/or evil thoughts and deeds. The demonic predation of material life gives the fallen angels something like a "high" even as it enables them to survive and operate.

If the theft of life is complete, it obviously results in the death of the victim. It is this spiritually predatory activity of depleting the "light" aspect of the life force of both human and beast exacerbates evil thoughts and deeds even as it enables the fallen angels and their servant beings to survive and operate. They are driven by the same needs of self-preservation as we experience on earth because their existence is an earth-bound realm of spirituality.

In the natural universe, evil has become almost universally associated with darkness, which is the result of light energy's removal or absorption. This stolen/absorbed light energy enables fallen angels to operate. It is usable because the life force is the thermodynamic derivative of the full spectrum of metaphysical and physical energy that residually remains from God's original creation of the observable, natural universe from the "nothing" of His power transferred from beyond light speed. It is through the recycling of natural matter and energy that God designed a self-sustaining universe of seemingly long to eternal duration. Most astrophysicists believe that the universe's clock will eventually wind down according to the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Even the speed of light exhibits a slowing down.

It follows that good spirituality is not dependant upon taking life from another – in whole or in part. Ultimate goodness is life well lived in the genuine expression of a love that is unselfishly unconditional and undemanding. Such spirituality does not generate external needs at the expense of others. It exemplifies the principle that life engenders life – in whole or in part. It gives without loss or creation of a needy self.

Healthy spirituality is as concerned with and contributes to the growth and well-being of others in balance with self because the lives of all are priceless and thus incomparable. They will not be subjected to the devaluation of commodified exchange. With healthy spirituality, material considerations are separated from the person's identity as far as temporality is separated from eternity.

Many cultures, past and present, teach spiritual principles of a life force shared by humans and animals. The life force is the physical dimension's spiritual energy presently vibrating at the speed of light, which is also known in eastern traditions as *ki*, *chi* or *prana*. The names and specific characteristics may vary, but the primary characteristics and core functionality of the life force transcend ethnicity and religious tradition. Understanding and balancing the life force provides a key entry point to spirituality that I term Natural Spirituality. Due to the pervasive influence of Greek philosophy, western religious traditions have obscured the biblical references to the life force and confused it with the concept of an independently animated consciousness called a soul. The Bible plainly reveals its presence when read in the original Hebrew and then Greek.

I have presented this brief overview of a real and not merely perceived universe built on a Judeo-Christian biblical foundation to illustrate a reasonably rational possibility that the world or realm of the spiritual just might not be ignorant imaginations dreamed up to explain what is presently unexplained by science. It is a matter of perspective in one way and so much more than that in another. From any side, it can be seen as an issue of ignorance. Science may be ignorant of the realm beyond light's speed, and the primitive may be ignorant of scientific explanations or principles derived from systematic examination and repetitious testing.

Spiritual Encounters

Faith is a spiritual tool that works. Human faith is spiritually neutral in nature. It does not discriminate in what it can work on. By itself, human faith is neither good nor evil. It may produce works of the flesh, works of humanitarian kindness or even the state of righteous grace. How faith works and what it can yield when wielded is determined by the metaphysical context in which it is applied or exercised as well as by the source of its inspiration; therefore, simply believing in a spiritual truth or event is not proof of its validity or even that it actually occurred. The human capacity for misplaced faith is the source for our individual and societal proclivity of embracing artificial realities from collector or investor valuation frenzies (bubbles) to miraculous healings of psychosomatic conditions.

Some spiritual encounters just happen. No one is looking for them to appear, but they do. Spirit beings have their own agendas, and they do not necessarily depend upon human faith to execute their missions. This type of genuine, uninvited spiritual encounters is rare, which is why they become the stuff of religion. I term such spiritual events Pneumagenic Spirituality because they are generated by the spirit being(s) or force itself.

Throughout human history, people have sought answers to their questions and problems from the other side. Perhaps they wanted to know the future. Perhaps they wanted to heal some disease or injury. Because

spiritual matters cannot be directly and objectively understood by applying the scientific method, there has always been a perceived need by ordinary humans to have some kind of help to initiate spiritual encounters. This necessity of third party professionals (such as priests, priestesses, mediums and shamans) to gain insight and/or entry into the realm of the spirit has always proved to be problematic. Due to the individually experiential nature of most spiritual encounters, issues of dependability, honesty and verifiability automatically are a part of a searcher-initiated encounter. These problems also plague the academic researcher. They arise whether one is dealing with material aids, recorded knowledge or human experts and agents.

In some cases those seeking initiation into a spiritual circle may receive the opportunity for a spiritual experience or encounter from a master teacher or "guru" who provides a mediating link into the realm of the metaphysically unknown. In the most remarkable spiritual experiences, the encounter's impact extends beyond an individual to embrace and involve the lives of others. This extension to third party inclusion may consist of the simple presence of one other person, a small group or even a large audience of witnesses who stand outside the circle of a focal person's or group's encounter. Sometimes those who make up the circumference may themselves perceive and participate in the spiritual atmospherics as participant observers of the encounter.

Now this is not to say that every "spiritual" encounter is real. Some are purposefully faked by professional "spiritual mediums or guides" in order to defraud the ingenious of their money. Besides an experience of some inexplicable or awesome natural phenomenon, the sensed or imagined spiritual encounter could simply be a mental condition psycho-chemically induced or emotionally imagined.

Perhaps the most common source of confusion in identifying a bona fide spiritual encounter derives from general ignorance about spirituality. There are a lot of sincere, self-deluded people who will represent something to the searcher as being a spiritual activity, charm or event when it is nothing of the sort. Others are unwittingly introduced to potentially harmful spiritual encounters. Some of these introductions are purposed in spite of know dangers because a victim may be desired for some dark ritual mandated by another person's perceived need or desire for power. More commonly the searcher participates in an activity or thought behavior that is purportedly used to approach the metaphysical realm, but the net effect to him or her ends up being, "Is that it? Is that all?"

The point is that at best, not everything in the world of spirituality is as it seems, and matters are made worse when not everything presented as spiritual is genuinely so. Altogether, the more you mix these theoretical matters with true encounters, the more difficult the search becomes. This difficulty drives the searcher to seek help in his or her quest, which, unquestionably, often leads to a certain amount of deceit and disappointment.

Naturally, this kind of experience sours the search for spirituality, often to the point of terminating it or deciding that it is not worth the material and/or psycho-emotional cost. To both young and old discouraged victims of spiritual deception, the existence, validity and desirability of

spirituality evaporates. For them human life becomes devalued, limited and bitterly disappointing. Bitter disappointment may be followed by hopelessness. Habitual hopelessness leads to a loss of engaged vitality, and one's personal identity may be swallowed by a passing emptiness, a void of destroying darkness that exists to consume the unique beings of humanness.

Hope Remains

Yet, there does remain a naturalistic spiritual dimension to life, which is readily accessible to almost everyone: we are universally rejuvenated deeply from contact with the "wonders" of the natural world. The exact nature of the renewal experience varies - as does the experience itself. Such psychospiritual renewal is demonstrably real. It is palpable, and its effects on us can be measured as well as perceived personally. From underwater swims with manatees or whales to the panoramic view of the world from a mountain top at sunset, biological life is a wondrous miracle barely explained by all that advanced scientific research has to offer. I call this kind of phenomena Natural Spirituality, and a real spiritual force empowers it.

Recent medical research is beginning to provide scientific substantiation for the efficacy of many "alternative" methods of healing. The Bible and many other religious and/or philosophic writings from around the world discuss the neutrally balanced spirituality of this natural life force under various names and contexts. It is one of the exemplary areas where scientific and spiritual research is converging. In this meeting, some of the misbeliefs on each side are gratefully lost to the truths being proven.

The balancing and application of this mysterious will to life is a central principle in many approaches to natural healing of body, mind and soul. Although "alternative" healing therapies usually come bundled with a philosophical or religious context, they are in fact universally neutral when the practitioner's focus is on balancing the powers of the life force in order to enhance the biological health of the patient.

I will discuss this aspect of spirituality later in more depth. For example, one should distinguish between natural life force therapy of mind and body versus the so-called "soul" therapy that may accompany alternative health practices. The difference between the two is that the use of natural spirituality (life force enhancement) in health applications is intrinsically different from the pneumagenic encounters and operations that are utilized in reading, monitoring and treating the health of one's "soul." It is also different from the transformational interaction with the divine Spirit of God.

As binary mathematics have helped us to better understand and access the natural universe through digital technology, digital spirituality will provide the binary perspective to understanding the spiritual universe - what it is and how it works in your life or the lives of others. However, to begin with perhaps the clearest way to continue in our search for spirituality is to first define what spirituality is not.

Spirituality is not materialism.

Chapter 2 - What is Materialism?

ma·te·ri·al·ism *n.*

1. Philosophy. The theory that physical matter is the only reality and that everything, including thought, feeling, mind, and will, can be explained in terms of matter and physical phenomena.
2. The theory or attitude that physical well-being and worldly possessions constitute the greatest good and highest value in life.
3. A great or excessive regard for worldly concerns.¹

I contrast materialism with spirituality for the purpose of communication and as a stimulus to clarity of thought. The reason for our human inclination to focus on the socially created value of things is not, and can never be, solely an issue of matter, energy and scientific laws in its origin or empowerment. My discussion of materialism does not intend, nor do I promote the rejection of the natural world of matter, although artificial things made of matter are the focus of a materialistic mind as are various mental constructs or imagined realities.

The material world is real. It is not an illusion except where the dimension of time becomes illusory in the face of eternity. Our natural lives are materially real, yet their consequences are profound with potential eternal impact. Human beings are fleshly, biological beings born in a materially physical universe and animated by a natural spiritual force we recognize as life. This life force is the fifth dimension (after length, breadth, depth and time) from our mortal perspective but only the lowest or first level of "heaven." The life force probably vibrates at the speed of light, which gives it the quality of eternity without losing contact with the natural universe thus being also a part of it. The life force animates and sustains the physical universe as a permeable border between it and the eternal metaphysical reality.

Because we are composed of matter, people interact with the material realities of the physical universe but are also dependant upon and connected to the fifth dimension of the life force. I believe that this is also the zone of mortal human consciousness. In other words, our minds leave creative memory impressions in the force fields of the life force. The fifth dimensional life force is generically recognized as the spiritual plane of life. The level of consciousness varies from person to person, and animals, which are also animated by this same natural spiritual force, may also be aware of spiritual phenomena – sometimes even more readily so than humans. The truth of these observations is self evident when one is confronted with the immediate and dramatic difference between a living person and a dead body. One may weigh them both and get the same answer, but life is intangibly absent. It is more than an electrically charged nervous system: it involves the presence

¹ **The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition.** Retrieved November 04, 2006, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/materialism>.

of spiritual energy – the *prana* or *chi* of Eastern religions and philosophies.

Human beings and their relationships complex themselves beyond material satisfaction. A materialistic worldview always generates spiritual issues and spiritual issues mandate consequences requiring spiritual solutions - despite the observable and measurable positive impact it may have on one's quality of life or on the health of a society. Spiritual issues arise because human nature intrinsically possesses a spiritual dimension that cannot be successfully managed or satisfied by materialism. Elaborate exchange mechanisms exist to meet psychosocial and biological needs, but they cannot grow a person towards a level of unconditional love often associated with spirituality. This is the crux of the phenomenon and explains why a society consumed by materialism evidences such a profound thirst for spirituality.

A rejection of materialism does not equate to a rejection of wealth or prosperity, but the materialistic attitudes of people do create illusions of wealth where a few benefit at the expense of many. While poverty is ever present in the experience of humanity, one of the chief indicators of a materialistic society is a gross imbalance in the distribution of its wealth. Excessive imbalances in the distribution of wealth will, in time, demand a return towards equilibrium. Excessive imbalance is intuitively different from the natural differentiation of life circumstances. Inequality in its exterior measurement will always be with us. Life is indeed neither fair nor equal in its serendipitous situations, challenges and endowments. It owes us nothing but blesses us with everything within a world of disabilities and opportunities.

Gross imbalances in the distribution of wealth exist because a society led or governed by those with a materialistic worldview is blind to the source of its poverty; therefore, it cannot prevent materialism's fatally infectious spread even though its leaders may treat the symptoms of poverty with welfare relief. (Please note: I am consciously using the term "excessive" from a subjective perspective. Also, "social leaders" may mean religious, governmental, sports or entertainment personalities, etc.)

An enduring liberty requires some measure of independent wealth in the form of private property and worth in the value of being a person. Liberty always evidences the practice of sound spiritual principles by a people; therefore, a wealth that endures and blesses is materialistic in its tangibility but spiritual in functional purpose. It is the kind of honest and healthy spirituality that consistently and always promotes the great liberties of seeking truth and love, which are pillars of good, healthy spirituality.

To understand the deceit of materialism, one must learn how to find its core - the heart of the matter so to speak. Any search for understanding, regardless of topic, is essentially no different in method or madness than that which seeks to understand spirituality and materialism. The materialistic core is most readily revealed in how the inanimate nature of the things desired are associated and/or combined with their socially constructed value or worth in the eyes of a culture's children. Every culture has children, regardless of age. In today's world of global com-

munications and interaction, we are often the children of several overlapping and intersecting cultures. Discerning the areas of their impact provides an effective competitive edge in the formulation of marketing strategy.

The Birth Default

Some choices are made for us by default at birth. We are born members of our family, community and nation from which we inherit a particular subset of these factors' socio-economic structures and status. These defaults greatly impact where we materially start off in life as well as determining the spiritual context of our childhood. We do not choose them, but we do choose how we interact with our birth defaults. As we grow, we select our own personal preferences within these larger entities. We form our lives from subsets of sets and subcultures of over-cultures in order to align and integrate our personal identity in a synthesis that both conforms with and opposes what is typical of the whole culture.

Sometimes an individual will jump out of the pot of his or her own culture and into the frying pan of another one. Such a radical change commonly occurs on a temporary basis as a person explores his or her identity. Although some individuals get stuck in the process of self-exploration, truly permanent changes in cultural allegiance are difficult and rarely successful enough to provide lasting personal satisfaction; however, significant shifts in cultural identity do occur in the lives of singularly remarkable people.

Regardless of our conscious choices, every person still ends up with competing, interacting and interlocking memberships in multiple human cultural complexes or systems. We are constantly pulled in different directions by these competing cultures. Mostly we deal with these divergent pressures without taking the time to make objectively detached decisions. We do not thoughtfully analyze these competing sociocultural influences because we are rarely aware of what is going on underneath the surface of our lives in the subconscious reserves of our brains - much less our souls.

This subliminal confusion erodes liberty and prosperity because such can only be actively guarded and protected by conscious exercise of spiritual principles seemingly in opposition to materialistic advantage. Many wise men and women have written on the necessity for a vigilant, educated and spiritually oriented citizenry in order that a people retain liberty and prosperity. Such conscious living by nature puts materialistic values at risk once they are sacrificed to sacred principles that value the non-materially defined worth of life over the comfortable pleasant-ries proffered by materialism's false promise.

Spiritually living a life of creative liberty and prosperity means embracing the risks thereof. It requires accepting a potential to certain loss of that which is valued by materialistic living, such as the accumulation of ego extending and sustaining power and wealth. Other risks might include rejecting the temptation to surrender a measure of liberty for the temporary security of some government guarantee. Today's trend in society also favors a life that is socially insured against physical hardship.

Although it might provide a medically extended biological existence, there is a price for coddling a consciousness caught in the alluring offer of illusory protection against a society's or a person's real or imagined fears.

Consumerism

Materialism panders to irrational fears and perceived needs. One such personal need of universal nature is to know who we are. Materialism has answered this question through consumerism. In today's consumer culture, one's personal identity is established through a purchased or acquired set of external, behavior-based patterns reflected in the ownership and display of things from homes and cars to tattoos and torn clothes. This external assemblage of accessories is purchased to mask perceived natural imperfections by conveying an image that reflects the self-selected illusion of one's true nature.

A materialistic personal identity is found in the pattern of choices purchased. The culture of consumerism merchandises the indirect purchase of a personal identity based on behavior and accessorized appearance. Thus, materialism substitutes a spiritually hollow identity defined by stuff possessed and consumed for an identity uniquely created through and expressed in the richness of and depth of one's character as may be expressed in an unselfish concern for others that cherishes life in its uniquely particular expression.

The materialist identity is not innovatively creative in the formation of who he or she is as a person because the externals purchased are designed, produced and marketed by others. A healthy spiritual identity is created by the spiritual potential latent within each person to love. The materialist approach of externals hides a bankrupt inner being that contrasts with the spiritual definition of personal identity as a richly complex, uniquely created internal state of being that is traditionally referred to as character.

A person's eternal spiritual identity may be creatively forged only in the fires of the trials suffered in the practice of truly honest love. Honest or unconditional love seeks the spiritual health and growth of another or others. Unconditional love may mature out of the natural balance of conditional love. It does not exhibit the false humility of self-suffocation or inflict any sociopathic abuse upon others, which among other evils, are the fruits of deviant or unbalanced conditional love.

Conditional love is a purely exchange-based relationship that values others only in how another person is functionally (materially) useful to him or her. In balance, conditional love forms the pragmatic basis for most social systems. When conditional love becomes unbalanced, social problems arise. Consequently, sociopaths practice a particularly distorted form of conditional love to the point of obviously treating other people as commodities valued only from the perspective of the sociopath's benefit or harm. While sociopaths obviously abuse human relationships, many societies indirectly do the same.

A materialist cultural system integrates people as if they were replaceable parts based on perceived functional benefits or outputs to society instead of recognizing the immense spiritual value of each individual. By this definition, our modern globalized culture of secular materialism produces social outcomes skewed in a sociopathic direction.

The Social Problems of Materialism

Materialism is a progressive disease that hollows out the creative worth and vitality of life. Its gradualism is one of materialism's primary deceptions. American materialism began over two hundred years ago growing as the grassy weeds do among the early shoots of wheat. Just as months must pass before one can clearly see the fruitful difference between the two, so many decades of US history separate that nation's causes of wealth from its enjoyment of it. The cultural consequences of living by secular materialist values are not obvious enough yet to stimulate a broad national shift to the spiritual. For those with eyes to see, the evidence is plain. Although there are some exceptions, most folks will not change how they live their lives until forced to do so by some emergency.

Just as the majority does not pay attention to their diet until they have a heart attack, the American superculture will not shift directions until she suffers her inevitable comedown. America's inexorable and inevitable hour of trial will come. It will brutally thresh the once green field to separate the good, fat kernels of grain from the wasted blades of inedible cover crop hay, which will be chewed up and spat out of the combine of divine judgment that has been the natural life cycle of nations and cultures from before history began.

Let me give you one example of how US public policy fails recognize that materialist solutions do not solve social problems. Evidence for the truth of this observation is found in the fact that increased levels of funding for public education do not produce increased quality of results. American students today know less about the wholeness of life and the society that they live in. They are less motivated to do the hard work of necessity and creativity than ever before. Instead, they have absorbed the materialistic desire to be rich over the character values of how one becomes successful. The attainment of wealth is more important than how it was come by as proved by the growth in illegal scams, legalized fraud, lotteries and gambling. The latter have become socially acceptable entertainment pursuits as well as enormously popular drivers of local economic growth. In response, institutions of higher learning have increasingly emphasized ethics in their business classes with questionable results.

From a systems level evaluation of society, public education serves secular purposes resulting in the destruction of our social fabric. Its primary functional purpose is to provide an inefficient day prison for youth with the potential by-product of education. It makes it possible for both parents to earn salaries subjected to our governments' oppressive tax burdens. The politicians demand their pound of flesh before working citizens can even meet their reasonable requirements for housing, food and clothing. By design our present education system sepa-

rates children and parents from each other for most of the day – every workday!

This chosen separation, preferred because of apparent and real economic necessity, stunts the spiritual growth and character development of our children. A child's engagement in substantial and daily family interaction is one of the most important agents for enabling liberty and stimulating positive spiritual growth. Because of the multi-generational absence of familial health, we have reached an era where parents view themselves as incapable of educating their own children practically, morally or spiritually. They cannot themselves pass on what they did not receive. Instead, family life has become increasingly irresponsible and violently fractious.

Parents set abominable examples to their children. First, more than half the children do not live with both of their birth parents. Many never married to begin with. Other parents are addicted to drugs or wasting their little free time on selfishly empty material pursuits or immoral entertainment instead of engaging their parental opportunities and duties. Their hypocrisy has dovetailed with the trends of mass society to create an avalanche of addictions that could probably fill an early education alphabet book, "A is for Alcoholic, B is for..." Unfortunately, no, "B" is not for "Bucolic."

The Plague of Addiction

Only about 70% of high school students graduate in the United States. Most drop out either because school is boring, abusive and dangerous, or because the student experiences a personal crisis ranging from an unplanned pregnancy to criminal arrest and/or drug addiction. Any and all of these factors are strong symptoms of a spiritually starved society. Solutions to these kinds of problems will never be found in an exclusively secular set of materialistic programs and policies. Publicly financed and administered programs will only deliver minimal levels of success more dependant on individual initiative than on the psychological and social guidance provided by various kinds of social welfare programs.

This is why the federal government has shifted to "faith-based" providers. Strong arguments have been made that this kind of government policy potentially compromises religious freedom, which I would tend to agree with. Even more obvious is that the secular humanist political system is using religious institutions to cover up its own poor results without admission of its empty, yet politically correct, philosophy of materialism's failure. When will the public wake up to the fact that a materialistic approach to solving social and psychological problems has nearly bankrupted US and state treasuries?

The spiritually desiccating winds of materialism have dried the souls of western civilization and driven its deceived denizens into the deserts of addicting thirsts. Without souls at peace, people seek satisfaction through sensual excess. Drug trafficking will never end until the demand dries up. The demand will never dry up until society changes and embraces a spiritually based lifestyle. Addictions of any kind are poor substitutes for healthy spirituality. They satisfy only temporarily

and come at great physical and social costs. Addiction is even more destructive to the formation of creative individual identities expressive of the liberty of love. The falsely energizing highs of cocaine and meth will never satisfy the spiritual fulfillment that human consciousness craves.

Addictions come in many different forms. Anything that excites or accelerates natural hormones and pheromones that make humans feel good, really alive, happy, sensually perceptive or mentally extended to superior awareness can become addictive. Adrenalin stimulation is a primary addiction in extreme sports. Sexual promiscuity combines psychological as well as biological stimulation that can quickly become selfishly focused and damaging to others' lives with huge consequences from sterility to death. The huge rise in the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases within the general population should give some clue that our modern practices fly in the face of natural spirituality and the biological laws built into human beings. Moreover, the millions of aborted babies testify of the public's devaluation of human life and respect for its precious potential.

Besides being a vital sign measuring a culture's health, human sexual mores and practices are windows into a person's true spiritual self. All addiction and obsessively stimulated highs are sensual substitutes for spiritual experience. They source some of the material forms of spirituality. One of the key insights I will explore in these pages is what natural science reveals about spiritual reality. I will share how natural forces, laws and environmental settings reveal spiritual insights because the physical and metaphysical realities are one interwoven fabric. Through the natural consequences of our attitudes and actions, the physical universe is designed to encourage humans to do the right thing spiritually.

The Corporate Education Trap

Returning to my example of public educational failure, successful young people are herded into college programs to learn at high cost what high school didn't teach them (but used to less than 40 years ago). Instead of graduating from high school and entering community life with all of its relational lessons and opportunities to mature as unique persons, the explicit curriculum of the post secondary educational system tells parents and students that going to college is the road to success in life. Public education's implicit curriculum enslaves its participants with philosophies that are intellectually narrow to bankrupt.

Furthermore, today's high cost of higher education encumbers young adults with burdensome debts that obligate them upon graduation to take any available job at the expense of choice. (Only a minority seem to end up working in the areas of their majors.) College is often the first link in the ever-lengthening gold-plated chain of economic bondage that plagues our modern materialistic society. Instead of being paid off, student loans are replaced by consumer debt so that the younger generations will never fully get out from under the original debt burden. These educational catch-up debts just become transformed into financial obligations of a different name.

This economic addiction to rollover refinance defers reality on both an individual and societal level. Whenever any problem is removed by time and context from its cause, it becomes more difficult to recognize and solve. This is true both for a person and for a society. While individuals and families often face obvious financial challenges and can get some credit management help, it takes a longer time and more extreme circumstances for a society to recognize and address the fact that it is bankrupt. But a day of reckoning does eventually come to societies even as it does for its members. What is true for our society in regards to economics and finance is even more true when it comes to spirituality.

The modern western education system also enslaves us to a reduced level of consciousness. "Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" rings hollow. It is not much more than an ancient quote from an iconic document once spiritually potent that does not describe our evolving secular materialist society. The competitive drivers of survival in global society demand high performance with 24/7 attention. Higher education may prepare students to be suitable employees capable of highly specialized task execution for a number of years, but it usually does so at the expense of spiritual growth and its liberation of a uniquely personal creative identity.

Corporate survival commits employees to a constant devotion to task duties until they break from mental and/or physical exhaustion. Winners in this professional marathon can get robbed of lifestyle rewards by the demands of more responsibility, opportunity and reward in greater power, wealth and/or status. At best the average employee may get to enjoy some years of retirement before being confined to an expensive eldercare commercial system, which inexorably eats up whatever savings there may be. It also takes away any inheritance from the family, although some of that financial penalty comes about because of their non-involvement in each other's lives.

To meet global competition, citizens are herded into focused educational programs designed to channel students' time into intense specialized training without the liberating context of the big picture of life's purpose, responsibilities and creative potential. Exhausted by our busyness, whatever free time we have becomes quickly absorbed in a costly maze of entertainment options that dull the intellectual consciousness in favor of sensual exploration and satisfaction for a cumulative price so high that only the addicted will pay it. Those millions who fail to handle these sensual lures effectively end up in and out of prison for various crimes committed in the pursuit of providing for their sensual and emotional addictions.

Thus, the freedom inherent to a life too precious to price has been lost or stolen in the chaos of commodified global materialism. Most people's lives have become mere commodities worth only what a devaluing currency can buy in exchange for specified hours of their biological lives, usually in some form of labor. The surplus capital necessary for economic freedom is only accumulated by the few. A small minority of wise individuals design and implement personally unique, counter-balancing strategies vis-à-vis the system. This approach provides them with the potentially liberating opportunity to pursue and enjoy the spiritual fullness of life. Sadly, most people who achieve such sur-

pluses in time and money eagerly plunge further into the deadly trap of excess, which only intensifies their enslavement to global materialism's temporal illusion.

I do not believe in the strategic compartmentalization of life. Pre-occupation with a particular area of focus can be a useful tactic to attain short-term goals, but it does not qualify as successful life philosophy. An examined and broadly integrated consciousness of multiple interests and activities is the healthiest and happiest approach to our appointed days. If your personal scope of interests is too limited, you will lack the innovative flexibility to survive in our rapidly changing world in a way that preserves the liberty of person and freedom of choice. Liberty requires that a philosophic and material balance govern our interactions with this world system of globalized politics and economics.

The key management concept here is balance, and the point and make-up of that balance differs from person to person. Great prosperity or success always comes with the increased challenge to retain balance. There is a hidden price to those who "make it big," and the challenges of imbalance come in different ways. Corruption creeps in through three primary doors: wealth, fame and power. Those who fail in any one of these areas will experience an even more intensely complex form of slavery that requires them to sell out their fellow humans to secure and protect their temporary perks of power, property and prestige. Those who successfully avoid corruption may experience positive spiritual life.

I hope that you are beginning to see just how critical balanced spiritual health is to a society's beneficial operation. While world history gives example after example of these principles of materialism and spirituality, at this point in time these lessons particularly apply to the United States of America because it is the dominant national culture that shapes Globalism around the world. The American ways of business, entertainment and material lifestyle is desired and imitated around the world.

American Cultural Materialism

The culture of the United States possesses a foundation of spiritual gold and silver. Subsequent generations have worked diligently to move the mansion of our republic off of its solid foundation. In fact, modern America is almost completely separated from its constitutional grounding and now precariously rests over a deep abyss of vain philosophies with her super structure supported by collapsing walls of sand. In other words, the mansion of America has become the most pretentious out-house on the planet. It is only a matter of time and occasion before it falls into the smelly mess waiting for her at the bottom of the sand pit.

Why? Because American society has made materialism its central value. This is what the world sees and what the world imitates. Indeed, for those who will study our society we have valuable lessons of both triumph and embarrassment for everyone enamored with her power, her economic vitality and seeming liberty. But America's liberties have been, and continue to be, mortgaged away bit by bit in order to protect the material benefits, wealth and social security of her citizens' im-

mediate mortal comfort. Temporal, prosperity is favored over spiritual health and wealth, and the youth of the United States will pay a very heavy material price for her abandoned spiritual heritage.

An over-culture of governmentally acceptable, all embracing, shallow and controllable *faux* multiculturalism is favored over the religious and constitutional values that engendered the present power and economic position of the United States in the world. This progressive degeneration continues, and most are oblivious to it because they do not see with spiritual eyes. Neither does the world at large. Our blindness is due to the mass abandonment of what were once commonly held spiritual values. (Ten Commandments anyone?) Even our material economy is rotten at the core due to a massive indebtedness incurred by the consumptive and impatient acquisition of questionable luxuries and ephemeral military power.

To return to the parable introduced above, the population of the United States is like vast acreage of mixed wheat and tares/grass. The only way to protect or favor the wheat over the unfruitful grasses before harvest is to pull the grass by hand carefully in small quantities. This presumes the proper identified and discernment between the two by the workers. But harvesting in love and grace by hand is impossible due to the immensity of the harvest. A harvest of national scope requires the use of mass scale mechanical harvesters or of chemical treatments applied by airborne crop dusters. In history, such harvests are equated with the decline and fall of nations. In the Bible, it is the judgment detailed in the ancient prophets of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel or Zechariah as well as the AD 90s prophecies against Roman Babylon in the Apocalypse of Jesus given to the apostle John.

In practical application, this means that we may not be able to change the world or our nation by personally embracing a life founded on good spiritual values and principles. It does mean that we can change the circumstances and experiences of our personal lives and perhaps those around us. Honestly practiced spirituality is guaranteed to positively impact at least some of those around you. Just don't worry about precisely who or how much. That is God's work through you, and it is a work about which one can only possess partial knowledge.

The Importance of Knowing Ourselves

A materialistic perspective precludes an awareness of what is going on underneath the surface of our lives. We may be theoretically unaware that subconscious reservoirs exist within a person's brain, mind or what is sometimes called a soul, but most of us do not have a clue about the specifics of our own spiritual health. This subliminal ignorance and confusion erodes love, liberty and prosperity because such can only be actively guarded and protected by conscious exercise of spiritual principle seemingly in opposition to materialistic advantage.

This necessity places your individual responsibility at the heart of the matter. I do not suggest that each of us is responsible for a whole society's pre-occupation with material goals and values, but each of us is indeed responsible for how we participate in or interact with our social context. We must take responsibility for our decisions, whether

they be active or passive in nature. Our powerful capacity to make decisions is a primary characteristic of our humanness and the key to better management of our personal "worlds" as well as the public planet. By birth we inherit a necessary responsibility for the natural world with all of its plants, animals and resources of energy and minerals.

Thus, materialism is also a system of social choices wherein the underlying philosophic principle places value on the things tangible (a spacious mansion) and intangible (the status and identity messages of that mansion's style) of this world, as delimited by space-time. Other examples of things tangible and intangible of this world could be gold and fame. The first comes from and returns to the earth, and the second comes and passes with the wind.

Regardless of the specifics, materialism is a system of processing life participated in by persons, families, communities, regions and nations. Its practice is evidenced in the laws, customs, norms and motivation of the subject(s). Where dominant, materialistic themes direct the general topics or focus of attention in all the social media, it affects every kind of art and literature, consumption behavior, the chosen or desired entertainment and the focus of gossip spread or shared.

Materialism is an everyday valuation of the things gained from life as opposed to cherishing life for intrinsically being as it is lived. Materialism pursues the evidences of life, the good or successful life, the yes-this-is-me-alive kind of life, instead of the satisfaction of being alive, of discovering one's core purpose, holiness and/or joys of one life given but meant to be shared in love.

Materialism at its core is a way of life that is driven by fear instead of one drawn by love. It is the anxious turmoil of insatiability versus the knowing peace of fullness becoming perfected. Materialism is the idolization of life instead of its veneration. It is the empty grasp for the Creator that latches on to piece after piece of the Creation. Each piece obtained represents a temporally satisfying, self-delusional substitute for the real thing simply and exactly because it can be caught, controlled and experienced - at least for a time. The spiritual life is free from this forced bondage and rests in the eternal reality of becoming a creator.

Materialism is also where we value our personal convenience and objectives over the life of another or lives of others. It could be the obvious pursuit to attain an advantage of wealth, status or position, which would seem to provide the security of personal survival in a state of comfortable prosperity and "success." It could be a less obvious and more complex issue such as a seemingly inconvenient pregnancy and a decision to sacrifice a new life barely begun so that the present one might continue unencumbered in its pursuit of some set of personal desires or objectives valued more highly. By both decisions life is commodified and devalued.

This is not to say that the seekers of the spiritual should always sacrifice themselves under every situation of choice. Yes, spirituality does require the sacrifice of material values or selfish objectives in favor of life, and no, spirituality is more difficult than that. It is a sensitive balancing act because life itself is a dynamic and not a static.

For example, under certain situations, abortion may be a spiritually balanced decision, but a more spiritually balanced decision would have been to prevent conception in the first place. Perhaps the most spiritual decision would be to only engage in sexual relations where committed love is evident and where the potential or unplanned fruit of coitus would be a creation both desired and welcomed - if perhaps not at first, certainly later upon reflection and adjustment to such a change of life. However, the fact is that we live in a very imperfect world in which sexual intercourse may take place under less than ideal circumstances, a fact that initiates various moral dilemmas - particularly for women.

These observations are neither new nor unique to me. An awareness of human nature's predilection to materialism in one's self and/or in others has been noted by many wise men and women down through the ages. They have written on the necessity for a vigilant, educated, and spiritually oriented citizenry as a prerequisite for the preservation of liberty and prosperity. Such responsibly conscious living by nature puts materialism at risk when balanced against a set of sacred principles that value the non-materially defined essence of life over the pleasant promises proffered by the potential satisfaction of physical sensations possible in the material world.

Artificial Reality

To a certain extent, each of us lives in a material world of our own creation; therefore, to a varying degree we each perceive and experience the physical universe through the lens of an artificial reality of human design and acceptance. The creation of any artificial reality is a joint effort between the observer and those who are responsible for the context of interaction, or even the totality of the culture. Every human construct of reality is more or less truly real, and that is what makes the search for spirituality so difficult. Our misperceptions of what is real are not internally distinguishable from what is truly real. This quality of mental imagination works on physical matters as well on metaphysical ones, and its expression naturally varies from person to person. What is cold to one is hot to another. What tastes yummy to one is too spicy for another, etc.

While this human proclivity to imagination is problematic at times, it also provides reasons to rejoice and celebrate. From human imagination has come all of the good things of life as well as the most terrible. Creativity is the essence of humanity. We create environments; we do not just modify them! This is the huge divide between the most intelligent animals and humans.

Yes indeed, animals have drawn pictures. They have signed and communicated with us in simple language. They learn from and teach each other, too, but in their natural setting without overt human contact, any environmental modification by animals is derived from some aspect connected to survival enhancement within their native biomes. Animals do not create artificial environments or realities. The more exceptional capabilities of the most intelligent species have been observed in cultural environments constructed by humans to encourage such learned and artistic behaviors

I have concluded that this capacity for creativity, to imagine from nothing and build our own environments according to such creative vision is part of the spiritual make-up of the human mind. Within the realm of human creativity, I include the capacity for government and administration as well as artificial symbol creation and manipulation such as language as part of what I consider the natural creative capacity of human beings. Thus, civilization's inherently indivisible production of good and evil artistic creativity and political government systems may be intrinsically attributed to human nature.

For our topic, this natural capacity of the mind complicates the search for spirituality because we can imagine spiritual experiences so realistically that our brains have trouble distinguishing a true spiritual experience from that we might wish for, imagine, desire or dream. If a person lives in an imagined world too estranged from reality as perceived by the rest of his culture, then he or she may be considered mentally afflicted instead of spiritual. Other presumed realities are more easily confirmed or proven wrong. Someone who believes that he is the world's greatest quarterback has a real world setting, a real football game with two teams of real people, in which his boasts can be tested under real conditions. By the fact of limited life expectancy, any person's artificial reality has limited impact and usually has an excellent chance of being challenged at sometime, or even often, within the course of real world social interaction.

When a whole society or culture embraces an artificial reality, you must deal with mass delusion on a scale that does not always lend itself to a gentle wake-up call. Just look at the experience of Nazi Germany, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or the past experience of anyone who has escaped from a communal religious cult. In each case individual persons were held captive by a distorted ideology promulgated by a large number of people who controlled the power of government and/or with a near monopoly in theology.

An example of a material artificial reality jointly shared by individuals and large groups comes from the worlds of finance and trade. Different brand names, product categories and currencies are traded according to different perceptions of worth. A number of financial tools are utilized to measure and express those perceptions from interest and exchange rates to the price of gold and other essential commodities. When it comes to finished products, some people will only pay \$15.00 or less for a pair of jeans while others are looking for fashion statements at \$200.00 or more. These original prices reflect an artificial reality. Functionally, both pairs may wear and cover with the same performance but their perceived value differs significantly. At a thrift shop these two brands of jeans may each sell for \$2.99, an example of bottom line reality. The same lesson applies to most anything bought and sold in our modern world including labor, which means peoples' lives.

"The bigger they are, the harder they fall," goes the old saying. Mass delusion is self-sustaining until it implodes. Data acceptance and processing is distorted by group agreement on "the facts and analytical methods." Variant ideas and opinions are shunned and silenced. Contrary evidence and contrarians both disappear without discussion. And so it goes and often grows until it collapses on its own lies or is crushed

by reality's wake-up call. The demise of a nation suffering from a mass-created artificial reality might only happen after immeasurable sacrifice and suffering. Its downfall could also result in the deaths of millions, including innocent victims, complicit members and responsible participants or leaders.

While the imaginary projection of artificial reality is physical in essence or make-up, it always generates spiritual consequences. Massed human beings fall under what is termed mob psychology or mass hysteria. In both cases emotional energy runs high and deep to the point that reason is swamped by external suggestion or events, which themselves may be manipulated to purposes contrary to what individual members of the group might actually desire or execute on their own. While much of this phenomenon can be psychologically explained, I also believe that it attracts spirit beings who feed off of the massed life force and emotional energy. This is how they do their work of parasitic destruction.

For the individual seeker of spirituality, our innate human capacity for self-generated spirituality (another form of artificial reality) complicates the search. It is difficult enough to encounter documentable spiritual phenomena. When we add the potential for imagined spirituality to our search parameters, it becomes even harder to differentiate between the physical and spiritual. You might think you are experiencing a spiritual encounter when you are not. Christians might think they are "born again" when they only had an emotionally theological experience and not a spiritual rebirth or transformation. So what are we to do?

Welcome to the eternally re-occurring life-long problem of humanity! We must embrace this so very human characteristic at face value. I will discuss some parameters that can provide practical, functional guidelines towards an objective evaluation of our own spiritual health. It is important to understand that each person's spiritual journey is one in which the dissonance between the temporal artificial constructs are resolved with the eternal ultimate reality. It is a process of re-harmonizing mortal creators with the divine Creator - without the elimination of creative individuality. This is what each day is about and what our journey in search of spirituality will produce. Onward!

Chapter 3 - The Impact of Global Materialism

Most of the commonly recognized ills of modern global society are linked to, if not directly caused by, western materialistic philosophy because Globalism is an outgrowth of western civilization. This is not to exempt or excuse non-western cultures because a greed-driven mistreatment of the environment is not the exclusive proclivity of any particular political party or economic philosophy. Indeed the environmental atrocities committed in the 20th century by the totalitarian Soviet regimes had nothing to do with market economies, international trade agreements or secular capitalism.

No social organization or societal structure can escape the strengths and weaknesses of human nature, though some compensate for them better than others. Globalism's extreme size and pervasive impact on every level of life has subjected the entire biological environment to the spiritual nature of humanity. Just as a natural person is powered by material spirituality, so is Globalism. The life force powers all biological life. It impacts plants, animals and humans individually and the bio-cultural systems integrating all life forms collectively. When a person suffers from some kind of disease, a naturopath might focus on a particular biological support system, like digestion, or on the systemic health of his or her body as a whole. People experience the impact of the life force individually due to local and individual context as well as being affected collectively due to regional and global context.

Globalism as a complex system reveals a structure designed to overcome the natural limitations built into the earth's ecosystem – including people. Ultimately, even the massive socio-political economic matrix of Globalism cannot escape the eventual consequences of its fundamental structural conflict with the ultimate reality of natural spirituality. The specific areas of departure from balance are many and interactive because the environment seeks to counterbalance any violations of the life imperative. Groups of people have become mobs due to a collective distortion of reality that I believe may be subject to spiritual manipulation by human intermediaries and spirit beings. The popular association of occult practices with horror, bizarre torture and all forms of political, economic and spiritual oppression through the perverse manipulation and destructive exploitation of various fears is broadly correct.

Consequently, we should not ignore the possibility that Globalism may be the observable outgrowth of a spiritually dark agenda of social oppression and identity distortion. Parts of that agenda flow from the various and competing strategic interests of human governments and other organizations, such as global corporations – both for profit and nonprofit. I contend that the master strategy driving Globalism lies beyond any single human organization's capacity, which means it may be a juggernaut out of control or the visible manifestation of a broader spiritual battle in the metaphysical realm.

Globalism is at one and the same time the outgrowth and ultimate vehicle for disseminating the materialist worldview described in this book.

The philosophy of Materialism inspires the structure of its operations and composes the core of its philosophic purpose. This fact is revealed in mass culture at all levels. It pervades the instant worldwide communications of humanity's electronic consciousness. Because a materialist spirituality lies at the heart of the Globalist vision, it materializes a reality of observable spiritual fruit in the lives of billions, which includes the fates of the interconnected ecologies of biology and human society.

In simple words, this means that Globalism's materialist spirituality will fail to solve universal human social problems no matter how intensive and well financed the well-meaning efforts of sincere public servants. Social problems sourcing from underlying spiritual bankruptcy will never be solved by secularly reasoned humanist solutions. It makes no difference how intelligent the social theory or how large and well managed the budget dedicated to the programs devised and implemented to address them. Spiritually caused social problems will only be solved through the freely chosen local or regional implementation of a genuine and healthy spirituality.

Globalism has exacerbated the competition between populations internally engaged in the economic struggle for survival. The excessive competition that nations and communities experience today goes beyond a survival-motivated grab for essential resources that has resulted in concentrating over 50% of the world's wealth in the hands of 2% of its inhabitants. This massive material imbalance provides convincing evidence that we live in a world out of spiritual balance. A grossly skewed distribution of wealth (and power) is the most obvious testimony of today's spiritual poverty. The Globalism juggernaut pervasively imposes itself upon nations, peoples and persons without offering the option to say no. Its appeal of illusory wealth and well-being is contagiously viral and spread accordingly. It infects regional cultures broadly and deeply from within its vitals, modifying core values and distorting any existing systemic balance.

Admittedly, human civilization in any cultural expression has always fallen short of the ideal. Most cultures or societies can stand some improvement when it come to human rights, basic liberties or economic opportunity, but modern Globalism's impact excessively distorts every aspect of life it touches. Because people personally experience or otherwise are aware of their nation's or region's shortcomings, they will readily opt for the illusory material solutions to their problems that Globalism offers:

1. Increased wealth solves most problems, and
2. What it does not, Globalism's spiritual principles will.

People will choose the allure of a better life as seen through electronic media over the currently perceived pain or suffering popularly attributed to specific issues or problems. They do not grasp the consequences of jumping on Globalism's merry-go-round. They do not realize that they are exchanging their known set of problems for a future of much greater ones.

Attack Against the Middle Class

Spiritually healthy socio-economic systems produce a relatively populous and prosperous middle class able to exercise a politically controlling plurality in a significantly powerful governing institution. How wealth and power is distributed remains one of the better measurable indicators of a society's health, which means dynamic function with relative spiritual balance. As a socio-economic and growing political system, Globalism undermines the middle class even as it appears to grow it in some places, because it ultimately erodes traditional spiritual values. The traditional values of most societies are usually closer to natural spirituality than the materialistic spirituality expressed and manifested in Globalism.

When a culture supports a broadly based middle class, it indicates that valuation labor and capital are fairly balanced. The right of the average person to own and hold income-producing property is a key factor in the balancing act as is a sound and stable currency. Other important factors are a dominant, relatively homogenous culture that does not oppress minorities, military and police power closely subject to the citizens instead of being answerable only to a commander-in-chief, minimal social and governmental corruption, minimal and fairly indiscriminant taxation, access to capital at reasonable cost, minimal restrictions on trade, rule by written law based on just values and fairly judged as well as the freedoms of speech and expression. Globalist propaganda claims to provide these same benefits to all of its participants, but these claims are illusions based on partial truths or realities because the publicized benefits are not naturally sustainable.

The measurable truths and realities of Globalism are ultimately negated by the essentially artificial reality of the total system. Proof is found in the increased asymmetrical distribution of wealth and political power through the populace. The top 2-3% control where the juggernaut dances even if they can't completely choose the type of dance or how it affects specific participants. Like any man-made economic or political power bubble, Globalism will eventually implode with disastrous consequences.

By all measures, the middle class in the Unites States of America is shrinking. In fact, America's middle class is under attack from an undeclared war on several fronts. In our daily lives, we still worship at the shrines of higher education and retirement golden years, but not for long as both of these cherished stages of middle class life are being destroyed by Globalism. Due to an increasingly incestuous dependency on others, our fears grow, and we demand more and more government insurance against the ups and downs of life. We trade real, hard-earned liberties for amorphous securities proffered by ingenuous, incongruent and untrustworthy politicians. Most of us are either clueless or so misinformed of the facts that they do not know what to do to rectify the situation. Our political options are little more than Dumber and Dumberer. Yes, we the electorate are Dumb.

Poverty levels grow due to a tax structure that does not trust poor people to decide for themselves how to spend their money. Small to medium owner property rights are undermined by excessive taxation and over

regulation. Government is a necessary parasite. Good governments, like symbiotic parasites, provide services or benefits to their hosts: they contribute to the hosts' survivability. Like all parasites, governments grow too large and become toxic to the health of the governed unless controlled and kept in balance. Today's nation state governments have become so large that they want to terminate their hosts in exchange for a piece of the whole globe! How can any person or organization keep a global government in balance?

Public education is a farce that does not deliver value through high school and then exorbitantly charges for college and other advanced education. Due to the poor quality of high school graduates, much of a student's college years are spent in remedial learning, which too often leads to substandard or impractical skills with a hopelessly large burden of debt. The present realities of institutional education and the workplace project a future for our youth filled with an unsatisfying day-to-day world that could be described as an employee-debt-enslaved consumertopia where the golden carrots of success or of an opportunity rich retirement are forever just beyond the tips of our noses. Happiness will be forever pursued, so seemingly close but truly, so far away.

Globalism increases the centrality of authority and wealth so that local school boards do not control the curriculum of their schools. Educational financing structures regulation at the state level and above has removed meaningful control from local school boards, which essentially nullifies parental influence. School systems have become encumbered with top-heavy administrations and intermediaries whose concern is state policy, which is more and more globalized, rather than the wishes and values of parents. The character and structure of public education has been one of the most important tools used by globalists to undermine middle class family values as well as being the primary agent in the secularization of spirituality, that is, the promulgation of a materialist spirituality.

The influential global elite attack America's middle class through the indirect manipulation of capital and labor. Money is totally imaginary. It is created, and its supply, cost and availability managed by and international web of privately owned "federal" or "national" reserve banks in defiance of constitutional provisions to the contrary. Any nation that does not cooperate with the global cabal is punished financially. The consequences are electronically quick and brutal. Through the manipulation of currency values via balances of payments and various forms of indebtedness, wealth is redistributed according to the wisdom of the banking elite.

To anyone who does a little research, it is plain to see that American wages and wealth are being purposefully eroded through the devaluation of the dollar. We only accelerate the process set inexorably into motion by governmental debt by our personally irresponsible financial profligacy in response to easy credit. One obvious step towards reducing this government debt would be to convert government pensions to 401K plans and reign in public service benefits to bring them into alignment with what is reality in the private business sector. Government pension-benefit plans are guaranteed and set at high levels. These

overly generous government benefits will be unwillingly paid for by the middle class through the real value deterioration of our private savings and investments for retirement.

The global elite manipulate labor supply and demand, too. Like capital or anything else, market value is determined by supply and demand. When manual labor is undermined, all wage scales above it suffer. Politicians of both major parties promised that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Mexico and Canada would provide more and higher quality jobs for Americans. Everyone knows the truth in retrospect. Jobs were lost in a program largely funded by the middle class – in other the words, by the very workers who lost their jobs.

Many will argue that Globalism is the kind of technology-driven progress that cannot be ignored or avoided. A person or a nation needs to “get with the program” or get run over. It is true that technology has made it much easier to outsource jobs and move goods more cheaply and efficiently around the world. This is not bad in itself, but how is it managed? Are the choices honestly presented to the people? Are the promised improvements to working conditions and environmental stewardship ordinances enforced where the jobs go? The record is disappointing to say the least. When labor and production prices are too low, one will find abuse of people and/or the environment. Both result in consequences we all pay for with tax dollars or other economic and environmental shift of liability.

Advanced communications, computer automation and container transportation technology make Globalism profitable and possible. Yet, these technological tools are only turned into unbalanced advantages as a result of government regulation along with sophisticated tax and/or subsidy policies that usually benefit existing mega-businesses and make it difficult for genuine start-ups. For example, the lessons of NAFTA are ignored and the US government pushes additional international agreements without even trying to fix what is wrong with the present one – much less repeal it. A North American Union (NAU) between the USA, Mexico and Canada seems to be on today’s agenda. Super roads 10 lanes wide with sophisticated electronic infrastructure and power supplies are being built with the help of American taxpayer dollars. The NAU promotion strategy probably builds on trying to solve two problems at once: the collapsing US dollar and illegal immigration. First, the NAU’s Amero will replace the US dollar, Canadian dollar and Mexican peso, which will save Americans from the total loss of their retirement accounts’ purchasing power but at significant cost of freedoms as well as a substantial loss of real purchasing value.

Immigration – illegal and otherwise – is simply labor insourcing. Rather than move the jobs to cheap labor, governments facilitate the delivery of cheap labor to management through policies of commission and omission. Nationalism is out of favor, so borders are not that important other than for the potential revenue they can provide. The NAU follows the European Union’s progression of unification, which supports a read-between-the-lines logic like:

NAFTA failed because the boundaries are still too real. If we eliminate them, then people will flow both to several direc-

tions, and money will flow likewise if it is all one currency. National and ethnic differences will become increasingly less noticed or meaningful. They are not important anyway.

The shape and form of today's societal ills have much to do with Globalism's political, economic and spiritual policies. These policies are driven by widespread greed in the general population as well as the ruling elite's particular lust for wealth, power and status through a phenomenon of equal opportunity corruption at the expense of the average person. Globalism corrupts the few who are winners and crushes the billions at the bottom levels of the worldwide human pyramid of power, wealth and status. Only at the limited and illusive midpoints of success may one find a balance particular to each person's identity. Globalism doesn't just threaten nationalism. It attacks regions, ethnicity, the middle class and the chance for true economic advancement out of poverty, undermines the traditional family and ultimately commodifies the individual person. As I will discuss later, any balance in life leading to a creative identity formation is a spiritual process. Healthy spirituality demands each of us to exercise a freely chosen, determining role in its development and practice. Globalism puts such a high price on free choice that realistically, there is no choice.

A Short Spiritual History of Globalism

The globalist dream goes back into the dimmest recesses of human history. It is clothed in the myths of beginnings, which shroud probable cores of truth with powerful spiritual symbols. Even in today's political and economic rebirth of the European Union, we find mythic imagery that harkens back to Zeus' rape of Europa and the erection of the Tower of Babel. Even before that famous first ziggurat, the Bible discusses the spiritual beginnings of urbanism, which cannot be separated from the transformation of historical western civilization into modern Globalism.

Globalism emanates from the great cities of the globe. The sociocultural systems that came together to create the first cities out of agriculturally based villages and towns now drive the juggernaut I refer to as Globalism. Its ultimate expression would be a massive urban superweb of continuously connected megalopolises. Just as the "miracle" of compound interest (so simply and memorably illustrated in the classic book, **The Richest Man in Babylon**, by George Samuel Clason) can make a mountain of money out of modest savings – given enough time, so the first urban centers have compounded their growth in wealth, influence and power to become the massively over-concentrated focused cancerous overgrowth of wealth and power known as Globalism. Today, no region, tribe or nation can escape its corroding psychospiritual, political and economic toxins. The planet spins beyond natural balance towards a scientifically projected eco-social collapse as this worldwide bubble of an integrated, all encompassing artificial reality meets the ultimate realities built into the physical cosmos, the metaphysical universe and natural hearts of humankind.

Since most of us live in cities and all of us suffer exposure to Globalism's impact, wisdom demands a little historical journey in order to better

recognize and understand global materialism's hazardous influence on healthy spiritual growth. We cannot ignore the cultural histories of Greece and Rome or the Judeo-Christian traditions and scriptures as primary pillars of western civilization. The powerful truths of the Bible's stories and symbols have inspired sacrificial altruism and intolerant inquisition both. Despite the considerable incongruity between the values promoted by Scripture and how the history of the West unfolded in real life, the Bible's moral and ethical authority remains as a potential counterbalance to the spiritual distortions promoted in the name of God and/or the church. Like Social Darwinism, the distortion of biblical principles and history played significant roles in the birth of Globalism.

The Bible's first book of Genesis reveals where, when and by whom human civilization began to oppress its citizens in a way that inspired and rewarded evil. My definition of evil is:

That which steals life from another is evil. It is evil whether the theft is one of property or of the life force. It is true if the theft is total or partial, because partial theft or damage may contribute to the inability to provide for necessary biological needs, promote moral weakness, result in physical sickness or contribute to psychological depression. If the theft of life is complete, it obviously results in the death of the victim. It is this spiritually predatory activity of depleting the life force of human and beast that exacerbates evil thoughts and deeds... (digital spirituality, Chapter 1)

Cain invented the city to get around God's punishment for killing his brother Abel. A farmer by trade, Cain could not make anything grow. This curse followed him wherever he wandered as punishment for murdering his brother. (Genesis 4:12) Because the ground was cursed for him but not for others, Cain decided to settle down at the crossroads of trade routes and built the first city, called Enoch after his son. He made himself its king so that he could collect (income) taxes off of others' produce and labor. (Genesis 4:9-17) From the creation of his city-state kingdom, the way of Cain meanders its way through time to become the road to Babylon and later, to Rome.

If Cain is the eponymous great grandfather of Globalism, then Nimrod is the mythical grandfather. Mythical and biblical sources cite the construction of the first Tower of Babel by Nimrod as the first major public works effort after the Flood. Most archaeologists equate this tower with the Mesopotamian ziggurat. Here is the biblical account:

Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words.

It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. They said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly." And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar. They said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."

The LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. The LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech."

So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth. (Genesis 11:1-9)

Most people remember the Tower of Babel as the time when human languages became diversified from the original Hebrew. They do not think about why God did it, and the lesson is valid whether one believes in a literal or symbolic interpretation of that collection of religious writings. When the rest of the Bible is read, the answer is plain. God divided human languages to diversify human culture so as to delay the political and spiritual purposes behind the tower's building. Nimrod sought to unify the world into one kingdom, as one mass of humans under one name. This is the first time politics was used to enforce a spiritual ideology, and we find political power in operation against the Creator. Genesis 10:25 and 32 reveal that God had wanted the families of humanity to move apart from one another and scattered across the face of the earth in order to fill it with families grown large as tribes and nations.

God's spiritual plan was to create unique persons living in families and tribes distinct from each other. Nimrod's plan was to accumulate power based on the number of people controlled and have them build a tower (uniting the population in a massive public works program) so that they could survive another Flood if need be. If the Creator may be called the King of the Earth, logic and tradition both identify Nimrod's motives as putting himself up as the anti-king in opposition to God. Today, we would call him an antichrist.

The ancient tales all agree that Nimrod, and most all of the ancient kings, did not tolerate the existence of another equal in political or spiritual power within their reach. These city-state kings used the social dynamics of urbanism to consolidate their power. By forcefully bringing the people under the control of the city-state, a king would break down tribal and family loyalties that might create a power base to oppose him. Ancient kings figuratively or literally headed the state's religious system, too. The citizens were taught to look to the king as their "father" representing God's forceful will and judgment on earth. Historically, this concept continued down through the ages in slightly different formats. Philosophically, this concept evolved to become known as the "divine right" of kings. With the institution of kingship always came a form of nobility or elites, whose power base was always military, religious and/or economic.

With city-states also came the first wars for wealth waged in the name of various gods. Terrible political instability characterized ancient Mes-

opotamia until Sargon the Great of Akkad. He was the first person in secular history to create a kingdom consisting of more than one city-state through a controlled policy of religious tolerance. The worship of more than one deity was permitted. As long as Sargon's power was acknowledged as primary, conquered cities could continue to practice their local religious customs in honor of their cities' gods.

This pattern of kings consolidating power over many cities and gods continued for centuries with more or less notable success. The Assyrian kings and Nebuchadnezzar are notable examples of success with some applied improvements to the original concepts of empire building. After the New Babylonian Empire of Nebuchadnezzar and his descendants, the Persians actually took a step in the direction of centralizing their authority through a judicious use of autonomy in bureaucratic organization and religious freedom. For example, Cyrus introduced the Persian era by letting the Jewish exiles return to their homeland from their scattered captivity throughout Babylonia and other regions under Persian control. They had their own governor and priesthood and were permitted to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. This freedom permitted the Jews to create a society and culture more based on the Bible than during any other era of Israel's history.

Spiritual Father of Globalism

Classic Greek civilization was built upon a Babylonian foundation with unique advances in artistic expression, politics and philosophy. Greek history and culture has had contributed to the foundation of modern western civilization due to its enthusiastic adoption and promulgation by Alexander the Great. Alexander was a major innovator in the development of spiritual, political and economic Globalism. Because he believed that Greek culture, politics, sports, language and philosophy was universally superior to anything else, Alexander imposed it upon the peoples and empires he conquered. His enforced enlightenment intrinsically possessed great appeal to the conquered peoples as well. Everywhere he went, the urban elites embraced Alexander's program of Hellenization in much the same way that modern nations readily import and adapt many features and values of modern American culture as spread by global technology and trade.

I consider Alexander the Great the spiritual father of modern Globalism. Remember the inherently organic bond between urbanism and Globalism. Alexander built cities after the Greek model in every territory he conquered. His more famous undertakings were brand new cities like Alexandria in Egypt. Otherwise, his engineers Hellenized a city by building essential Greek cultural infrastructure like gymnasiums, markets, temples and theaters. The extensive distribution of these Greek culture centers demonstrates that Alexander was even more successful in capturing minds than he was in military victories. His governmental program of co-opting young local leaders and wealthy oligarchs under the direct rule of a small cadre of militarized loyalists established a permanent place for cultural Hellenism as an essential element of the Western way of life long after his death. In addition to fulfilling Alexander's primary purpose of spreading and nourishing Greek culture among the ruling elite, his program accelerated the human trend toward planned

urbanization worldwide. As a part of his program of Hellenization, he encouraged and at times commanded miscegenation or the purposed mixing of the many nations of humanity to create one genetic and cultural new world order under his reign. His program promoted syncretism of culture, religion and race.

Alexander and his successors consciously encouraged enculturation of all of his conquered peoples to the Greek ways of speaking, thinking and doing. He did this by building cities modeled after the Greek plan. As the founder of cities, Alexander made himself a god-king on par or superior to the great cities of ancient Greece, which were each founded by an eponymous Greek god or goddess according to the mythical and real history of the city. Greek city-states were mostly ruled by an elite club of oligarchs, often using democratic tools to commit the populace to their programs. More than just a symbol of civic identity and pride, the temple of the city's god or goddess served as the city's treasury and last point of defense.

Alexander was the most successful conqueror of all time. I think that God struck him down while young knowing that his empire would divide, and thus delay once again the rebellious trend of Globalism. The Jewish revolt against Hellenism under the Maccabees is celebrated annually at Hanukkah. If the miracle of eight days of light from one day's worth of oil is true, then it would seem that God approved of their intentions and blessed their relative liberty from the Globalism of that time even if He would not have commanded their resort to armed revolution. Despite the intrigues at the top of the theocratic Hasmonean Kingdom of the Jews, the result was a free practice of traditional Jewish customs by those who wanted to do so without being forcefully dominated by Hellenism.

Julius Caesar and others since sought to match Alexander's great record and failed, but even in their failure to achieve the immortal fame of "the Great" Alexander, they still built a succession of great to mediocre military and commercial empires using his strategies of military conquest and cultural governance. Through the Caesars, Alexander's legacy inspired the creation of the Roman Empire, which to this day epitomizes western civilization. Augustus Caesar and his immediate heirs established firm central control over a vast realm that lasted another 1,500 years through the maintenance of governing institutions like the Senate and socio-political management of the masses through welfare food rations, public building programs and entertainment with gladiatorial events and a Roman state religion. Architecturally, Roman engineers created new weapons of war and then added better roads, sewers and aqueducts to connect and support the Greco-Roman city centers of baths, coliseums, monuments and temples built everywhere Roman legions traveled. Unlike Alexander's brief mortal life, Rome sustained a political and economic empire of direct control that lasted at least hundreds of years over every territory conquered.

Against Roman dominion, the Jewish Zealots revolted in the late AD 60s, which resulted in the termination of Jewish religious autonomy and the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70. Another revolt began brewing in the 90s and erupted around 132 under the leadership of Rabbi Akiva and Simon Bar Kochba. They attempted to rebuild the

Temple, and when Rome defeated their armies, the Jewish zealots retreated to the Judean Desert to hide in remote caves until they were hunted out. Emperor Hadrian sowed Jerusalem with salt, expelled all of the Jewish inhabitants and forbade any practice of Judaism. He also violently persecuted the Christians.

The deification of Roman Emperors simply strengthened the centralized authority of the state. Diocletian (circa AD 300) separated the Roman Empire into Latin and Greek halves. He eliminated all semblance of republican government and declared himself Lord and God (*Dominius et deus*) combining into his person the roles of political and spiritual leader. Being divine in person, Diocletian established a number of protocols that removed himself from public view, which added divine mystery and authority to his person and office.

The Emperor Constantine reconsolidated the Roman Empire under his rule and co-opted the Christian churches by making the Universal or Catholic Church the favored religion of Rome. They continue to the present as Roman Catholicism and the various Eastern Orthodox Churches (Greek, Coptic, Syrian, Armenian, etc.). Constantine strategized that an empire-wide common religion would unite the diverse peoples found within the provinces or dioceses under his own authority. To this end, Constantine called the Council of Nicaea in AD 325 to eliminate doctrinal differences between what had been a loose association of local churches of varying doctrines and/or traditions of ritual practice. The Emperor eliminated those who opposed his plan to structure the church after the imperial bureaucracy with one set of approved doctrines and rewarded those who cooperated with his goals with money, church buildings and lands.

Constantine's innovation mobilized the official Christian religion to the service of the Empire. He eliminated potential competition by combining the Roman state religion of political and military power with the mysteries named after a man who had lived 300 years before. Throughout human experience, it has always been more economical and effective to control the masses through fear of bad eternal consequences (fear/reward religion) than to hire enough police to make the threat of mortal death an imminent reality.

Besides the loss of much biblical truth and ancient patterns of worship (Jesus' teachings in favor of non-violence and against war, for example.), the major consequence of Constantine's Romanization of Christian churches was the repression of dissent or divergent individual opinion on spiritual matters. The institution of Christmas on December 25th is a good example of his syncretistic practice of separating the Christian church from its Jewish roots (in this case Kislev 25, Hanukkah) and welding it to Roman-pagan ones (the Roman calendar's holiday of Saturnalia).

While Hanukkah commemorates an apparently God-blessed political revolution that created a cultural environment of religious liberty, Christmas observance represents enforced political acquiescence to the absolute authority of the governing hierarchy. While today's celebration of Christmas is mostly materialism gone wild, originally the holiday was purposefully designed to teach a biblically accurate doctrinal

conclusion (God born in the flesh), but religious authorities linked it to the Roman calendar in a way that Christianized Roman culture without changing its traditional substance. Since it is not a biblical holy day or linked to Jewish historical observance, the celebration of Christmas instead of Hanukkah moved public focus away from the practice and importance of divine social justice and religious freedom to a mystical reward for unquestioning obedience to the religious hierarchy of an official state church established under the emperor's watchful eye. In the western half of the Roman Empire, the political bureaucracy crumbled due to internal corruption and powerful external military threats. Beginning with Pope Leo I, the Roman bishop truly became the Pope fulfilling the emperor's failed role as the leader of civilization. In the East, the Orthodox Patriarch was appointed by, and usually remained subservient to, the Emperor.

The Bible nowhere commands the observance of Jesus' birth or his resurrection, though the Wave Sheaf offering during the Feast of Unleavened Bread both looked forward to and commemorates the date of his resurrection. The Bible only mentions observing Jesus' death at Passover, which begins the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Constantine's Council of Nicaea substituted a Sunday Easter observance for a variable day of the week occurring (and Jewish) Passover. Just as the date of Christmas separated Jesus from the probable date of His birth in the fall, its observance removes Jesus from His Jewish cultural heritage and context of teaching. Religious observance of Christmas is a symbolic submission to and acceptance of the primacy and power of the Roman Church. Since its social and religious observance is rooted in a syncretistic and materialistic spirituality, it is not surprising that modern Christmas traditions focus on the commercialized fulfillment of excessive consumerism in a manner that obscures the truths of its originally intended religious message.

How one observes Christmas, if done at all, is a good measure of Globalism's impact on his or her life: just evaluate the degree of commercialized focus in what you do and how you spend your money during that time of year. If for no other reason than to save money, the huge number of merchandise sales and new product releases will make even those would like to ignore Christmas entirely to pay attention to the message of the culture and participate in its materialistic orgy of consumer excess.

The Roman system of combined and/or mutually supportive political and spiritual governance was reinvented and applied to medieval Europe by Charlemagne. Around 800, he combined his empire with control over the Roman Church to create the Holy Roman Empire establishing a pattern of governance that continued well into early modern history. Certainly since 800, the Roman Catholic Church has used its influence and raw power to uphold the rule of monarchs and political despots favorable to it. The Roman church historically has not tolerated other faiths, including other Christian traditions. Through inquisitions of varying intensity implemented and enforced by Catholic rulers over the centuries, the Church has brought her influence to bear against competing religions in exchange for opposing her champions' compet-

ing politicians. One hand helped the other in the tradition formalized by Charlemagne.

A thousand years after Charlemagne, Napoleon renewed and improved upon the Roman Empire model in extending France's dominion over the European continent. Besides standardizing the economy and encouraging the advancement of science, Napoleon modernized the governing bureaucracy and the army, Napoleon "re-engineered" France after the Roman model in an admiring imitation of Charlemagne. He innovated a political methodology of using elections to get himself "elected" Emperor while making the French people feel like they had a hand in determining who ruled them and what their fates would be. Napoleon's nephew, Emperor Napoleon III, seems to have even done a better job of electioneering to his purposes.

Since Napoleon, the world has lurched through one imperious nation-state empire to another. After two named World Wars, Globalism now clothes itself with international organizations. Some of them are multi-national corporations, and others are non-government organizations – usually non-profit charities initially funded and controlled by elite families. Concurrent advances in technology applied to warfare have increased the scope and intensity of destruction beyond comprehension. Not only is humanity capable of destroying the surface of the entire planet several times, we are insidiously capable of destroying it gradually through the release of uncontrollable agents and processes upon the vitally essential biological and ecological infrastructure of the entire planetary life system.

Finally, we have experienced the rapid growth of international committees or councils of nation states. Some examples are the regional trade and tariff zones such as the European Union, NAFTA, the World Trade Organization and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). A number of organizations also work towards religious unity in conjunction with various global organizations such as the United Nations.

Modern Globalism trends towards increased central control of power over the entire planet. If it follows the historical pattern, there will be an impression of democratic input, but the actual governance will emerge from public and private competition between the wealthy and powerful elite of this age. An illusion of great peace and prosperity will mandate political acquiescence and conformity in the name of prosperity. We can expect official encouragement for a unified religious organization to enforce support of global institutions of enlightenment in the name of tolerance. The developing worldview is actually a materialistic form of spirituality that presents an image of truth and liberty, even as it suppresses the creative development of a genuinely balanced and healthy spirituality. As a psychospiritual phenomenon, Globalism is the most massive artificial reality in human history because it appeals to the billions with its materialistic spiritual values of illusory wealth and temporal power over at least one's own life, if not many others' lives and energy.

Globalism, the Invasive Parasite

Globalism is not simply international trade grown more intensive. The problems of Globalism cannot be fixed by merely instituting better labor standards or other rules to promote fairness of exchange, though fairness of exchange should be facilitated as much as possible. The natural universe exhibits built-in variability and physical limits such as the speed of light and the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

Globalism seeks to overcome the natural limits of wealth distribution in order to solve human problems. It is supposed to be the ultimate perpetual wealth machine. It promises a present and improving prosperity for every corner of the globe. Within that prosperity is hidden the materialist solutions to all human problems. Globalism grows like a cancer. Its adherents are committed to rapid and pervasive growth of a worldwide economy and government believing that an explosive success will outpace the negative consequences of the methods employed in its achievement. Globalism is the ultimate living example of the old justification that the end justifies the means, but because Globalism violates the vital principles of natural spirituality that limit the negative impacts of human nature, it will kill the host planet if allowed to run its full course.

For anyone to survive in its competitive climate, Globalism drives social behavior in such a manner that leaves it perpetually unbalanced until total collapse. Just like its mega-corporate components, Globalism must constantly expand and grow, or it implodes. Externally, Globalism sustains itself with legitimate trade in goods and services, but at its materialist core, Globalism is the ultimate pyramid scheme in which the entire living fabric of humanity is at risk. Currencies and valuations are manipulated, as are environmental regulations and labor compensation, conditions and benefits. Its inherent evil is disguised by its legitimate business activity. Globalism is a moral hazard so huge that most people cannot see it. The only way to put Globalism into perspective is to compare it to the earth's entire web of interlocking ecosystems and the physical universe itself.

When compared to the natural world, Globalism is analogous to the deadly parasite that kills its host because it takes too much and loses it all. The international reach of global business and trade structures inserts foreign goods and services into local economies with deadly results. One of the best illustrations of this problem from nature is the increasingly common plague of invasive species into alien biomes. Naturalists the world over must contend with foreign invaders that seem immune and impervious to local biological controls. The kind of living thing is irrelevant. It may be a mussel, a plant, a fish, an insect or even a meek, grass-eating rabbit.

The source of these biological problems is international trade driven by irresponsible profit motives. The key factor is that a living being was moved out of its natural context beyond the natural constraints of its birth environment. Indigenous biological controls do not work on them. In these cases, scientists often attempt to identify and introduce a controlling organism from the intrusive species' original biome that will not end up creating an even bigger problem. The task is not easy

and not always successful. There is no doubt that prevention would have been the best policy, but prevention as a solution will not work once the infestation is established.

Globalism is an established parasite or invasive species. It will not moderate to balanced stasis or die on its own without destroying everything. It will not go away peacefully because its very existence thrives on imbalanced human demands based on materialistic spirituality and financial artificial realities that must be manipulated to the advantage of a few at the expense of all. Globalism can only be defused by changing the human spiritual condition in almost all nations: Globalism's core materialist spirituality must be transformed by encountering Ultimate Reality or the planet and all humanity will die.

Natural and Necessary Constraints

Without a healthy spiritual dimension to human society, the necessary constraints required for balanced social structures never become a sustained reality. Where as natural laws force constraints upon space travel or ecological health, human civilization is an artificial reality system requiring humanly devised constraints to keep it in balance. Those constraints must be instituted with discipline and by desired choice that can only be successfully empowered by the voluntary application of healthy spiritual principles by all participating parties.

Some things work on a small scale and fail when they get too big. Natural constraints operate in the biological environment to manage the natural cycles of complex ecosystems. Without wetlands, water becomes polluted. Without sufficient mass of wilderness area contiguously connected together, thousands of plant and animal species become extinct because they simply need more than a thousand acres to sustain a biologically diverse population large enough to support genetic variation and sustained growth within a balanced biome.

Human nature is rooted in its material composition and natural spiritual essence. Next chapter explores natural spirituality further, but now suffice it to note that good and evil have pervaded every human culture since the beginning of consciousness. Material variation of social context has done little more than operate as a check or balance on human nature's indivisible mixture of good and evil. Each culture has experienced relatively better or worse periods of success in moderating the destructive negatives and enhancing the productive positives of the human experience. With very few possible exceptions, no great man is held to have been without sin or evil potential. A specific discussion of possible exceptions enters into the vast realm of religion, which itself exists in multifarious forms to deal with the human issues of good and evil among others.

Constraints derived from the balance of life are found everywhere in nature. By natural design the powers of life are divided – more obviously so in the more complex forms of biology. Flexibly balanced interactions of varying tolerances exist between multiple life forms in any ecosystem. Upset these naturally constrained interactions in an ecosystem, and death occurs because life cycles break down in contagious doom loops of collapsing interrelationships.

Within a species, the life force itself is usually balanced sexually. This division of reproductive power results in fascinating, interactive patterns of learned attention and instinct that work together to preserve the life of the immediate creatures or plants of study as well as provide for the survival of other biome members. If one gender dies out, the species usually dies out and other plants or animals dependant on them in some way may die out with it.

Human cultures create and impose artificial realities upon both the natural and social environments we live in. In the world of business, both natural and artificial scarcity have often been manipulated or taken advantage of to gain wealth. Artificial realities of human economic activity work well even on a rather large scale, but for sustained growth, they must operate within a functionally balanced matrix of diverse social realities that is itself sustainable. Each requires voluntary constraints to imitate the natural limits found at work in successful, healthy ecosystems of diverse and interdependent species.

Eliyahu M. Goldratt's Theory of Constraints (TOC)¹ works in the business world because of voluntary constraints applied to individual organizations within the larger system of the world economy. These self-imposed constraints functionally operate as consciously chosen governors of greed and other self-destructive inclinations of human nature to produce flexibly sustained organizational growth because of ongoing improvements through the reduction of bottlenecks to expand productive throughput. The operational prerequisites lie in the reality faced by most organizations that seek to apply TOC: a world of competition significantly large to produce an expanding demand faster than any one organization could voluntarily desire to provide. This state of affairs permits a business virtually unlimited growth in profits with an economic sustainability of intentionally sustained employment. Goldratt's theory will not work absent either the wisdom of good management policies and/or absent a quantumly larger world of healthy social institutions functionally designed within the natural biological context of a consistently healthy planetary environment that does not suffer from any spreading cancers of biological imbalance.

Modern Globalism already exceeds all concepts of natural and self-regulated constraints, and it is still growing. Some world leaders seek to apply TOC to Globalism through the spread of environmentally sound business practices and the practice of voluntary limits of wealth concentration. The emphasis on voluntarily choosing to spread the wealth of the world more evenly is rational, but people are not rational. We can never agree with one another on what is fair or just, so there is no peace in the Middle East despite rational plans to attempt a balanced coexistence between Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews either.

The situation between labor and management is similar. Organized labor may be analogous to nation states with vested interests to protect and sustain, while unorganized labor are like informal, loosely connected terrorist cells composed of the have-nots of the world. Materialist spirituality would limit the size of humanity to control this problem much as DeBeers historically controlled the price of diamonds by artificial scarcity. Where as diamonds threaten to become a commodity, hu-

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theory_of_Constraints, accessed on July 30, 2007.

man life has already arrived at that status; therefore, the trick for global leaders is to get enough people to voluntarily “check out” of the system so that it can be sustained.

Of course, there will never be sufficient numbers volunteering to die so that somebody else – especially a group of foreign strangers - can live a quality life of relative wealth and ease. World leaders tolerate and implement policies of human commodification to achieve global goals of prosperity. The political difficulty is to accomplish the elimination of unwanted people at the same time as they project a humanitarian image or face. The ramifications of this observation could fill several books, but here are a few examples to inspire further thought.

World leaders currently tolerate many global conditions of inhumanity even as they take public steps to ameliorate them. While I would admit that many of the world’s elite are at least in some measure humanitarians, their pragmatism necessarily rules their pocketbooks and inspires an agenda not so altruistically humanitarian. International human welfare and immigration policies are put into force intentionally to demonstrate a lack of racial bias in the elimination of undesirable excess population. The working ethic here is that it is impossible to preserve everyone alive, so a token representation of an ethnic and racial identity group is enabled by “equal opportunity.” Others are given political asylum or refugee status by states to facilitate assimilation into the global urban sprawl. With such policies paraded across mass media outlets, humanity’s varied genetic heritage is preserved and the population stabilized at the cost of millions of lives without inspiring overt political turmoil.

Eliminating the concept of “foreigner” is critical to the success of this program. By mixing nations into urban megalopolises scattered all over the known world, the concept of patriotic dedication to the modern nation state will theoretically disappear and bring peace. Alexander the Great began to implement the same strategy to eliminate the divisive patriotic ties to the various city-states of ancient Greece found within his armies and empire. If we are all convinced that people are not that different - that we are all one brand of the brotherhood of humanity, then policies favorable to one group or class at the expense of another make less of an impact politically. If we “are all the same,” then potentially effective political opposition by suppressed ethnic and racial affinity voting blocks is neutralized. With such a value system, no one gets greatly excited when large numbers of their distantly related co-nationalists suffer and die due to “natural causes” or “political turmoil.”

Materialist philosophy does not recognize a truly potent spirituality beyond the social and emotional realms of human experience; therefore, religious tolerance is promoted because it is impotent (from Globalism’s perspective) as an ultimate reality but useful for population management. Modern technology encourages and permits the continuation of representative ethnic traditions, religious customs and ancestral languages, which are harmless when stripped of nationalism and national critical mass. For example, Jewish cultural heritage, Yiddish and the various expressions of Jewish religion are OK, but only if disconnected from the Zionist state of Israel. Ultimately, Israel and every nation state are not acceptable. Globalism seeks to eliminate all of them one at a

time through the strategy of divide and conquer - today Israel, tomorrow the Arab nations, for example.

Current conditions of pervasive poverty and shortened human lifespan will not be eliminated quickly because the economic system cannot pay decent wages to all of the people who are already healthy enough to work. Globalism contends that this goal is attainable if enough individuals and nations will restrict population growth through birth control. "Control" here is broadly defined, and its practice includes the presumed acceptance of sexual promiscuity without birth and homosexuality that adopts the accidents that do happen. Elective choice of conception is available to the wealthy in an empty, but very profitable, show of a commitment to life - especially a "quality life." After all, who wants to live any way other than quality?

In the social science of politics, balanced systems are also necessary for sustained success in governance that grants meaningful, consensual input from the governed. The US Constitution represents the culmination of integrating several very good philosophic and functional checks and balances into a republic that protected its citizens from the dangers of human nature too often found in great leaders. It expresses a collectively enlightened self-interest that applies the golden rule in legal format. The US citizenry has lost meaningful control of its government by permitting its politicians to depart from wise and legal constitutional constraints. I believe that most of the immediate problems facing the United States today derive in part from the neglect or imbalanced application of those originally designed safeguards. For example, the United States of America has engaged in a number of military conflicts more properly called wars - without any formal declaration of war. Changing what you call a war does not mean that it is not one.

Global Politics Revealed

Current political forums held around the world discuss what to do about the rogue elements that do not play by the rules. It is like the story about the wolf in sheep's clothing gone global. Sheep within a flock will sort things out between themselves with some butting and other means of establishing a pecking order. The end result is a reasonable balance integrating a measure of inequality. However, if a wolf in sheep's clothing is added to the flock, it will upset the whole process by eating his or her opposition. The wolf will keep eating the sheep until there are none left. The flock only survives if it can breed faster than the wolf can eat. This mad race may extend the final outcome for awhile, but eventually the fat wolf wins to die of starvation.

World leaders today commonly take public positions of moral integrity that recognize the "wolf in sheep's clothing" problem, but the trouble with Globalism is that we have many wolves in sheep's clothing. There are more than enough to consume the whole flock. The only reason they have not done so yet is that they fight with each other over who gets to eat which sheep. The public battle between them consists of one accused wolf declaring himself a true sheep and exposing an apparent sheep (his or her political opponent) as being a wolf in sheep's clothing that eats sheep in secret. Regardless of who wins the public contest,

often decided by elections or public opinion polls today, the wool is pulled over the eyes of most of the taxpaying, economically trapped, and military-serving sheep.

So far, this publicly staged contest of denouncing the other wolf in sheep's clothing as a truly more dangerous, ravenous wolf has delayed the onslaught of global consolidation as the wolves battle it out between themselves and jockey for position in the overall order of global affairs. This has given the sheep an interim opportunity to reproduce faster than they are consumed, but time is running out. The wolves are multiplying and consolidating in a strategy of cooperative and coordinated sheep consumption. Once they unite, they will divide the fattened flock into their spheres of influence and then try to eat their competitors' sheep while protecting their own until last. Once all of the sheep are gone, the wolves will eat each other. If permitted to run its natural course, the last wolf would die of starvation and nothing would be left of sheep and wolves (humanity).

The material reality is that natural and labor resources are unevenly distributed over the face of the earth. These economic differentials provided the basic framework to David Ricardo's theory of classic comparative advantage. Comparative advantage functions effectively from a humanitarian perspective only when there are relatively balanced natural constraints in force. This means that there is neither extreme scarcity nor excessive abundance.

Globalism breaks the rules of comparative advantage by developing and thriving on a program of purposed superabundance controlled by a relatively few elite against a manipulated (i.e., regulated) scarcity in monetary and financial power. Globalism would not exist without international banks' mutually shared advantage in the control of currency exchange rates, terms of debt and level of interest rates. Global economic forces are driving towards regional monetary unions, and ultimately, a global currency. The behind the scenes struggle for power is evidenced in ebbs and surges of various currency valuations as the various entities compete for dominance. A global winner will temporarily arise when there is one global currency and one superbank to manage it. Both will be under the control of one government entity.

Meanwhile, these competing elite agree in a common message to the masses of ordinary people: world peace will come from global free trade in an integrated economy of ever-increasing prosperity. Play along with the fellows in charge and eventually everyone will be well off. If you do not, you will be punished – first with economic restrictions, and if necessary, with military operations or even occupation. Play along with the big bad wolves, and you may be the last sheep to be eaten.

Global Materialism Distorts Individual Identity Development

This is another way of saying that the superculture of global materialism distorts and oppresses true spirituality. The first way that Globalism crushes spirituality is through the spread of the American and Western culture of secular humanism with its materialist form of spirituality

that so confuses the search for true spirituality. According to scientific humanism, spirituality is a matter of individual emotional and psychological need (a crutch) without reference to any absolute or ultimate reality. The influence of this perspective extends into every corner of the world through mass media. Using multiple formats, popular and government-controlled media communicate a materialistic artificial reality in one underlying message: reality is only what can be examined and explained by science, which is further defined according to institutionally accepted facts and theories and/or a psycho-emotional perception within the imaginary constructs of a person's individualized experience of culture.

To live a balanced spiritual life today, we need to understand the underlying drivers of Globalism's social engineering – regardless of how humanely intentioned its agents may be. Creative identity development requires a significant level of liberty – the freedom for me to be me and you to be you - without an abandonment of social responsibility beginning with one's family. Partly, this is due to the important role that a healthy, multigenerational family can and should play in one's spiritual journey. More importantly, to thrive spiritually and survive materially today we need to be able to see through the artificial realities generated by Globalism. Understanding the big issues and significant strategies at work will help to cut through the multiple media messages of misinformation and material spiritual values that threaten to drown out any hope for spiritual growth within a relatively stable context of tolerance and freedom of thought, speech and action.

Here I want to briefly relate how modern Globalism's values and strategies hearken back to Alexander's more openly stated objectives for his new world order of Hellenism. To me, the ultimate form of discrimination is to eliminate racial and/or ethnic distinctions because it takes away from who each person is as an individual. Please remember that the perspective of my discussion here is societal or systemic and not individual. I do not view individual decisions to marry and rear children of mixed ethnic or racial heritage as inherently unspiritual or wrong on the basis of that specific aspect of a marital choice alone. Depending on the persons and situation, a decision to marry and raise children of a mixed heritage may be the best spiritual decision to make.

Racism is a great evil, and it is rooted in materialism and/or false spirituality. It attributes differences in material power and culture to biological differences. Most of the time, racism has been expressed as the material oppression of one or several groups by a dominant one due to imagined or real biological and cultural differences. Such oppression is a distortion of conditional love based on a perception of biased scarcity and the need to compete for resources vital to survival – particularly in regards to an identity group's survival. To preserve itself, the dominant social group forcefully steals life components (from capital resources to liberty of labor) from others. Usually great spiritual violence is also suffered by the oppressed.

Biological differences are a fact. The more science researches the human genome, the more complex it becomes, and much of that complexity aligns with racial and ethnic identities. This is how it should be according to Digital Spirituality because unique body characteristics signifi-

cantly contribute to who we are as persons. The soul identity is created by synthesis of body and spirit. Each of them is different and true spirituality celebrates as holy the uniqueness of each person that comes about from the union of genetically unique body with the decisions one makes about how life is lived. How we live our lives in the bodies we are born with uniquely modulates the spiritual medium of reality much as digitized light reveals spectral signatures.

Traditional cultures around the world preserve the body's vital role in spirituality by honoring one's parents and ancestors. The extension of honoring one's parents is to honor one's entire heritage. Such a simple but important truth drives and nourishes the spiritual health and personal creativity of a human being as expressed from gardening to writing an opera with symphonic accompaniment. Evidence of the power of heritage can even be found in American culture with Alex Haley's blockbuster book and TV mini-series, **Roots**.

Identity formation comes about through a series of personal decisions. Some of those decisions are made for us before birth, and some of them we make for ourselves. The destruction of national, tribal or clan entities removes an important component of a person's individuality. It is an attack on healthy spirituality, which is focused on the identification and fulfillment of one's unique place in the universe.

Recall that both Nimrod and Alexander the Great established dictatorial policies to eliminate genetic and cultural differences. They opposed national or tribal loyalties as competition to their dreams of universal, international empire. In both cases extreme concentration of humans into large cities was a major tool of their programs. Thus, urbanism has driven Globalism, and Globalism portrays urbanism as the ultimate living experience. Urban civilizations naturally attract people from different ethnic and racial backgrounds because great cities are built on trade routes. A natural mixing of people from different backgrounds will always occur in cities. The obvious consequence are arrangements that create families of mixed ethnic and racial heritage, which is welcomed as a way to reduce and eventually eliminate tribal differences.

Because of this topic's sensitivity, I write again that mixing racial and/or ethnic heritage is not wrong by itself. Cultural differences between spouses do present their special challenges to a marriage, but they are not intrinsically wrong. However, from the perspective of statecraft or global strategy, an increase in mixed marriages or other nontraditional unions evidence a subtle strategy to destroy us as individual persons from a systems point of view because they also undermine the multi-generational depth of family continuity. Just as globalist strategy seeks to destroy nationalism through the growth of a massive, interdependent, transcontinental urbanism that divides and conquers nations without armed invasion, so it seeks to destroy large, influential families through the idealization of individual particularism – the separation of a person from deep meaningful loyalties and relationships based on the traditional family structure.

The patriotic psyche and geographically significant (due to a combination of size and location) nation states resist movement towards the development of a global economy and polity. If powerful blocks of mu-

tual political and economic interests can be broken into more numerous and smaller geo political units, then it becomes vastly easier for a global elite to establish and direct a world government through a form of democratic process or other expression of the people's will. A virtual set of global citizens constructed out of statistical analysis are more easily represented than real people with national histories and traditions. Furthermore, a world without nation-states makes it possible to force the compliance of any holdouts effectively with small military forces. It makes military strong-arming more economical even if requiring more intelligence and technology because, at best, the opposition can only muster a loosely organized terrorist network of scattered dozens instead of a million man army with missiles, tanks and ready-to-fire weapons of mass destruction.

Similarly, Globalism's social values also favor smaller family units without the economic and social depth of long continuity. The ideal global citizen is a individual professional of high taxable income exercising a lifestyle of high consumption. Non-work hours are filled with sensual or intellectual entertainment. He or she is socially connected to civic or interest groups that provide multiple social ties that are warm and civil but not the intensely deep relationships of healthy multigenerational families. Convivial lunches and meetings take place, life stages shared or recognized and good works in support of accepted civic programs performed. There is no familial confrontation to smooth rough spiritual edges and any lasting impact is limited by human mortality with little continuity due to a lack of familial heirs.

Once again for clarity's sake, I contend that every culture could stand some redefinition or improvement. This includes any traditional set of family values. Obviously, folks will disagree over the details, but that is not my point. What I observe is a worldwide general rejection of the traditional cultural package as a whole in favor of Globalism's material spirituality. Rejection of the whole is justified by problems with the pieces. Some of those problems are rooted in spiritually unbalanced social biases and some of them are no doubt due to the attitudes of those who reject what they perceive as their cultural heritage's unreasonable restriction of his or her individual human rights – most of which they have learned from electronic mass media.

Politicians loudly claim to champion family rights or worker's rights, but once in office, their actions are not congruent with their electioneering rhetoric. The issue is not just about families. The pragmatic ability to organize into any economically strong, politically potent affinity group, such as a union or political party is legally, bureaucratically, financially and culturally undermined by existing social and governmental institutions and the media that do not want any meaningful competition of ideas or programs.

For example, President George W. Bush campaigned with heavy rhetoric directed towards traditional religious values – especially Christian ones. Once in office, very little was done. A partisan might argue about Democratic opposition, but Mr. Bush did not apply the executive power of his office towards effecting an agenda in support of family values to the degree that he consolidated the power of his office and moved the country towards dependence on a global economy and government.

National and individual liberties were sacrificed in the strategic neglect of Constitutional requirements, directives and obligations by all three branches of federal government.

Here is another example of how the citizenry of the United States of America is managed indirectly by elite controlling the mass media's factual misinformation on issues and opinion formation on what can be done about them. Popular opinion in the USA holds widely (probably about 90%) that supporting or voting for any party other than the Democrats or Republicans is money thrown away and a "wasted" vote.

To the United Nations and governments on the path to Globalism, human rights are important as long as they do not restrict what the established government wants to do or thinks is right. Self-evident, God-given human rights independent of a government's sanctioned authority and permission are taboo. As long as the rights under discussion relate to individual productivity and/or the disposition of an inefficient, high cost liability such as the care of children or persons with disabilities, they are accepted and upheld because it benefits the government to do so. Present technology does not permit further mechanization of these needed services, and present public morality does not tolerate the blatant disposal of human lives. Human rights encourage particularization through the separation of generations and the reduction of family members' influence on one another.

Small family units without economic, emotional or generational depth function as temporary support units for individuals when they are children or for persons with some sort of temporary or permanent disability. They function as short-term foster care facilities instead of dynastic conglomerates exercising influence from one generation to the next. Here is another example of how the modern economic and tax matrix concurrently destroys families in several ways. In today's world, most western families need to outsource the care of their aged parents to nursing homes in order to survive financially and continue to function in society as they have become accustomed to do. In the process of anyone entering a nursing home, all but the short-lived with extensive assets forfeits any possibility passing a meaningful financial inheritance from one generation to the next.

Sexual promiscuity and homosexuality work hand-in-hand to diminish generational continuity because they break natural family links and upset social balance even as they violate the principles of natural spirituality discussed in chapter 4. Broken family ties destroy family businesses and make it much more difficult to accumulate sufficient resources to compete on the political stage. A regional political structure provides local stages and incremental political opportunities granting increased access to meaningful participation in the governing process. You don't need a fortune to run an effective election campaign. That simply is not the case today in America or much of the rest of the world. Money is the kingmaker, and the media cover the dollars raised with more detail than any open discussion about truly important issues. The public forum is limited to projecting Rorschach images that permit the voters to see in a candidate what they want to see and sound bites that obfuscate the other contender's positions as well as prohibit any in-depth discussion of pragmatic options and their consequences. Most certainly

avoided is how the government itself contributes to the problems that afflict the citizens' well-being and natural rights.

In a world population of individuals, each one sees himself as relatively impotent when it comes to dealing with global governments. Most people just cave in and do what they are told as long as they can survive the process of subservience. Others position themselves to do the telling. Those unhappy with the system are left with few options. Global government is too big and complex to fight: at best one bureaucrat can only help resolve a small part of any request or deal with any real problems. To get something done, one finds a way to get what he wants from the government without directly opposing it. If following the rules is not possible or desired, then such a situation leads to corruptions of many colors. History is full of them.

Globalism and Immigration Policy

A modern social issue relating to this phenomenon deals with immigration policy. Again, it is easy to empathize with individuals trying to make a better life for themselves and their families. While the emotionally strong stories of individual suffering and hope cannot be completely ignored, neither can they be the primary basis for the establishment of a national policy in regards to immigration – particularly illegal immigration, which negatively affects the status and lifestyles of legal immigrants even more than it does naturally born citizens.

Because it confuses national identity and weakens the popular (political power) resolve of larger states, my hypothesis is that illegal and legal mass immigrations of peoples from one state to another fulfill the unstated agenda of the global elite. A state composed of divided populations is more easily subjected to external powers, specifically global institutions. Not only do they provide necessary third party mediation of power to settle disputes, but if approached with proper strategy and intelligence, less military power is needed to control the country.

The natural consequence of immigration motivated by material advantage is the destruction of any national or ethnic identity based on spiritual principles of heritage. A nation is more than a creed. It is more than a mutual wallowing in material effluence. A nation is a set of related families grown large through long history of interaction and shared culture. The families may be quite divergent as to ethnic and racial heritage, or they may not. What is plain is that most nations recognize, or are coming to recognize, that their identities are being undermined by uncontrolled immigration justified solely by economic and political expediency. Divide and conquer works as well for the control of internal politics as it does internationally. Massive influxes of diverse nationalities into any existing state will wash away its distinctive identity as a people, which in turn undermine and confuse persons about who they are as individuals. Such confusion of personal identity undermines spiritual traditions and the belief in absolute truth or a spiritual ultimate reality.

Remember, throughout history Globalism has been instituted by the ruling, wealthy elite to preserve their positions of power and influence at the expense of the masses. While the perspective of the oligarchs is

primarily concerned with their material advantage (the accumulation and preservation of wealth and power), it has even more devastating spiritual consequences to everyone alive because it spiritually destroys both “winners” and “losers” in the pursuit of material success.

Globalism uses racism to accomplish its purpose of subjugating 95% of humanity to the advantage of those already in power – be it political, religious, social or economic power. The elite always promise, and sometimes reward, one group over another for their sell out in effecting some part of the globalists’ strategy. Actual or alleged racism and/or revenge for actual or alleged racism is used as a way to motivate shock troops into doing the dirty work of inhumane beatings and killings.

Having stated the above historical roots to Globalism’s generic strategies, it is now time to address its most effective and subtle attack on spirituality. Globalism sells its philosophic approach to politics and economics by the “smoke and mirrors” presentation of prosperity derived from the application of technologically advanced secular materialism to social and economic problems. Outside of a show of concern for a moral workforce, because no one wants employees or partners who cheat them, Globalism undermines true spirituality by promoting a material form of it. It creates and sustains an artificial reality of prosperity and success by manipulating the temporal disconnect between the true causes and effects of liberty, prosperity and social justice.

Cause and Effect Disconnect

The present prosperity and liberty enjoyed by a majority of Americans are not the gifts or products of our present materialistic morals. The sustained level of a society’s proportionate prosperity is directly related to a healthy spirituality – especially when it comes to the distribution of wealth. Healthy societies evidence a broad and powerful middle class. America’s past moral and religious heritage is a major contributor to her wealth and success as a nation-state. Although the United States did not invent the middle class, it was the first nation founded by one. Her present power and economic position in the world flows directly from this spiritual and social heritage. In other words, our present good times are coasting on the spiritual investment of previous generations. Despite its imperfections, a positive correlation must be made between Christianity in America and our generally better levels of social justice and wealth distribution.

What is shocking is how quickly we are losing the great material benefits that blossomed out of a relatively long tradition of a constitutional government constructed in an environment of healthy spirituality that insured of liberty and provided great economic opportunity. Unfortunately, we have forgotten or are ignorant of how these facts connect to real life today. Times are good right now; therefore, our media assert directly and indirectly that America’s brand of self-centered, greedy, egocentric materialism is the cause of our prosperity simply because of apparent temporal association. No wonder other nations fail to achieve broadly distributed economic prosperity for their peoples when they adopt the “American Way” of success. In search of democratic prosperity, they imbibe many of the values of our modern, materialistic culture

- not realizing that the values of materialism actually carry the viral germs of tyranny and poverty.

Globalism "Americanizes" other nations to its economic and/or political values. To participate in the global system of illusory wealth generating finance and trade, a nation must also begin to adopt America's current culture of materialistic values, beliefs, goals and practices under the deceptive labels of democracy and liberty. Thoughtful statesmen should perceive the dangers even as they deal pragmatically with the increased integration of the global economy. They need to understand their nation's spiritual heritage deeply from a systems approach. Then it may be possible to integrate sound market economics, private property and/or democratic political practices into its native culture without destroying its spiritual fabric. Measurable evidence in an increased democracy and broadly distributed wealth should become more obvious. Such an approach will be more faithful to the best interests for all of a nation's citizens and more likely to last for a longer duration. But without careful implementation of modern trade and financial vehicles, the momentum of a spiritually sound past will do little to protect them because the seeds of materialism so latently potent with American culture take quick root and choke out any hoped for promises of prosperity with social justice. Selfish license will supplant responsible liberty, greed will subsume good intentions, and "market facilitation" will become consumer driven materialism for its own sake.

The hollow, greed-filled, self-serving core of American culture communicated with more substance than all of our propaganda during the Vietnam War. The Vietnamese government and ruling elite copied the heart of American Globalism and did not follow our hypocritically outward proclamation of spiritual values rooted in our constitutional birth. The Soviet Union imploded on its own weaknesses more than America and the Western NATO alliance triumphed. Once again the temporally *non sequitur* relationship of a short term revival of the American economy due to massive financial pump priming with the fall of the Berlin Wall was irrationally used to trumpet American superiority over Communism's failure. The truth is rather that Communism simply failed first. It does not mean that the American culture of secular materialism is spiritually healthy enough to endure even as long as ancient Rome.

Yes. That means that America is not immune to her own sickness. Without change, her self-destruction is sure. As rot in the heart of a tree trunk eventually brings down a great tree, so America's spiritual rot will topple her majesty. It happened to Rome; it will happen to the United States of America. Given the accelerating trajectory of American sociocultural conditions due to the speed of modern technological change it will only take the United States a few years to implode as compared to the hundreds of years it took Rome to fall from her influential heights of economic and military power.

There are no exceptions to the law of limits in the natural universe. What applies to nations on the large stage of the world is also valid on a smaller scale in every person's life. Every assemblage of matter, every activity of energy - all have specific properties. We may not understand them all, but they are specific and limited in number, or any defining identity would be lost. Humanly we often deny this fact in what we

believe and/or do, but in the end we all face the same, ultimate, undeniable limit. We die. Billions to trillions are spent every year to put this inevitable off a little longer. Additional billions are invested in researching about how to live longer. Most of this money is probably well spent. I'm not against life or its extension. I am definitely a big fan of life - bigger than I am of any professional sports team!

However we may seek to extend mortal existence or to continue our testimony and impact beyond the grave, it will always come to an end. Power is potent until it isn't. No matter how awesome it was at its peak, the power of this world or natural universe quickly evaporates. Memories fade. As the proverb goes, "a living dog is more powerful than a dead lion." I believe that all the great advances by science to extend natural life through chemical, genetic and biomechanical means will eventually run into some kind of natural limit. It is the law of the universe. For every birthing galaxy, there is a black hole. All life, matter and energy recycle to balance out at zero.

The natural world suffers from severe stress due to civilization's attacks on our environment. The net result is a negatively healthy world. How it will adjust is becoming a matter for strident debate, but almost everyone agrees that better management of our natural resources is called for on a global scope. Since the mass impact of our global industrial society has caused our environmental sickness, logically we should be able to largely rectify the situation given the understanding that more years and decades are required to undo or repair the damages than were required to inflict them. It always requires more effort and time to repair or build something than to destroy it.

Environmental healing is not just a simple problem of scientific understanding and logic; it is a matter of the spirit. Human energies strive with one another and the environment to survive in a manner desired. We cannot seem to do otherwise since we are driven by self-preservation and self-expression in statements made by how we live.

My hypothesis here states that a conscious nourishment of natural spirituality is possible across almost all cultures of humanity, and its fruit would be a restored natural environment populated by generally happier people. However, these people would still be searching since once aware of the pleasures and blessings of natural spirituality, we look beyond it through philosophy or religion towards personal encounter with the essence of immortality, the joy, peace and love from beyond light speed. It just seems to be locked up inside, looking to break out.

Because of our growing, almost universally materialistic outlook on life, many societies (our sociocultural environments) are also experiencing increased levels of toxicity. Materialism devalues relationships. The relationships I refer to are familial, neighborly and communal. Time is stolen from us, but then we let it be stolen. We choose it so, whether our choices are consciously made or not. Nonetheless, they are indeed our personal choices for which we are responsible.

Responsibility inevitably leads to some sort of evaluation or judgment. Some judgments are dramatic; many are not. The undramatic ones result from the simple consequences of previous decisions accumulated

over time. Consequences are the environment of decision requirements for today that we have created by our previous decisions and behaviors. Cause and effect are indeed very real, but so is the serendipitous grace of life. Spirituality witnesses that reason is not the only tools to use when it comes to the causes and effects of soul significant events or conditions.

The addictive pursuit of philosophically materialistic, as opposed to strictly material, goals results in the lack of time and paucity of heart to invest in the work and play required to build relationships between individuals and communities. Productivity and value are measured strictly in terms of that which can ultimately be measured, purchased, traded or seized for later benefit. Some examples are status, power, fame or glory, security and general consumption to sensual surfeit. Money or wealth is a common agent of their acquisition, but raw power is also.

Materialistic goals focus on something other than life as its core value. These goals are intrinsically personal in their orientation because they fill perceived personal needs from accommodating certain fears to marking one's identity on the landscape of life. In one way or another materialism is an exercise of attempting to feed the needy void by some thing one can buy, find or take, whether it be the direct enjoyment of the thing (like food or sport) or the indirect statement of personal value through selective possession of things that socially communicate a reaffirming message of success or status to self and public.

Materialistic values and attitudes arise from an imbalance of the natural spiritual dimension. It is an impersonal conspiracy to confuse as this imbalance leads to the hiding or the re-naming of the motives for our overt behavior. We do this to ourselves. We do it to others in order to do it to ourselves.

Perhaps we first project the ephemeral images of our created images to others because internally we seek a desired personal reality, but being uncertain of it, we must look for its affirmation in how others reflect it back to us. Therefore, by successfully fooling others, we end up fooling ourselves as we lay layer upon layer of artifice upon the truth of our inner being. The longer this process of self-delusion continues, the more difficult it becomes to locate and nourish one's spiritual core identity. Honesty is essential to spiritual growth. Truth and mercy are the intangible foundation cornerstones to justice and life eternal.

The problem is that we live in a world in which it is not safe to be honest or truthful, at least not about whom we really are, what we deeply desire and need or fear. We must be politically correct in our speech, and socially acceptable in our appearance and behavior. The world is uncertain. Our mortal survival depends on such things, and even if home is good to us, the children of the playground are cruelly unkind. Such is the hard stony ground in which spirituality must be planted, fertilized, and watered under the sun of the Creator.

Many people ascribe to the idea that changing behavior will change belief. This is only partially true because belief also modifies behavior. Belief and behavior are set spinning in a circle, and a spinning circle must be as balanced as a gyroscope in weight, form and speed, or it breaks

out of balance in a wild and destructive tumble like a washing machine wumping against the dryer, walls and shelves of cleaning materials in the laundry room. In the out of balance washing machine you've got a loud, uncontrollable, messy problem getting worse by the second until you can shut the power off. This is life. Life writ personal on you and your family and writ large on our nation and the world abroad.

Expedient Legalism

I reject the statements of softening sentiments that usually accompany a new policy or initiative. They simply mask the materialistic basis for a decision. Such a deceit helps no one. It is not good human relations, public or personal. It is a denial of truth. Such deceitful manipulation of true facts and motivations make the advancement of good spiritual decisions under bad circumstances impossible.

Lying or any other tool of manipulative control is a devaluation of anyone on the receiving side of the social interaction. Open honesty is far more respectful and promotes the kind of spiritual growth that yields long-term benefits for all parties. And do not forget, I have already stated how bad it is to be the person perpetrating the lies!

Unfortunately, even the American legal system promotes prevarication. The legal consequences of honest or utilitarian discriminatory decision can be huge. Therefore, it promotes duplicity of motive or action and retards the honesty essential for sound spiritual growth even as it may ameliorate the overt acts of violence common to social conflict. Trained lawyers are skilled in biased presentation of fact. Truth is not the object of legal action but advantage of the client. For example, this sad characteristic of the American legal system pervades the historical legacy of President Bill Clinton. In his case our current legal climate combined with his personality to produce chronic dishonesty and dishonor.

Principled honesty was sacrificed to political expediency. The message is that anything and anyone may become expedient at some point in order to advance the "good cause" of one's growth in power. Many "causes" could be considered good. That is not the point. The point is that for the perpetrators, the end justifies the means: the acquisition of the money essential to the support of an always-campaigning juggernaut or ever expanding business scheme is the materialistic bottom line upon which the principles of a self-preserved life are defined. People who constantly campaign, or who frenetically add one distracting activity after another to their lives, do so because there is something to cover up.

Such is the criminal consequence of materialism masquerading as social responsibility or even spirituality. Perhaps the criminals are less to blame than the country as a whole. As a polity, America permits such spiritual atrocities in politics because we don't much care about spiritually based values. As a culture, everyone has been co-opted by our desires to be a part of our almost pervasive national prosperity. It is as if the continued prosperity of the electorate can validate the inconsequence of governmental/political misconduct.

The sexual mores of the American public are confused, and the unpleasant politics of Washington was less important than the fact that most of us were making pretty good money. President Clinton did not resign, like many other democratically elected leaders do when such mistakes are made, because he knew that the people didn't care because they were just as confused about sexual morals as he was. The President and the people shared roughly the same materialistic value system, and he knew that the fortunate serendipity of growing national wealth in the 90s economy would protect him from a forced political removal. Unfortunately, the negative consequences of such a spiritually sick legacy will be with the nation for decades because it penetrated deeply into the fabric of our culture.

Returning to the discussion, we see that a materialistic worldview is typified by decisions, which are the essential expression of our intrinsic humanity based on some measure of material value. People infected with materialism exercise the power of their creative, imaginative choice according to calculated, conditional principles determined by the present benefit, as expressed in dollars or some other measure of material value.

Materialism, Commodification & Spirituality

com·mod·i·fy *tr.v.* **com·mod·i·fied**, **com·mod·i·fy·ing**, **com·mod·i·fies**

To turn into or treat as a commodity; make commercial: "Such music... commodifies the worst sorts of... stereotypes" (Michiko Kakutani).²

Materialism is a value system wherein the cost or material advantage/benefit of a choice is the determinant factor of behavior. Everything has a price. That price may be a part of one's conscious process of making choices, or it may be subconscious – below the level of our analytical awareness. Realistically, the degree of consciousness versus subconsciousness is always on a sliding scale. We are never fully one of the other while mortal, and in fact the particular level of consciousness varies within any person over variables of time and setting throughout the continuum of decision making called life.

There are no exceptions in this worldview. It usually does not begin that way, but it ends up that time, relationships, truth, righteousness, honesty and honor become denominated by a measure of wealth or status. Even the mortal survival or dignity in being, the world's natural resources, the biosphere of ecologically dynamic plants and animals, our children - both future and now living, all denominate down to a common currency of economic benefit. Economic benefit is measured by the degree to which it preserves and extends a person's, group's or organization's strength and survival. There are no priceless principles or lives because survival is the bottom line: any alternative is better than death. Stated another way, better your death than mine.

² Commodify. (n.d.). *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*. Retrieved November 05, 2006, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/search?r=2&q=commodify>.

This is the essence of commodification. It is not an issue of sentiment or statement of beliefs and principles; it is a system of hard facts derived from objectively observable behavior that gives true witness to the degree of materialism present in any one decision. Materialism is an attempted subjugation of the universe to the ego's value system. The value system of the humanly mortal ego is founded on its survival. Survival is promoted through the ego's extension of control over its environment in order to create a buffer zone of protection against any movement of life status towards weakness, sickness or death. This buffer zone is observed in behavior patterns that amass possessions, wealth, property, followers and family. It is also present in those that nourish and coddle the sensual appetites of the flesh in a consoling confirmation of its intrinsic vitality.

It is commonly believed that even though the body may die, somehow, "we" continue on, if nothing else, at least in the memories of others. Therefore, the human ego that we are all born with references value to its own material survival, benefit and extension. All value and its appropriate utility are judged from the reference point of the one holding the temporary control of the asset/person and/or its use/destruction.

Ego benefits provide materialistically tangible security for our intangibly mortal fears by protecting or nourishing our natural lives with fame, food, power, wealth or sensual pleasure. Each ego differs in its favored mix of reassuring delusions of insurance that it will not die but somehow continue beyond the grave. The important point to note is that these insecurities are manifested in behavior as opposed to the ideas, motivations and justifications for any particular behavior.

The Role of Mortality

Deep within us, the brain knows and fully believes in its mortality, thus it works ceaselessly to keep itself alive. The bottom line of human nature is that any alternative to death is ultimately acceptable. Life continued this moment provides hope for the next. Carried to extremes, self-preservation works against survival. Out of imagined or real fears, we often destroy ourselves in heroic efforts undertaken to prevent our foreseen doom. We take risks that we needn't have taken because we believed the dangers and fears we were fleeing were greater than the risks taken. Humanly, we will choose any uncertain outcome over certain pain, deprivation, death and destruction. Life is a gamble, and we take the odds that seem best at the moment.

Over the centuries of human experience we have learned to balance our fears with compensating belief systems. The more those belief systems are based on truth, the healthier has been their flavor of spirituality. What is truth? It is found in the facts (not suppositions or sanctioned speculations) of ensuing human conditions described by such terms as "general welfare," "quality of life" or in the predominant presence of balanced individual and communal love, liberty and responsibility in a social context.

As a result, successful people deny certain immediate gratifications or immediately needs for material survival in order to prosper in the long run. Socially, groups have learned to sacrifice a few that the many (the

group itself) may survive. There is a definite interlocking connection between individual and group survival. Biologically, there is a cogent argument which states that we survive genetically through our relatives and our children; therefore, people are naturally motivated to sacrifice themselves up to and including death in order to preserve the continuation of their genetic or cultural heritage.

In other words, deep within us personally we all know that we will die. Yet the nature of the human ego within still denies death at some level even if our personal philosophy and belief is that there is nothing to humanness that biology can't explain - that we are naturally mortal and made of matter only. Furthermore, in the natural denial of our mortality, we create a fear of our certain and inevitable death, which in turn creates the need for some kind of belief in immortality – for the continuation of ourselves in some manner. For some, the belief lies in the idea of an immortal soul. For others, continuation lies in one's children, art or charitable foundation.

In subconscious to conscious reaction, we seek to escape mortality by embracing spiritual belief systems that contend and promote immortality in one form or another. The rationally explained expressions of our desired immortality have varied considerably over time and space. There have been a number of versions on the concept of an immortally divine spark possessed by each person as a source of personal identity, while others teach an eternal circle of recycling reincarnation where matter and metaphysical essence change form over the ages but are never destroyed. The common theme here is that the soul goes through some sort of eternally progressive cycle of purifying education. This process is spiritually automated and incorporates some aspect of judgment or quality control (as in Hindu *karma*). There are many theories to choose from, and they are the source of the world's concepts and practice of spirituality as religions.

Consequently, internal mental processes of thought and belief systems are much more difficult to pin down. For every admission of death's reality, there is a compensating balance of conditional denial, the ever present "yes, but." Therefore, one working definition of spirituality is any method of balancing out or overcoming these fears. This cause and effect explanation for the human condition is easier to see in others than to deal with it effectively as it applies to each of us personally. "I am just as mortal as the next person – regardless of personal style or belief system." This truth is difficult to accept, but once we have done so, the challenges of life become more manageable and spiritually enriching.

The fear of death is the source of human nature, the root of every manifestation of self-preservation present in each person. Its presence within psychologically healthy people presents humanity with a universal reality shared by all. Without recognizing this psychological connection, a spiritually balanced approach to life is impossible because a person will not be able to live at a level of elevated consciousness and social responsibility.

The reality of death is perceived at all levels of human consciousness. For those on an honest search for spirituality, there is no escaping it. We must deal with the definitive absolute of death's coming experience

as well as with a faith construct defining what lies after mortality. In death every human, and thus artificial, construct of spiritual truth is tested at its graduation to ultimate reality. For the materialist, there is nothing beyond present biological consciousness. For billions, there is the expectation of a reincarnation according to a karma form of justice that provides a new opportunity to finally escape the materialist treadmill into some kind of blissfully desired ultimate reality. Other billions believe that they go through some process of divine judgment that determines their spiritual destination for eternity.

Those who engage the ultimate absoluteness that death presents to them have sunk a part of the sure foundation life into ultimate reality. Death is a cornerstone of truth that can lead to other self-honesties. Being honest with one's self is the most essential prerequisite for a successful search for spirituality. True spirituality transforms the dissonance of human artificial realities towards congruence with ultimate reality or God. The beginning of that congruence is to accept deeply and humbly that human life is biologically limited to what we experience and see around us as material beings. In other words, death is the mortal end of each person's identity configuration within this conjunction of space and time across all dimensions. The creative generation of a person's identity ends at death.

Spirituality as a Form of Materialism

One rational direction for this discussion is to now conclude that spirituality is a form of materialism and thereby end our conversation. People suffer from psychosocial needs, and they make up the spirit world and religion to meet those needs. But not so fast. The key transition here is that the innate human need for spiritual answers arises from questions about scientifically measurable, material facts. Facts specifically related to our proven biological existence and its mortality.

Moreover, I have not yet begun to address the evidence for the metaphysical dimension of the universe, which includes the edges of scientific probing into the nature of life itself and into the paranormal and/or extrasensory capabilities of people. Scientific research has compounded the growth of sensually acquirable knowledge exponentially. It has clarified, intensified, and confused the thinking person's search for spirituality, but it has not ended it. And it won't because there are spiritual dimensions to life beyond the five senses and reason.

If we are to grow in our understanding, then openness in a reach for truth is essential. Humans are not easily open about these issues. Yes, we may be to a certain point, you know - to where we left off last time we struggled with our mortality, but honesty to the core of our innermost beings is not easy to achieve. In fact, I do not believe it to be humanly possible to attain perfect honesty at these deepest levels. Regardless of that fact, I also believe that we must continue to try, or the spiritual growth of our being or "soul," as it were, dies within us leaving alternatives worse than the frustrations of not knowing or not achieving an acceptable level of success in our search for spirituality.

These explanations enable us to defuse the disruptive immobilities of life caused by our subconscious fear of death. Humans exhibit many

kinds and degrees of phobias, but they all have one source – the fear of death because each person's subconscious, the deepest mortal you, knows the truth that death will end that person's/identity's existence. In consciously denying the biological mortality of the ego through various innovative spiritual theories (wishful artificial realities), we deny total mortality from within the deepest psychological self. Based on this deep denial, we philosophically and theologically construct an alternate truth, which thoughts and feelings are acted upon and expressed through the visible body. A person's precise interpretations and recitations depend on the belief system held or studied.

So spirituality puts a balance on the mortality of our consciousness, which enables human beings to function effectively in life and society. It accomplishes this feat through the temporary resolution of, or by providing interim answers to, eternal questions. These answers and solutions are combined with some level of covert denial of the truth that, without exception, every inner man or ego dies when the body dies. Since human nature inherently denies that humans are but biological matter, we imaginatively create rationally sound, spiritual explanations and substitutes for the truth of temporal material existence.

Dealing with the fear of death gives rise to some expression of faith and results in a spiritual rebirth. This principle is testified by the natural cycles of life as well as by the resurrection story of Yeshua/Jesus called Messiah or Christ. In one form or another almost all human philosophies and religions have embraced the myth that although humans are outwardly mortal and/or corruptible, we are all inwardly immortal and good due to one explanation or another. The "good" part is extremely important, for without it there is no enlightened rationale to justify immortality. Evil immortality is seen as hellishly undesirable, except by comedians looking for a bankably enriching laugh as they present the "other place" as an extension of the sensually good times enjoyed in the flesh.

Spirituality as the Non-Material

Contrasting spirituality with materialism is to define it as the unperceived reality beyond the reach of the physical senses, which is to say beyond the examination of the scientific method. Earlier I discussed how spirituality is an extension of the natural world of physical science. Throughout history and even today, most people think of spirituality as the opposite of materialism. The metaphysical spirit world or universe is an opposing negative mold or parallel dimension to the physical or material world.

Contrast is a very useful method to gain a better understanding of how things might be or probably are, and it is a rationally permissible approach. Even if one looks at spirituality from a scientific perspective, the issue merely becomes one of "where do you place the border between the two?" After developing the theories of relativity Albert Einstein spent most of his adult life searching for a "Unified Field Theory"; therefore, it is not unintelligent or unscientific to think of the physical and metaphysical dimensions as an integrated whole. Einstein spent most of the last half of his life looking for proof to what might exist

beyond the speed of light. It is not wrong to speculate on what lies on the other side of a black hole.

In contrasting spirituality with commodification or materialism, we can conclude the obvious. We understand the search for spirituality to be a search for the non-material, for a something which cannot be discovered or measured directly by the five natural senses of touch, smell, taste, sight and hearing.

The human mind is the ultimate analyzer and integrator of sensual perception. One could include thinking as an *Uber*-Sensor or summary of the totality of humanity's exploration of the natural universe and the mysteries of life because human philosophy and theology encompasses the rational application of these senses to these questions. Through the process of thoughtful exploration and logic, humans can embrace the intangible realities of the spiritual. We can visualize the metaphysical beyond the physical and sense that which lies beyond our natural capacity to explore materially.

Unlike material commodities, true spirituality cannot be bought. Even though access to and understanding of spirituality is advertised and competitively sold in the professional and media marketplace, its acquisition or experience cannot be directly caused by economic exchange. There may be an economic exchange to set up the conditions conducive to a spiritual encounter, such as a travel package to the mountains of Tibet or a session with a spiritual coach, but the exchange of material value, say money to buy this book, is not participation in, nor the enjoyment of, some level of spiritual exercise of and by itself.

The search for spirituality acknowledges by its existence that human life includes a spiritual component or dimension that desires fulfillment. Each person is more than just a body without denying the body, and we seek to encounter that spiritual essence of our ultimate being, of who we are transcendently beyond material substance or flesh. Spirituality requires the free interaction of one's being with the perceived evidences, which communicate the existence of a deeper reality, being, existence, dimension or power to the spiritually oriented person. By essence, spirituality exists beyond that which any person can readily dissect and classify using the vast arsenals of the physical and social sciences. Whatever this spiritual domain is, it operates according to rules only indirectly discovered by science in our physical dimension of space-time.

Symbolic evidence or the history of spiritual encounters usually becomes very important to the spiritual person. This is true whether the encounters occurred to others, such as a spiritual leader, or to the searcher because spiritual phenomena (miracles or encounters with the other side) are perceived as links to the very substance of life itself - or more importantly, to life's personal meaning and purpose. The scope of any particular spiritual manifestation ranges from an individual's experience of a deeply private or personal "ah-ha" moment to the reverence and respect of spiritual leaders and traditions that may be shared by millions of people.

digital spirituality

Chapter 4 - Natural Spirituality

“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.” Albert Einstein

The materialistic perspective views humanity as the highest moral authority. Hence, collective human thought becomes the source of spirituality. Unknowingly believing that the physical universe is all that there is, materialism enthrones science, the knowledge product of human intellect, on the holy of holies of our society, but even the most humanistic flavor of scientific materialism does not satisfy our deepest spiritual needs and questions. Nature does so beyond presupposition.

Natural spirituality is the awe beyond mere chance that must be experienced first hand. The mystery of Nature answers human yearnings both conscious and subconscious. Nature's multilevel impact supersedes any of the whys and wherefores accumulated in the exegesis of scientific laws and discoveries pertaining to the natural environment. For many, natural spirituality is the consummate ideal of what spirituality is all about - the very awe of existence, of life in the world of life interconnected. Some are honest in recognizing the boundaries of natural spirituality. For others it is a matter of functional behavior betraying the underlying philosophical perspective of the universally absorbed secular materialism that permeates modern global culture.

In simplest terms natural spirituality is a value system in which the quality or nature of life is more important than its continuation. Words being what they are, I need a chapter just to define what that last sentence means. Suffice it to write here, that in natural spirituality the intangibility of life is valued over its material context. In other words, spiritual life is valued more than money or any other materialistic expression of power that can influence or change the natural and sociocultural (both economic and political) worlds we live in. This value concept is currently out of vogue in western civilization. All truly conscious humans sorely feel the effects of its absence.

Many psychosocial commentators believe that we either have already begun a swing back towards spiritual balance or that we soon will do so. These conclusions or predictions are founded on a broad observation of human history and social behavior. A surge in favor of society's spiritual search is seen as a balancing reaction to our present pre-occupation with materialistic values based on a selfish preoccupation with financial wealth and social status. The things and experiences of daily life are now encountered at a pace of change unimaginable a few decades ago. I am certainly not the first or only author to comment on this aspect of modern life at Internet pace.

Spirituality demands and exhibits a significant degree of detachment from the material world. Those in its search may consciously seek to alter the hold of reason upon their hearts through the application of material aids that magnify sensual pleasure as a way of initiating or en-

hancing this detachment. Consequently, spiritual exercises have almost always included some kind of preparation of conditions favorable to its experience. Examples of such preparations include: fasting, meditation, prayer, locating the event at a sacred place, including rituals of mind-altering drug consumption, music, drumming, dance and/or mind altering foods, herbs or drinks.

Nothing really surprising here. In fact it should be expected given our discussion so far. It is logical to invoke material aids or environmental atmospherics in order to inspire natural spirituality, which at this level is defined as a person's or group's encounter with the biological life force. Natural spirituality's core characteristic or mission seeks to preserve a meaningful perpetuity for its adherents through an embracing of natural spirituality's forever of the fleeting present moment – the eternity of the NOW. In truth, the inevitable, but consciously delayed, end of natural spirituality is mortality – death.

If the end of natural spirituality is death, then why is it that most of us come away feeling more alive than ever, renewed and recharged from encounters with the natural world? First, because encounters with nature do impact us spiritually on multiple levels. There is a real spiritual force in nature that imbues every ecosystem uniquely. Our presence in natural environments draws on and contributes to those natural spiritual forces giving us the feeling of being “recharged.”

Secondly, even though we have studied it and come to rational explanations for so much of it, there still remain vast tracts of unexplored natural phenomena and ecological relationships that beckon to the more humble inquiries of a person seeking a purpose beyond self-gratification. Even at the present level of knowing and unknowing, nature delivers up on its platter more than a single person can conquer. So “Mother Nature” can still present us with something bigger than humanity – especially in small groups. In our direct encounters with her vast and powerful uncontrollability we come away exhilarated, or perhaps humbled at our hopelessness in the face of her fury.

The exact biome or activity engaged does not seem to matter much in the final analysis, except to say that each of us have opinions and preferences – some of which are more inspiring than others. Whether we choose scuba diving to encounter the denizens of the deep or sailing the atmosphere in a hot air balloon, the essence of the adventure is the same as we engage chosen, limited technologies to ride the waves of natural power as we explore the boundaries of technical understanding.

The popularity of one ecological encounter over another is but a function of accessibility, intellectual appeal and educated distribution of preference (marketing). Usually our choice of experiences derives from a positive sociocultural context such as continuing family traditions of outdoor activity or going on outings with friends; however, the impact of mass media nature programs drives an increasing amount of ecotourism that grants inexperienced urbanites access to some remarkable experiences with esoteric natural phenomena.

The appeal and satisfaction supplied by natural spirituality lies in its honest stripping of several layers away from the artificial realities we

humans create through our cultural adaptation to this world and universe. Rarely in pursuing natural encounters with the borders of the wild do we strip away our entire cultural interface, but many layers are inevitably left behind. For example, even with the advanced safety harness and with the coaching of expert guides, rock climbing can be dangerous - so can white water rafting or spelunking. That potential danger, or management of lost total control over one's circumstances in the wild, will awaken spiritual resources within even the most jaded secularist.

Removing Artificial Reality Naturally

Artificial realities come in all manner of cultural packages and formats. Usually when we think of reality, we realize that each personal perspective differs to some degree from the truth as measured objectively. Each of us has a set of beliefs and experiences which seem real to us within the scope of our own sensations, feelings and thoughts. Rationally, we may recognize or suspect that what we believe or are experiencing internally or personally may in some manner be distorted by our own imagination, that it just might be different from what is really going on, if we only knew better. Even so, we rarely do anything about it. Thus, experiencing an immensity of complex natural simplicity often provides the more objective perspective we need to re-assess our artificial self-constructs of reality.

Autonomous and interactive cultures get a grip on reality by using socially developed ways to confirm and measure it through some accepted form of verification. The elements of objectivity are commonly introduced by accepting a validity determined by an agreement arrived at from many points of reference or observation where others are able to independently repeat or confirm the conclusion or fact in question. In the multitude of witnesses, many aspects of real truth may be established. As long as the witnesses are in some measure objective, spiritual phenomena and principles may be established as valid or at least determined to be important and meaningful to those who experienced/observed it.

Although individual departures from "reality" may be what first come to your mind, I am more concerned here with those artificialities that reach societal scope. Their deceitfulness lies in their very pervasiveness in the consciousness of a society's members. When artificiality extends throughout a society, it is very difficult to impossible to obtain the services of objective outside observers acceptable to that society. Within the United States it is more difficult to obtain a perspective of how other nations view our policies, for example. When it comes to spirituality, the issue is that we are all mortal human beings. People might claim spiritual insight or experience, but how does one verify those claims?

Over the course of their development, human social realities may depart from the measurable truths of the natural world through the designed concentration of energy or power exerted upon a small area. "Small" may still be large enough to integrate large numbers of people into a web of economic and psychological interdependence. The basic principle is the same as when great wealth becomes concentrated in one

person's pocket or in the construction of artificial real estate developments from retirement communities to shopping malls.

Artificial bubbles of affluence can be created in the midst of wrenching poverty and perpetrate the illusions of wealth or social viability exploited by their builders and owners. Inside the controlled confines of these artificial oases everything looks "right with the world." One's sensory evidence supports the psycho-spiritual lies promoted by the resort's promoters at one level or another. The truth is only evident when you escape to a more detached perspective or temporarily leave the resort to witness how the staff and surrounding populace lives.

Concurrent with the advance of "factual" scientific materialism, "subjective" spiritual values were replaced by the rationalized morals and ethics of the modern, "educated" worldview. As human societies advance technologically and scientifically, they learned to substitute the tangible evidence of hard facts experienced in the "here and now" in the place of the previously believed intangible promises related to some sort of ethereal and unproved afterlife.

Scientific humanism suppresses spirituality as superstition, but it does not supply a universally satisfying substitute for our basic spiritual needs. Indeed, the popular curriculum preaches that as science has advanced, the spiritual world, bounded and defined by superstitious ignorance, has retreated from human consciousness even as the "factual" world of modern science replaced "superstitious ignorance" with knowledge and material fact.

Into this philosophical debate enters the sheer experience of the great outdoors. Any in-person exposure to the wonders of nature and cosmos impacts human consciousness. We sense the presence of something much greater than ourselves. Artificiality collapses in the presence of engaged biology and biomes beyond urban belief. This natural appetizer of ultimate reality challenges us to the core of our being with something from beyond our ego creations of illusory wealth and the artificial reality of golf resorts and verdant indoor-outdoor shopping malls. We sense that hidden in the expanse of the natural world we might find some answers to the spiritual questions that nag at our mental innards.

Materialism's unsatisfactory answers to life's meaning, challenges and problems gives rise to drug abuse. The use of various hallucinogens, intoxicants and depressants to neuron-chemically alter one's conscious perspective is materialism's unspoken substitute for healthy spirituality. Secular humanism officially classifies spirituality into safe and suspect experiences of elevated consciousness. The safe experience participates in the pioneering edge of the scientific frontier where science is precariously engaged in the process of producing knowledge about the unknown natural world. Every other form of spirituality is considered foolishness, suspect, or even dangerous to reputation and life.

Spirituality has increased in popularity as a backlash against the overly materialistic secular culture of the modern west. Human identity and the impact of a single person's choice have been lost in the massive billions of people pressed into our consciousness by multimedia aware-

ness. From sociobiology to consumer market manipulation, people subconsciously sense the futile emptiness of stolen personness, so they rationally and/or instinctively rebel against the secular norms of their materialist desert and emotionally enter the dense unknown jungle of spirituality in search of themselves and a life worth living.

The Search Begins

Searchers usually start in what is considered a safe area of spirituality – from a walk in the woods to yoga exercises. However, one's journey may soon begin to touch on what lies just beyond, so the searcher probes into the border areas between what seems truly safe and what suspiciously beckons as possibly dangerous and thus, exciting and appealing. These border areas have become so popular that many universities offer courses on them, and some offer accredited academic degrees in exotic spiritual studies.

One area of spiritual study on the border between the safe and suspect are the various folk religions and myths held by indigenous tribes left along the sideline of our fast-paced raceway we call the modern world. Science portrays these primitive practices to be the sops of mental comfort required by a life bound by superstition or as the blissful ignorance formally tolerated in those who are not yet "modern." The primary exception to this paternalistic putdown lies in the area of healing herbs. Big Pharma is busily interviewing and documenting the few surviving primitive herbalists in order to tap into the thousands of years of acquired experience with various healing herbs.

Some examples of suspect spirituality include these same tribes. Healers with herbs are also shamans who often combine the herbal treatments with spiritual exorcisms of infecting spirits and other unseen forces. Some perform knifeless surgeries. Others become entranced healers channeling diagnostic information about the sick subjects similar to America's famous "sleeping prophet" Edgar Cayce. Beyond these "primitive" tribal practices, any journey into the dark side of magick is considered dangerous and potentially deadly. The meaning here goes beyond any concept of moral collapse or an eternity spent in hell. "Deadly" here means just that – the cessation of mortal life. That means life as we live it every day. Messing with the "other side" was fraught with unknown dangers; therefore, shamans were concurrently feared, sought after and respected by their communities.

Borders between metaphysical classes of experience blur easily. Most suspect spiritual pursuits lie outside the immediate realm of natural spirituality, and I categorize this class of phenomena as pneumagenic spirituality. Pneumagenic spirituality is classified in Digital Spirituality as real encounters with genuine spiritual forces, or entities or beings. I come to mention it here because natural spirituality, as well as theological or philosophical spirituality, may act as a doorway into the uncharted dimensions of the metaphysical reality.

For example, many aspects of natural spirituality are utilized in beneficial or "white" magick. Practitioners of magick differentiate between the safe "white" magick and the dangerous (suspect) "black" magick, and they recognize that the border between them is very hairline and

jagged. There are many different systems of black magick. The variations lie primarily in the different names and specific order of rituals invoked, but the basic principles are quite similar. The world of the occult is a confusing, ever-shifting terrain of smoke, mirrors, truth and lies, but more on that in the chapter on pneumagenic spirituality.

Unbalanced Sexuality

Nothing dominates popular media more than amoral sex. Its omnipresence feeds obsessively compulsive economic transactions driven by libidinous addiction. Sexual appeal, advice, issues and images are so pervasive in modern western society that I will not even attempt to prove that our excessive focus on sexuality is out of balance. Instead, I will offer a discussion about why sexuality is out of balance and how that impacts one's search for spirituality.

Throughout the natural world, the sex drive is one of the most powerful biological forces of life. Throughout history, humans have exploited and merchandized sex in a manner that distorts and destroys human lives on a massive scale. Besides an obvious linkage to profit generating popular demand, gender socialization and sexual expression play key roles in the processes of one's identity development. Individual choices within cultural expectations in sexual style and substance provide a palette of primary colors to paint one's living self-portrait. Merchandizing sexual choices and expectations mightily contribute to the commodification of life, which is a primary and deceitfully effective way to devalue it.

Because modern materialistic cultures dry out the spiritual waters of the human heart, they create an inner emptiness that drives millions to try almost anything to become someone. Most people alive today struggle with unfulfilled lives of limited hope or happiness. Our modern spiritual wasteland offers spiritually deceptive answers to these inner needs in the form of gender role redefinition or chosen modifications to sexual identity. An individual muddling through life in a state of psycho-emotionally confused consciousness is desperate to design whom he or she really is as a person. Our media profitably panders to these spiritual needs with misdirected advice at a high price.

In other words, a real spiritual vacuum is transformed into, or positioned as, a problem of unfulfilled sexual satisfaction open to universally simplified solutions that may be directly or indirectly purchased. While issues of sexual dissatisfaction are genuine, they do not account for the pervasive imbalance of sexual preoccupation present in western society. Put into historical perspective, I see the media's sexual answers as an updated version of idolatrous fertility worship. To insure environmental fecundity, many ancient religions incorporated human sexual acts and food offerings into their priestly liturgies.

Today's sexual solutions are driven by images implanted by popular media through video and audio devices instead by the statue of a mother goddess placed prominently in a temple. Similarly, today's male and female film and music idols dominate the virtual altar of public attention and receive billions of dollars from millions of fans who place budget priority in the virtual experience of a diverse assortment of sexu-

ally oriented entertainment venues – many of which are totally bizarre, demeaning of humanity and violently destructive. Of course, virtual experience eventually leads to attempted actual experience with other persons, whether voluntarily engaged by consenting adults or through forced abduction and murder of adult and child victims. If even only a few of the many incidences reported are accurately verifiable, there is more than enough evidence to support the society wide issues presented here. Unfortunately for the thousands reported and the millions not reported, unbalanced sexuality takes its terrible toll on human lives every second of every day.

Natural spirituality can help us move towards a better balance in sexuality. It cherishes life within the course of a person's life cycle and social context. Sexuality is not denigrated or exploited when it is experienced in the environmental interchanges of real life as working persons of intrinsic value. It is not commodified when engaged in as a natural expression of responsible love and care, and neither do its participants suffer endless event chains of abuse and identity devaluation to empty destruction.

Naturally, our birth gender contributes to who we are as individuals. Because life experience does not satisfy millions, they are open to the allure of sexual solutions to their spiritual identity problems. Sexual desires and activity tap into the life force heavily, mold emotional outlook and provide tangible expression of artificial and real personal identity. Although it is a deceitful substitute for spiritual power, sexual experience and image are readily accessible and may be immediately rewarding sensually. Millions, if not billions, are enslaved to it resulting in a faux spirituality that can only create a material-bound identity.

Natural spirituality's inner peace evades the sexual deviant. Evidence for this conclusion is abundantly encountered in almost every public forum because the abusers of sexual power consistently seek social acceptance for their contrived concepts of sexual normalcy, which are actually excessive distortions of artificial reality. The temporary euphoria enjoyed from self-directed sexuality provides only short-term satisfaction. Its transitory reality of impact calls for reinforcements because it is an artificial reality. Just as a Ponzi scheme needs new investors to pay the promised premiums, so do perpetrators of sexual deviance demand open public acceptance of their behavior, and/or new objects of their desire, in order to expand the borders of a social artificiality or lie. The energy focus centers on the arrogant seeker of public approval in an idolatrous exercise of an identity destruction driven by material gain and/or sensory-emotional addiction. It is all the more dangerous because gender supplies one of the most foundational identity components.

Present social expectations do not help. Materialism has perverted western cultures' modern views on sexuality. It's commodification of life cheapens sexuality so that it destroys people through its abuse at the extremes and by its distorted, socially perceived role in life. Natural spirituality helps to restore a balanced approach to sexuality through a reverence for the special sacredness of life's creation ability within the responsible social contexts of healthy family life. If permitted, it reminds us that the problems of life are challenges to one's spiritual

growth as a unique person. Those challenges are best met by embracing life through the application of a forgiving love rather than by fleeing the challenges of painful disappointments, betrayal, hurt and/or unwanted consequences of our poor decisions and the circumstances that arose from those decisions.

This approach does not necessarily mean remaining in what seems to be a physically or mentally abusive relationship that is destroying one's physical (bodily) and/or psychospiritual health. It is important to get an objective third party spiritual perspective on our own lives sometimes because we cannot be objective about ourselves. Our materialist values and everyday practice of use and toss, enjoy while it lasts then exchange it for another, applies to more than toys or automobiles. It has overflowed to how we treat ourselves and others spiritually by creating a culture of blaming others for the consequences of our own foolish, wrong and/or impulsive decisions. Mortal life is by nature unfair in order to inspire the spiritual response that will reveal who we are intended to be forever.

Respectful practice of sexual responsibility is impossible without mutually committed love between the participants as well as for any new persons born of their union or affected by it. Ideally, I refer here to unconditional love, but even a balanced conditional love will work psychosocially. Without disciplined love, sexual activity becomes repetitively boring and empty of lasting gratification. This leads to the pursuit of extremes in abusive sexuality cyclically expressive of and causative to the devaluation of one's self and worth as a person. The commodification of one's own sexuality for the purposes of survival and/or sensory escape from life's empty promises only represses spiritual enlightenment or progress. It is a choice skewed towards death and not life.

The burning issues of American society are not really "homophobia" and a woman's "choice" concerning the legal rights over her body, but rather the personal and social attitudes toward, and the practice of, sexuality now "liberated." Liberated from what? Perhaps an abusive situation, but as a society, we are clueless that the unhealthy relationships causing sexual abuse and dissatisfaction are ultimately rooted in materialism – perhaps even a false spirituality. Nor does escape from one sexual trap justify a materialist response that lands one into another. Responses to problems are not real solutions if their primary feature is simply to relieve us from the need to responsibly face the difficult spiritual challenges that come from entangling personal commitments, failed relationships and the natural fruit of heterosexuality, which is a new person - the ultimate purpose of life by design.

Thus, abortion becomes an issue of sexuality. Sexuality is naturally bound to the generation of life. Sexuality without that possibility is not natural, which observation has implications for those pursuing homosexual preferences. Yes, it is true that one can find examples of asexual reproduction in the natural environment. In most cases asexual or self-fertilization is a specie's emergency survival strategy used in difficult circumstances. On the whole the natural spiritual balance found in biological life is expressed in the female-male yin-yang. It is not yin-yin or yang-yang. This is the digital nature of both the biological and spiritual dimensions of the universe. Of course, we must exclude from

this systems design view the exceptions where things sadly go wrong due to the destructive mutations and/or degeneration of human, plant and animal genetic material. Process design always provides for errant defects or statistical outliers.

By natural biological design, sexuality is spiritually sacred because it is the concentration of biological and spiritual life forces. Nature's sacred core is fertile life and not sterile death. Reproductive union produces the creation of new beings when bodies are sexually joined together. Actually, sexual union creates several new identities for people, which are manifested biologically, socially and spiritually.

It is not just the baby that is created. Socially a family comes into being, and the life forces are spiritually mingled, too. The relationships thus created in turn form learning situations that force us out of the comfort zones of self-protecting selfishness to consider the care for another adult and then innocent, totally dependant children. Sexuality was purposely designed to biologically force a spiritual confrontation with ourselves. Corrupting sexuality to purposefully avoid or negate biology's spiritual learning opportunity destroys natural spiritual potential to the detriment of all. Spiritual balance provides for family planning but not for family avoidance.

Being sacred, human societies around the world and down through the ages have made more taboos and rules concerning sexual relations than almost any other aspect of human society. These rules defined the applicable responsibilities for sexual relations by each culture's moral consensus. Historically, there has been a universal religious bias towards heterosexuality because of its obvious potential for the children so necessary for the survival of a clan, tribe or nation. I do admit that cultural biases have often been restrictive to oppressive of women's rights and dignity as persons. Also, some ancient cultures did permit homosexuality, but ideally only within prescribed parameters that still recognized the sacred nature of potentially reproductive heterosexuality.

Of course, there is no consensus in modern western society today so there is great confrontation between different subcultures within our society. The source of that confrontation is the growing predominance of the materialistic outlook on life by all participants in the dialogue. They spend their energies on excusing their own failing by pointing to the abuses and failures present in the lives of their opponents.

Rather than admit to personal spiritual emptiness, they compare themselves to others less commendable. Rather than measure their attitudes and behaviors against the higher standard of even natural spirituality, they associate with fellow deviants from the same. None even dares to mention even the true health cost to society of materialist sexuality in both the dollars spent to deal with the consequences of modern sexual practices as well as the suffering and impeded lives that result from sexually transmitted diseases. Condoms are not the universal, across-the-board answer – a reverence for life is, beginning with one's own spiritual potential.

Instead of honoring the sanctity of sexuality in specific and life's sacredness in general, modern western societies' sexual attitudes and behav-

iors have made an idol out of heightened passions and pleasures as substitutes for real life. Natural vitality has been crushed out of western society by its materialistic value system and rejection of healthy spirituality. Mass culture's headlong crash in the pursuit of evermore bizarre and extreme sexual expression and exhibition testifies of its deathly core of being.

Sexual pre-occupation becomes a form of idolatry whenever the felt passion and self-benefits of its exercise are more valued than its practice as an expression of life intrinsic in successful union. This attitude makes the modern approach to sexuality a material thing to be manipulated for strictly personal advantage out of something meant to be shared in trust that is precious in itself for its wealth of potential and opportunity. Biological sexuality is the fountain of natural life, and the bodily urges and pleasures of its practice are omnipresent in the natural cycles of life throughout the ecosystem at all levels of biological existence.

My point is that natural spirituality contributes a healthy sense of balance to our modern materialistic approach to sexual pleasure and perversion. It points out the necessity to protect life in all of its dimensions – both in mind and body, spiritual and social. In contrast, mass media entertainment promotes the pursuit of sexual pleasure with a distortion that values excessive sexual compulsion to distraction more than the life force it represents. It does so shamelessly in greedy pursuit of prurient profit.

In today's widespread commercial and manipulative exploitation of sex, materialistic societies have abandoned the intrinsic sacredness of life for the ephemeral experience of momentary nervous sensation. In its place they have erected an impotent holographic image of the real thing. The images of pleasurable desire are everywhere, the realities are not. The responsibilities and rewards of what comes after or should accompany sexual activity are resoundingly absent.

And the result? The result is a passing passion that does not satisfy but leaves one still searching insatiably for more. The more leads to excess sexual activity, drugs and violence. The bottom line of this destructive process is broken relationships, abandoned children and ego identity-implosion. All of which impede healthy spiritual growth and fulfillment because they break down biological health and constrain creative identity formation.

Love requires intrinsically mutual valuation and balance. It is a submission to the balanced rhythms of the natural forces of life. It is humility before the grandness of a living purpose beyond self. Instead of a manipulation to solely self-centered personal achievement, status, pleasure or desire, sexuality congruent with healthy spirituality is a synergistic system of energized, self-perpetuating biological and social relationships that do not require inordinate intervention and insertion of external power or manipulation in order to be satisfyingly fruitful and survive.

Dualism is the Wrong Approach

In dualistic systems of spirituality, the nature of the body is considered evil, and the nature of the spirit is perceived as purely good. Spiritual pursuits in this genre abuse the flesh or focus on deprivation of the body's biological needs or natural senses in order to enhance the presence and/or contact with the spiritual. Accordingly, any spiritual contact, possession or encounter with the realm of eternity is almost automatically judged to be good because the temporal world of the material, including the fleshly body, is evil or at best a hindering distraction. In some eastern theologies the material is not even real because of its passing, temporal nature.

Digital Spirituality emphasizes the reality of the physical universe, a material reality, along with the balanced roles of both body and spirit in the formation of one's spiritual eternity. Who we are flows from both components of our being. Without the union of a body and a spirit, there is only death. An unbalanced approach to either side of this structure inserts increasing levels of deathness to one's life, which is at its heart spiritual in nature and eternal in potential. As unique persons, we are not completely material or temporal, spiritual or eternal, but an incongruous melding of it all. Thus, extreme bodily asceticism is not called for to deal with an evil body. Nor do we bridge the sensual gaps between the metaphysical and the physical by eliminating the body's role in life as a strategy for removing barriers to spiritual enlightenment.

The importance of one's body to the formation of eternal identity is poorly understood by all philosophies and faiths. Many of them do, however, retain practices that honor the body's natural form, health and functionality. By the end of this section I hope that you will better understand why one should take proper care of his or her body in this life even though we live in it only a short time within the perspective of eternity.

Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, understood the role that balance plays in dealing with the body spiritually better than most eastern philosophers. His point was balance: neither deprivation nor excess. Drives of self-preservation – lead to much suffering of self and others. The goal is to keep the body under discipline but not abused through beatings or extreme deprivation. The middle way is best.

Your Body Beautiful

Modern western culture may be the most body conscious society that has ever existed. It obsesses about the external image of the body. People spend huge amounts of time, energy and anxious thought about what they can do to modify their external appearance. With the advances in medical technology, more and more of this obsession has focused on the refashioning or a body's flesh, its manipulation and/or adornment with painted tattoos or imbedded jewelry. Most do not think about its purpose. Too few even consider its healthy maintenance, growth and development over one's lifetime. And yet all of this energy derives from a universally perceived truth: our bodies are what set us apart from one another. They are what make us unique as individuals.

Much of our body image mentality revolves around our feelings of sexuality and the desire to be wanted or attractive. We have been media conditioned to equate sexual acceptance with the acceptance of ourselves as persons. Sexual intimacy substitutes for psychological depth of knowing one another. Rather than engage in thoughtful, multidimensional activity and conversation, people engage in sexual acts and fantasies. The absence of inner peace, of knowing that one is loved and a part of a familial whole of some kind drives the phenomena of substitute families from gangs to "swinging" clubs and resorts.

The mystique of sexuality has disappeared. Ancient fertility rites were more balanced than today's abandoned, irresponsible, almost frenzied pursuit of personally experiencing sexual excess in the number of partners, positions and a seemingly endless assortment of high-priced, manufactured accessories. Our culture is fixated and too many people's thoughts are fixated on the potentially addictive preoccupation with escapist sexual pleasure. Continued participation in this jaded pursuit of selfish pleasure in the absence of committed relationship context only aggravates the exploitation of all involved. If the true spiritual hunger of a sexually unbalanced person is neglected, it becomes desperately aggravated. Putting off, denying or suppressing our inner spiritual needs only feeds the continuity of false pursuits of increasing sensual titillation that will never satisfy the soul because it is the commodified and deceptive search for meaning in the rush of feeling the power of the biological life force surging within us. It is ever so fleeting and destructive of personal worth and identity as a uniquely creative being.

However, it is also wrong to conclude that the body and sexual desire are evil. They are not. They are natural and neutral in moral character. It is what we as deciding people do with them that counts. Just as international trade is good for national commerce, so a healthy balanced, sexuality is good for a person's spirituality. But too much of a good thing uncontrolled becomes evil, trending to death and destruction. So it is with frenzied global trade in pursuit of the very last mill of profit. So it is with frenzied indiscriminately excessive sex adventures. Both have commodified good things to a level of explosively destructive consequences.

The Body is Not Evil

Human civilization has suffered from great evil. Although the definition of what is evil may be debated between persons and cultures, that evil exists in the human sphere of experience and nature is universally admitted. The causes of evil are as debated as its definition. Digital Spirituality postulates that evil is caused by spiritual imbalances in the life force. Human civilization does not evidence the same balance of yin and yang as found in the natural environment. It is deficient in balance, which is why immersion in nature revives people. If we decide to accept the impact and consequences of natural reality into our lives, then we can experience a recharging of our spiritual batteries. Our spiritual index moves towards balance.

The source of imbalance in human systems is directly linked to our capacity to create artificial realities. Civilization is an artificial construct

not found in nature but created by human societies. That they are essentially artificial is witnessed by all human civilizations' cyclical and transitory qualities. Every "Golden Age" of every people and culture in the history of humanity is bracketed historically by chaos and degradation. The rise of a "Golden Age" is usually due to a strong leader's forced aggregation of resources, power and influence over a collection of populations. Usually one or more subcultures dominate others. Excessive concentrations of power and wealth corrupt spiritual balance, which eventually leads to a decline and fall for the historical cycle to begin again. For thousands of years, the limited advances of human technology kept the excesses manageable so that civilization has continued in spite of some occasionally severe imbalances of evil. Modern technology has expanded the power of humans so greatly that we can create artificial realities with the unintended potential to terminate all life on earth as we know it. Of course, some would intentionally use those powers to destroy parts or all life on earth in order to accomplish their diabolical purposes.

Spiritual imbalances come about as the result of two primary causes. The first is by human decision to realize excessive desires and power for personal benefit at the unbearable expense of others. The second cause is the interference and agenda of unseen spirit beings that also depend upon the same life force that sustains all of nature and humanity. These beings drain power from natural life support systems as well as from human social systems, which include empires and religions operating under the powers and principles of material spirituality. I will discuss this further in the chapter on pneumagenic spirituality.

Since evil derives from the imbalances of the life force, then neither the human body nor the bodies of animal species are evil, although both possess sensual drives for survival, appetites essential to biological function and regeneration. No one has ever considered animals evil because they often need to kill one another to eat or procreate. Disease may create errant behavior patterns, but healthy animal bodies are not naturally possessed of evil, although demonic or angelic possession and use of animal bodies for unnatural purposes is documented by a number of ancient religions.

The natural environment is a spiritually balanced set of interlocking ecosystems that perpetuate the cycles of a diverse web of biological life. The natural balance of the life force in nature is upset only by gross external influence. Examples of such factors are human urban expansion, asteroid impacts, earthquakes, continental drift and the intervention of spirit beings mentioned in the paragraph above. Thus, evil is generally absent from natural organisms. Under the influence of a mostly balanced life force, animals are not evil; therefore, the flesh of their bodies is not inherently evil.

The difference between the biological bodies and function of animals and humans is minimal until one enters the realm of language, symbol manipulation and artificially created reality. Animals adapt to their environments and, within the limits of their genetic signature, may change biologically and socially over time and circumstance to improve their survivability. Any evil, sickness, madness, disease or depression is due to an imbalanced life force. Animals cannot manipulate the life

force, but humans can do so and have done so repeatedly. People adapt to their environments culturally and not biologically. They change a natural environment in a way that creates an unnatural or artificial environment or reality. Thus, lush gardens and massive buildings may come into being in the midst of deserts or sub-arctic regions, where such life would otherwise be impossible.

Human biology accesses the same breath or life force as animals, and human beings die for essentially the same biological reasons that animals die. Unlike animals, people do manipulate the life force into imbalance and create evil. Both material evil and good are due to structural imbalances of the life force created by the imaginative power of human decision responsible for the formation of artificial realities. In fact, human conscious may be defined as an artificial reality with the power to manifest changes in the material universe through bodily interaction leverage by technology. Thus, human bodies are not inherently evil. How we as persons respond to their urges and needs may create an evil experience or evil consequence for ourselves and/or others, but the empowering source of that evil is the imbalanced life force and not the body itself. Remember, natural death is not an evil but the evidence of a closed system running out of energy. There is a momentum of natural renewal through the creation-destruction cycle, but even the speed of light is slowing, which proves an albeit slow, but total, system wide trend to dissipation or energy loss.

So the human body is not evil and dualistic religious theories of an evil body and a good spirit are wrong. The body is neutral. The life force is a null set of good and evil, light and dark energies. There is no immortal soul or spirit creature imprisoned within a normal human body. Instead, we are responsible to make the right decisions about life in pursuit a slightly positive spiritual mix of choices that is not so excessive that it negatively impacts the spiritual force of others or the natural environment's carrying capacity. The wonderfully observed tolerance of natural systems to sustain temporary imbalances of biological presence is a reality too often ignored. Just because a good situation is sustainable does not mean that more of the same is also sustainable. There are limits to the flexible adaptation of natural systems.

Some will object to Digital Spirituality's contention that human life is only material and temporal. In truth, many religions and philosophers contend otherwise. I find no evidence for innate human immortality, and the evidence often proffered rather attests to the existence of spirit beings that may take and/or are given possession of fleshly bodies for the energy high it gives them. In the end, these spirit parasites kill their hosts with destructive callousness. To better understand the spiritual capacity or goal of humans, or to better integrate the body and all of its fleshly desires into a spiritually balanced life requires some philosophical understanding of how the human being's structure of body, spirit and mortal soul contributes to consciousness, identity development and eternity.

Structure of Human Life and Identity

The material universe possesses the capacity for change. My rationally derived purpose for this built-in characteristic of change is to enable a free will creativity to yield a rich treasure of diversity in individuality. The metaphysical forces do not vary in their universal qualities or nature. With spiritual forces, what matters is the degree of access and use: how much or how little are they at work in a being. The life force flows through the entire system constantly recycling. All living organisms must tap into it at sufficient levels to remain healthy and alive through its normal life cycle. Just as any physical force or energy follows universal laws blindly, so does the life force. It does not discriminate in any way but interacts with a living thing based on exposure, receptivity, capacity for flow and manner of application. It may be used for both good and evil purposes by conscious beings: the former results in a net positive balance of life and the latter in a theft of some measure of life that short circuits or distorts the natural balance of life.

Thus, someone rich in the life force is very much alive, without any lasting sickness, sorrow or depression. Because of the universe's characteristics of constant change, all living things – plant, animal and human – require constant energy replenishment. If energy levels drop low, or the biological system is not balanced in its nourishment and activity, in its inflow and outflow of energy, then the being trends towards weakness, ill health and death. In fact, nature employs competitive survival to eliminate the weak and unhealthy. In any ecosystem, objective reasons contribute to weakness or strength, health or death, and its balancing act works to replace the unfit with the best fit available. How the specific trends manifest themselves depends upon the bodily qualities of the plant, creature or person under consideration.

Consequently, our individuality, our personality or what makes a person the unique identity he or she is, will be rooted in the material differences of each person's body and how those differences manifest themselves in the living of one's life. Some of those differences represent assets, and some provide difficult challenges to overcome. Thus, spirituality focuses on how and what a person chooses to do with his or her life. How do you apply the spiritual forces available with the body you are born with. Writing this statement, I have added a third element to a person's living structure – the intangible consciousness or creative capability for choice in thought and execution.

Just as ultimate reality is divided into two spheres of physical and metaphysical, so biological life reflects this same organizing principle. Two primary elements must be present for life to exist: a working bio-mechanism or body and the power to activate it – the life force in the temporal dimension of reality. Because the rich potential for genetic variety is further diversified in how a person chooses, creates, avoids, rejects, implements and survives the multitudinous options and combinations of life factors available, spiritual reality presents us with tremendous potential for unique identity creation in metaphysical abundance.

The awareness of this potential is consciousness. Unfortunately, most people go through life with little application of conscious choice. They neglect and do not use their freedoms and vast potential for rich living.

Most wander through the maze of human existence mindlessly reacting to and directed by blows or shocks administered by others individually and collectively (through social interactions and structures) perceived to be beyond their control. They prefer spiritual sleep, the dull hum of residual consciousness instead of truly seizing life as a whole from beginning to end, one person interacting with a living universe.

If you don't think that "automatic pilot" describes your life, or that it doesn't happen to you, I ask you, "How many times have you driven by your objective, missed an obvious highway exit or talked on your cell phone without causing a serious accident?" You were on what I call "automatic pilot" – the brain's capacity to function and keep you alive biophysically despite your lack of attention. While this works often and variously under different biological and social environmental circumstances, it does not work to your benefit in any search for spirituality. In fact, the natural brain is set against the directed effort and thought required for spiritual growth. It is set on self-preservation, which is a steady road towards death all of the time fearing it and avoiding it. Healthy brain activity is not consciousness or mind.

A human being's individual pattern of consciousness or mind is his or her identity. Your mind and being, personality as a unique individual is completely intangible resulting from the activation of a functioning body given access to the life force. The dynamically unique pattern of who you are comes from the union of body and spirit. Separate the two, and we are dead, inactive, unconscious, not present in this point of time and space. The very intangibility of our identity's essential and existential being is what gives us the potential for eternity. Anything else would be bound to the material universe in all of its vastness.

For example, I believe that our identities leave imprints on the life force like spectral signatures in electromagnetic or light energy. The patterns of our existence, creation and interaction with others and all life in the universe travel as intricate patterns imbedded into the life force as it travels to the ends of the universe at the speed of light in the 5th dimension. Thus, the record of our identities – every word, deed and thought at each discreet mini-moment of time - possess a material eternity that may be accessed somewhere in the material dimension of the universe right now. That applies to every person who has ever lived. If and when those patterns reach an appropriate spiritual receiver, they may be played back or restored. That is the reason why bodily resurrection plays such an important part in many religions. Even in Jesus' case, the Bible testifies specifically to a bodily resurrection. His resurrection to a spiritually eternal life included the transformation of his dead fleshly body into a metaphysical one before it had decomposed. It was a purposeful object lesson for all humanity.

Summing up the structure of a human person, Digital Spirituality proposes that human life is founded on the union of a material body with the breath of life or life force, a spiritual power temporally bounded at the speed of light referred to as the 5th dimension of space-time. The union of the body and spirit creates a third entity, the soul. Human beings are born mortal souls. The souls are mortal because consciousness in space-time requires the living union of a fleshly body and life

force. Both composing elements are material and limited by all natural evidence.

The intangible soul created by their union is itself mortal because it depends on the union of two material components. The intangibility of the creative identity or consciousness of a person is evidenced in his or her impact on and in the physical universe – both in regards to animate beings as well as inanimate objects. The patterned signatures of each person's consciousness left in the life force are themselves temporal, although possessing long-term material existence. All evidence, imprint and conscious existence experienced as human beings will pass with the end of the physical universe. The rational deduction that the meta-physical universe as it may exist today would pass away at the same time as the physical universe only emphasizes the temporal nature of human life in all of its elements.

Thus, any search for an eternal spirituality must eventually transcend the present set of realities. It must minimally reach outside of the physical universe, which is why so many have engaged in pneumagenic spiritual encounters. I will discuss that in chapter 6. In the next chapter, I will discuss philosophical and theological spirituality because it is especially wise to think thoroughly examining the evidence available and reflect upon it before engaging spiritual powers outside of the natural balance of the life force or one's own conscious use of it.

From this perspective of human structure, the body becomes more significant than the superficial treatment so often given to it by religions and human cultures throughout history and especially now. Firstly, one's genetic heritage becomes more important and relevant. We reflect the genetic success of our ancestors as well as inheriting some cultural and spiritual context. The role of the body in creating unique identities helps to explain why its genetic make-up is so complex. The Human Genome Project is just beginning to discover that the body's genetic structure is much more than just the identification of which gene variants are present. Just think what it would be like if everyone shared identical genetic signatures like identical twins?

Respect for the body is important in respecting the person. Decoration of the body reflects the identity of the person. Cleanliness, grooming, exercise, good diet and other health considerations become important components of healthy spirituality. We have been given the blessings of life, consciousness and the capacity to learn and change. There is not excuse not to apply them in whatever situation we may find ourselves at the present. A balanced but attentive attitude and pattern of bodily care and health maintenance contributes to eternal well-being, too. It frees our minds to search more effectively. If one is presently in poor health, incarcerated or trapped in the rat race of surviving the self-imposed traps of civilization, any small beginning of choosing the options biased towards life instead of death produces immediate spiritual benefit that will eventually materialized in better physical well-being, too. This creates a virtuous cycle of spiritual growth within an enhanced natural life expectancy at a vibrant level of dynamic physical activity and mental consciousness.

Abuse or commodification of a body cheapens the person and is a severe act of violent destruction. The degradation of the body in any way degrades the person. This is true for sexual promiscuity as it is for racial or ethnic discrimination. It degrades the special value of a person destroying the uniquely individual nature of his or her consciousness and violating the spiritual principle of free will. What is done to persons is done to tribes and nations by forms of Globalism that destroy national identification and heritage through policies and practices motivated by greed for wealth and power. I also make similar arguments elsewhere in this book in regards to unregulated immigration policies primarily justified by economic considerations. Valid spiritual principles work at all levels of scope and should be applied accordingly. Both conditional and unconditional love take the consequences of life destruction into account, and based on a policy or practice's degree of inclination towards life, it may be considered moral and spiritually ethical.

The Life-Death Continuum

If life is a kaleidoscope of color in motion, then its moral rendition is the grayscale conversion to the black and white pixelated pictures of each moment. Digital Spirituality is built from the binary analysis of living data across time and space as perceived in the human dimension of life on earth. Every action and thought may be broken down into its elements, its network of decisions and implications, effects of internal and external consequences that composes to some shade of gray when seen from the total composition. The moral judgment of human life is the product of the life force that can produce nothing more colorful because it is all a bit picture of black and white (yin and yang) of varying intensities. The structure and composition of those elements can be revealed when any aspect of a person's life, or any social interaction, is magnified to a high resolution of pixelated clarity.

Although the ultimate objective is to get back to color, we cannot get there without analyzing the elemental pixels of that which empowers our living: the fruits of the life force in our lives and those we interact with up close as well as at a distance. This means getting back to my earlier definition of good and evil. Good (light) is that which pertains to life and evil (dark) is that which pertains or trends to death. There is no pure white light in the natural world that is absent of any darkness because everything eventually dies. Just as the material stuff of life is recycled from tealeaves and field mice to redwood trees and populations, the spiritual stuff of life, the breath of life - the chi, ki or prana - constantly cycles between the dark and light, hitting all of the gray points in between. Its best outcome is a balance picture that trends toward the light, a life evidencing more white than black. This is the internal philosophical argument in support of karma: that how we live life now affects our spiritual future in some way. Some kind of score is being kept.

Without reliance on some external or traditional standard, analyzing whether one's thoughts, habits and considered actions trend towards health, happiness and life or sickness, sorrow and death is the most reliable and objective natural standard of morality. It works when balanced psycho-biologically between the life of one with the lives of the many

as well as a socio-biologically between the cultural survival of a minority within a majority and humanity as a whole. This approach is not without flaws as objectivity ever remains a challenge, for example, but it is the intrinsically wise standard of natural spirituality. Its primary advantages are the preservation from the overt destruction of the extremes and the stimulation of individual human consciousness as well as cultural health and vitality.

An immediate comparison with cost benefit analysis comes to mind – especially if consideration is given to long-term effects and not just the immediate or near term consequences. Many similarities present themselves as well as common weaknesses. The advantages of being able to break down all thoughts and behavioral patterns or acts into their decision tree or high-resolution pixelated composites is very attractive. The major weaknesses come about when considering the subjective intangibles of life. How do you account for or consider the value of loyalty, the definition of beauty or even what constitutes the minimum quality of life worth living? Despite these very significant systemic weaknesses, such an approach is more rational and less arbitrary than the materialistic values absorbed without conscious evaluation that dominates our modern world's program of moral education. Global values are skewed to a material measure of wealth, of value based on a slippery standard of monetary worth, and they are promulgated inadvertently and/or intentionally by the media and systematically through the rewards and punishments of the economic-political-social systems of human societies.

Many individuals are aware of their culture's moral programming and try to re-make their mental outlook through a redefinition of who they are as persons. The challenges of doing so successfully are significant. It requires a great deal of energy, so conscious self-reformers often borrow or lean on existing alternative answers to modern materialism. Bookstores and media formats explode with alternative ideas, so it is natural to go shopping and select what we like from them. Most subconsciously adopt a homogenous variant of what their peers are doing and espousing. A few go a little deeper than that in a conscientious exercise of internal moral and philosophical consistency. They deeply examine whether or how the individual items bought or considered fit into their existing identity paradigm as well as evaluate the net moral value of their evolving sense of philosophical and moral self as recast in an intentional image of personness. Some of these self-creations venture into the extremes of severe artificial reality. None of us can naturally escape all forms of artificial reality. That is where nature comes to our aid again and one way how environmental issues can give us a dose of reality towards a better-balanced identity formation.

Balancing the Life Force

An absolute balance of the life force creates a null, which is death, so most of the time one must balance a living system on the positive side. I refer to this as a living balance. A living balance to the positive is required by material reality's natural entropy or loss of energy. The whole universe is winding down and so is every living system – biological and social. Where as I speculate that perhaps the universe requires ad-

ditional energy input from the 12th dimension in chapter 8, abundant evidence from the natural environment testifies that a skew towards surplus indeed provides a living balance. Each participant in every ecosystem produces more than is required to simply replace itself. In a functioning biological system that is not overtly stressed from the outside, natural checks and balances even out any temporary extremes of abundance or paucity before they get out of hand and set a trend towards self-destructive implosion or explosion. The tolerances built into the natural environment accommodate moderate surplus as insurance against irregularities of experience.

Another way of expressing this principle is that natural systems provide for plenty but not surfeit or excessive abundance – nor extreme dearth or lack. We apply it in our lives by seeking to create and retain more wealth than is immediately foreseeable – savings against the proverbial rainy day. When a person maintains a living balance of the life force, then he or she is alive, strong and healthy. More energy is available than immediately required to sustain life and do something constructive. Mortal life is in an inevitable descent towards death, but conscious intervention can cause the descent to spiral gently, floating downward as a down feather slowly sinks through the air to the earth, inevitably surrendering to gravity. Some are lazy and do nothing to impede their natural fall. They experience empty lives without meaningful substance and die much earlier than they should. Then there are those who actively choose the rush of addiction. They gamble everything on a fast and intense high. It is like buying their way to becoming a gold rock that sinks fast. They live fast and die fast burning up their potential in a self-destructive fury of ignorant confusion and spiritual impotence.

Balanced social and economic systems conform to these principles, too. Any lasting and productive social organization must have more willing and active participants involved than it needs or momentum is lost overtime to burn out. Social burdens are like weights. A person can carry a very heavy one a short distance for a short while. If someone helps, the two of them can carry it further and longer. If the weight is divided and shared with many – and with even more in reserve, then the weight can be borne almost indefinitely.

Similarly, businesses must make a profit large enough to sustain proportionate growth appropriate for its market. It needs enough reserves to fund innovation and invest resources in maintaining a positively balanced presence in an ever-changing market or set of markets. Nothing in life is static. A static business strategy dies being the victim of self-imposed (perhaps out of neglect or arrogance) economic entropy. As in chapter 3, I refer again to Eliyahu Goldblatt's Theory of Constraints (TOC). His theory purposes growth that does not exhaust its market. He targets abundant but not excessive or potentially exhaustive profit. The result is a business organization that positively balances the needs of its employees as well as its customers. Such an approach succeeds on multiple fronts in multiple dimensions.

Environmental Themes

Most of our ecological problems exist because we have “tinkered” with nature in order to force matters more to our liking. Awareness of socially and technologically created environmental problems has grown over the last few decades, but the real causes are obfuscated by their natural complexity and the socio-political biases of researchers and journalists. There may be recognition that the lack of spiritual values plays a major role in the justification of environmental abuse, but the solution is usually portrayed as the need to return to natural spirituality, such as practiced by indigenous peoples. The reaction of western democracies typically tries to “tinker” with the environmental factors as we currently understand them in order to restore it to some semblance of sustainable ecological balance. Neither approach will work over the long haul because each ignores some aspect of the systemic nature of environmental problems.

More directly related to natural spirituality are the environmental movements, the goddess fixation and its ultimate transmogrified form as Gaia, Mother Earth. The ecosystematic web of planetary life is naturally complex in its functional interdependence. The scientific establishment is transfixed by the twin headlights of biological genetics (the human genome project) and ecological equations of balance and imbalance (weather manipulation and global warming). Even with vast supercomputers and linked mega-nets of individual PCs and minicomputers, science is almost stymied by the vast complexity of our planet’s multifarious life systems. The average person may be forgiven to think of it all as an intelligent system of sentient potency – a goddess, the Gaia Mother Earth of Greek myth. This symbolism aligns well with the more radical feminists, which explains its resurgence in public awareness.

Of broader appeal is the environmental movement. Of course, there is nothing wrong headed about taking care of our planet responsibly. It is our home and the material source of all life outside of the sun, which energizes the earth’s biological systems. Without the sun’s energy, the earth would be a cold rock covered with a lot of ice. Thus, the ultimate yin-yang of Mother Earth and Father Sun has produced all life as we know it. These are the balanced natural forces of the universe at work on our globe, the dark absorbance of earth and the light radiance of the sun.

Science has not demonstrated how yet, but a number of specific sub-theories on how life began have been popularized over the years in order to justify how evolution could take place. Evolutionary theory remains learned speculation not sufficiently supported by empirical data. Science is more helpful and scientific in how we can restore raped environmental features and preserve/enhance the remaining biologically diverse remnants of our planet’s natural state. Along these themes a number of organizations have come into existence to save rainforest areas, preserve animal or plant species and otherwise to preserve and restore natural areas whose functional systemic values have become better appreciated.

We should recognize that some of them promote a false spirituality being at their core mere skills for global materialism. Nevertheless, most people involved in these organizations are clueless as to how their sincerely honest motives and hard work are being used by the global elite

to distract attention from their actual goals of monopolizing the controlling share of the world's power wealth and status. Beyond deceiving of the masses and relieving us of our positive balanced abundance and freedoms, the elite have probably deluded themselves into thinking that they are doing the rest of us a favor.

And let us not forget the introductory material of this chapter. The natural environment genuinely inspires us spiritually. Nature's vast beauty uplifts psychospiritually even as its health sustains us biologically. Both aspects are vital to human self-preservation. The common denominator of holiness is life. The sanctity of natural life systems is embedded in most indigenous religions. This extension of the holy to the planetary ecosystems has extensively re-entered western consciousness. It is but an acknowledgment of the ancient biblical command to Adam and Eve to "dress and keep" Eden's garden paradise.

Preserving the Environment

At this point I transition into the next chapter on theological or philosophical spirituality. Again the borders are fuzzy and overlap. The environmental movement has adherents who seem to be searching for personal salvation in the preservation of the wilds. A resurgent pantheism attests to a god in all, which is life. That life is biological, but it is also empowered by the natural life force symbolized by the yin-yang, which I believe is the spiritual answer to science's inability to create life even in the presence of all the necessary earthly compounds and solar energy. Biological life is indeed more than mere chemistry or physics. Biological life in all forms also requires a metaphysical force operational within the multidimensional context or space of biochemical processes.

The human species is indeed threatened by a globalized greed that rapes our environment for greater profit through the commercialized technological manipulation of genes whose potentially disastrous consequences go way beyond healing human disease or every day low costs that also produce increased yield bumper crops to feed the world's hungry masses. This threat is real and almost out of control. It is beyond the capability of a few to stop. That will require a universal rejection by the vast majority of the earth's population or divine intervention. The challenge of this set of issues is driven by the facts that individual self-preservation is more locally potent than collective self-preservation, and that the environment can only be managed and protected locally.

Secular materialism has destroyed vast areas of the earth's richest biomes. Its science threatens the survival of nations and probably even the entire human race. The destruction of the environment has come about due to a perversion of holiness. This is where the religious concept of holy has traditionally come to bear. Holy matters concern collective survival. Life is sacred, holy. Not just human life, but all life is sacred. Consistent congruent thinking demands an ethical system that is both pro-environment and pro-life. Moral social systems are built on the foundation of the holy and embrace both macroeconomics and the social implications of human reproduction.

The organic species provide natural boundaries for genetic drift that may be guided as we have experienced over hundreds of years in the

more natural development of domesticated agricultural plants and animals through selective breeding. The manipulation of genes across these genetic barriers is what creates the Frankenstein plants and animals that are not subject to natural environmental controls. This process is potentially even more disastrous than inserting a certain species from one side of the globe into a biome not capable of integrating or controlling it to the loss of native species and ecological balance. We have dozens of examples of these expensive and harmful occurrences from Japanese beetles and kudzu to mussels and mutated virus diseases.

But the answer is not a reversion to pantheism, where humans spiritually and biologically blend into the environment because they are a mere extension of the great apes. Our capacity to create artificial realities and to impose some of those realities upon the earthly environment denies us the easy out of considering ourselves mere animals. Animals function subordinately to their environments. The tools and adaptations they make do not modify the natural state beyond biological balance over a reasonable space of time.

Humans can and do use concentrations of power to modify the environment excessively beyond the rational natural boundaries of biological accommodation creating artificial realities of localized impact that exert may also a global impact. One example of this issue is depleted uranium. Uranium is a natural element. It is mined from the earth and concentrated by human technology to create nuclear weapons and fuel for reactors. As a by-product of atomic power plants, either depleted uranium needs to be artificially stored in remote hi-tech, shielded radioactive waste dumps deep in the earth's mantle for a price, or it must be sold for a quick profit – usually to be manufactured into armaments. It is still highly radioactive being much more concentrated than how it naturally occurs with a half-life of 4.5 billion years. In fact, many tons of it have been “recycled” into US armaments. As a consequence of the Iraqi wars, the Mideast suffers from wind blown dust clouds of the atomized remains of America's “conventional” armaments made out of depleted uranium. Today there are thousands of square miles exposed to this debilitating and deadly radioactive dust that imperils both US forces and local civilians.

Certainly, we must preserve and protect the natural environment. That is almost a no-brainer because we have seen the effects of industrial pollution, urban effluent and other forms of hazardous waste. High concentrations of population require hi-tech solutions to biological and industrial waste, or we suffer high evidence of disease, suffering and death, which are spiritual negatives.

Our spiritual obligations must include and go beyond preserving the natural environment for future generations because materialistic greed is only neutralized by a balanced spirituality. And that is why biological life is spiritually holy. This concept of holiness lays the foundation for rational philosophical or theological exploration and academic study of matters spiritual and divine, which is covered next.

digital spirituality

Chapter 5 - Theological or Philosophical Spirituality

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (Romans 1:20)

People create God(s) and spiritual constructs of the universe after their own imaginings or ideas. You could even say “after their own image.” Sometimes a person or social group believes in a mental construct of reality that involves a divine being, beings or hierarchy of spirits, but belief in a god, goddess or other spirit entity is not required. I define philosophical spirituality when the reality construct is non-theistic – does not involve a deity, and theological spirituality when one or more deities are included in a particular model of ultimate truth.

Whether you believe that God created the human mind or that it evolved, history is replete with the intellectual search to understand, define and categorize the realm of the spiritual. I believe that this philosophical or theological aspect of spiritual searching is the natural response of a mind designed to search out all matters of this universe as well as to survive the day-to-day challenges that each of us meet in our own bubbles of artificial reality.

Theological and philosophical spirituality came into existence as people tried to understand, explain and control the natural or pneumagenic spirituality that they observed and/or experienced. The academic products of this process range from Greek gods that run off with beautiful young virgins to theories concerning the mystical balance of spiritual powers required to achieve one of the various expressions of existential bliss. They include rituals, liturgies, and dogmas as well as the religious activities of worship, education, organization and management.

All rational and disciplined thought about spirituality (theology or philosophy) is constructed upon the foundation of humanity’s common and unique experiences of natural spirituality. It is the individualized process of rational examination that has introduced all of the religious and philosophical interpretations of reality, spirituality or the purpose for life - especially human life. Whereas religion is a subjective approach that focuses human feelings and acts towards the divine, theology and philosophy attempt an objective and systematic approach to the matter that is disciplined by reason. Religions arise from theological innovation that motivates a social expression for the human duties to God and fellow man.

Considering the separation of cultures by geography, time and language, an amazing degree of underlying similarity exists in human philosophical structure. Certain common problems and observations must be addressed as well as how each impacts a person or a human society. Some examples are:

- the questions of good and evil,
- faith and fear,
- the make-up of human nature,
- the existence of the metaphysical dimension,
- the existence and nature of God, gods or other spirit beings like angels and demons
- and how all of this relates to the human experience we call life.

The ideal goal of the search is to harmonize our humanly fabricated concepts of spiritual reality with what truly exists. While the ultimate outcome seems to be beyond the scope of this lifetime, we can at least make progress in reducing the number and degree of our misperceptions in the meantime. In other words, we should seek to minimize the artificiality of our individual reality constructs and better manage our inner doubts and fears.

The Sacredness of Life

Religious taboos often concern the sacred. They encourage people to behave, if not think, along lines of moralistic ideals that do not necessarily bring immediate social or economic advantage to their practitioners. The result provides a sense of purpose for life larger than an individual as well as expressing a collective purpose for a socially defined group of people, because religion is practiced by groups and not individuals.

The concept of the sacred communicates and transfers a culture's collective wisdom about life from generation to generation. Such wisdom not only deals with human relationships, but also with how a human being and groups of people should live responsibly towards the natural environment. Proper interaction with a society's environment in the natural world was essential for its continued survival. Many sacred practices and places preserve practical environmental wisdom and the spiritual resources essential to the survival of the group to whom they were sacred. Sacredness shouts, "Do not throw this out or change it at your peril! This is so important that it should be revered and not ignored or profanely revised."

The spiritual value of life conceived, preserved and conducted rightly lies at the core of the concept of sanctity or sacredness. This includes life lived at the natural, biological level of existence as well as in its aspects dedicated to the obviously spiritual otherness of eternity or metaphysical transcendence of the now. In philosophy and theology, cultures mentally encounter and rationally wrestle with the many paradoxes of truth. Biological life – especially human biological life - is central to sanctity, yet this holiness quakes in the face of death. All humans are mortal, and few who are psychologically sound seek to embrace that fact and accept it for the design absolute that it is. Most consciously avoid their impending deaths, which then hides their natural human fear of death within the subconscious realm of the inner most drives of self-preservation and procreation.

The thought systems of philosophy and theology labor to bring these inner fears to the light of rational thought in order to better manage or even resolve them. Thus, every philosophy or theology deals with the questions surrounding human birth and death within the context of the continuation of a culture through biological procreation and spiritual education. From these discussions come all of the ideas, theories and doctrines about life's purpose and what happens to a person (as a member/non-member of a group or society) after death.

One common paradox of human experience has been the repeated theme of a hero's sacrifice for his family, village or nation. While each person's biological life may be considered sacred, the continued sociological existence of a cultural group from generation to generation is more sacred, so that it justifies the sacrifice of many individuals when its survival is truly at stake or when its dominance over competing groups or nations is considered essential to its survival. Here in lies the conceptual root to the presumed nobility of one nation's or group's oppression of another. "If it is to be a question of us or you (plural), then let it be us alive and you suppressed, cut off from what we need, forced out or dead." On the personal level, these mortal struggles are expressed as, "Better you dead than me." Of course, the moral debate has always been whether a group's survival was truly at risk, or did members of a ruling elite use the group's the fear of potential defeat, subjugation or loss to manipulate them to oppose their competition as part of their struggle with other leaders from a different family, political party, nationality, language, race or religion.

The Role of Family

Most ancient cultures maintained a generational link beyond the boundary of death as part of its organic and chronological history of existence. Many sacred religious practices and beliefs are dedicated to maintaining and developing personal and spiritual relationships between those biologically alive in the material dimension of time with those who have passed over to the other side into the metaphysical dimension of eternity. Sometimes those ties are perceived to be very personal and direct, such as in the veneration of ancestors. Sometimes it is a step removed, such as in the veneration of traditional histories, values and social institutions. Ancestor worship is a good specific example as is the veneration of dead spiritual and political leaders. In diluted format, honoring "ancestors" – literal or social - provides the framework for all non-familial teacher-disciple relationships: sometimes one's descendant is not a biological offspring but a sociocultural or religious disciple. This is because group membership is as much or more a matter of culture as it is of biology.

These cross-boundary spiritual relationships play a fundamental role in the family's survival function as life's central social institution. It is not just a matter of biological survival, but one of cultural continuation with all of its fundamental values of universal humanness and specific social identity. The structure and function of a human family functionally serves many survival purposes at multiple levels. The make-up of its structure directly impacts those sociocultural functions whether one

considers the education of succeeding generations or the day-to-day economic survival and social power of a society.

It is not just a matter of its present leaders but also one of future leaders. It is not just a matter of what values are given lip service in a society's (superficial) public pronouncements (propaganda) but also one of its laws, norms, customs practiced in the daily interaction of its members. It is not just an issue of what is practiced but also one of the depth and breadth of specific values' and/or behaviors' prevalence in the social fabric and whether those cultural essentials are healthy enough to continue forward in time and thereby perpetuate a continued social existence in and relevance to the family of humanity. No wonder societies debate the laws and norms that culturally define the concept of family. It has always been one of the most important social issues and a concern of governments.

Since death is very personal as well as universal life experience or event, it is not surprising that the border between the sacred and profane fuzzes considerably whenever death is the focus of attention. Our memories are individually and collectively compounded by theological belief systems about life after death. First, they directly confront and psychologically manage our greatest inner fear, the root of all fears, the fear of death. Also, they work together in the hearts of the living to keep alive now what has passed beyond material temporality – the time boundary set by the point of death. Hence, the concept of the sacred or holy is often applied to personal as well as collective memories, persons and places.

Holiness or sanctity is functionally alien to the psychospiritual consciousness exhibited by modern, secular material civilization because something that is sacred has no price. It points in the direction of an absolute instead of a relative value that can be bartered. Relationships based upon beneficial exchange dominate the natural order of the biological and social environments. Sacredness hints that there is a higher level of relationship beyond conditional exchange, which we refer to today as unconditional love.

Furthermore, the concept of priceless life interferes with the modern libertarian approach to personal identity rooted in the dictum, "Do what thou wilt," which presumes no thought for others except as how they may satisfy some ego based and/or emotional need of the one who "does no harm." At least to the perpetrator of a self-defined willful act usually contemplates getting some personal advantage and not injury from what he or she does. Of course, suicide is an exception to this generality that indicates both psychological and social distress. If life is truly priceless, then the value of one life cannot be compared with, or exchanged for, that of another - when only based on human reasoning.

Extend this principle to a broader context, and one could conclude that healthcare should not be run purely as a business. The whole medical industrial complex poses unique challenges to modern society that are complicated by our social lack of spiritual understanding as discussed below. A more spiritually balanced culture would be able to more quickly and fairly come to some consensus on a society's approach to healthcare issues.

No individual is ethically in the position to value his or her priceless life over the priceless life of another – whether that is the life of a single person or the collective lives of society as a whole. Convenience and preference are unacceptable parameters for behavior. This ethical paradox calls out for some kind of divine direction from an outside third party authority that draws its wisdom from the spiritual realm. This is a rational response that ascribes eternity with the ability to fathom the fathomless: only the timeless can make just decisions about the priceless. Herein lies the crucial importance of sacredness: no society or culture will endure without it.

Building on the hypothesis that the concepts and rules of the sacred are essential for long-term group survival, we can now understand another phenomenon – martyrdom. Martyrs suffer and die for sacred causes. Individuals sacrifice themselves so that those of a particular aspect of the sacred may survive and prosper in the face of threatening persons, populations or unseen spiritual powers.

Necessary suffering, patience and daily sacrifices endured for a greater cause are not values promoted by western secular culture; consequently, Americans and Europeans seeking such spiritual values are more easily manipulated than those living in a culture of balanced spiritual context. Because natural spirituality has been so completely compromised by materialism in modern western civilization, its members are more easily misled as to what is a bona fide spiritual sacrifice or a genuinely spiritual martyrdom. The deceived martyr's artificial reality of spiritual or patriotic sacrifice is simply a delusion that really leads to the degradation, death and destruction of one's family, nation, culture and religion as well as (perhaps) some few of the targeted enemy.

The Spirituality of Survival

Note that I have again associated spirituality with mortal survival. This principle remains true whether applied to the individual or to the culture's pool of social genes used to define its way of life. Spirituality is definitely linked to a better life now as well as to concerns about eternity or an afterlife. These are the two primary aspects of spirituality:

1. that which is applied directly to natural, biological life and
2. that which concerns the supernatural or metaphysical life – especially distinct in nature after death.

Many people and religions embrace some kind of overlap between the two. For them, the natural world and biological science coexist with the supernatural and spiritual. These two aspects of spirituality provide opportunities for growth as well as potential for confusion and divisive interaction.

The natural life aspects provide a practical philosophical and social meeting ground for people from different cultures who share a globe, business or marketplace in common, because we are essentially alike biologically. Our biological functions and needs are universal, which is the reason that they form the central repertoire for mass audience comedy and an international reverence for medical science and health-

care institutions. Humor derived from biological functions and common desires or experiences works commercially because it appeals to a market broad enough to support it financially. Disease mostly knows no racial, social or cultural boundaries; so many international medical relief organizations exist. Our universal biological survival needs drive the environmental movements as well. In these cases, the subject matter is immediately comprehensible, becoming either funny or motivational as the context mandates.

Of course, personal variations are emphasized in our commonality, but that is because they are linked to our identity creation process, which is a matter of personal choice. Human nature is predisposed to picking and choosing its personal interpretation of spiritual values. In these modern times of global communication this trend has manifested itself in the growth in the number of "spiritual" individualists who do not participate in a religious community as well as the increasing appearance of syncretistic religious communities that borrow and recombine religious traditions and beliefs from different, and sometimes opposing, philosophic or religious traditions. One example is the incorporation of yoga and eastern meditation techniques into personal prayer by Christians. Not surprisingly, these behavioral practices are usually followed by incorporating some degree of eastern philosophy or religious teachings into the doctrinal beliefs of the yoga or meditation practicing Christian.

Role and status of medical care in modern society presents us with another one of those spiritual paradoxes. The following comments are not given in a supercilious or overtly critical attitude. The medical industry is very complex and the delivery of quality medical care is a definite challenge that many sincere people devote their lives to. Nonetheless, the truth is that people are mortal and the ready availability of quality care minimizes the immediacy of mortality; therefore, good medical care in some measure facilitates secular avoidance of the spiritual issues presented by universal mortality. Death avoidance does not eliminate the fear of death. If anything, it pushes it further beneath the surface of interactive public and personal consciousness.

The huge scope of demand presented to the medical industrial complex forces it to objectify and commodify the human body in order to efficiently deliver quality medical products and services. In other words, the human body must be treated as a biomechanical system of life functions in order to conduct research experiments to find either partial or complete remedies to the problems of sickness and infirmity. It would be financially less efficient to do otherwise. Yet, almost all participants realize at some level that real people are the subjects of these experiments or that the medical condition being treated is potentially life threatening. From the outside, I infer that the human face of medicine is most often administered through the initiative and grace of concerned practitioners who may or may not receive much corporate support for their personal commitment to compassion. Without the indirect spiritual mediation of these persons, the health care industry would be considerably less effective than it is. Unfortunately, I sense that these decent people are sometimes unconsciously used by a corporate system that is being driven by greed's competitive necessity to survive.

The primary spiritual danger here is that medical success has the potential to encourage the avoidance of that most essential spiritual challenge – mortality. I believe that the fear of death lies at the heart of human nature's drive for self-preservation. Most "instinctive" reactions people have to life come from the transcendent principle of protecting life and limb. In balance, this is good. It is essential for day-to-day function. However, my focus here is on the bigger questions of life – what is it and what happens at death, which is what any search for spirituality addresses.

The scientific advances in medical products and the institutionalized delivery of therapeutic services by the healthcare industry have enabled modern civilization to increasingly finesse publicly the spiritual consequences of death. By focusing on the body's physical health and medical repair, secular society has become profane and continues to intensify in its profanity in a manner that trends increasingly out of balance when it comes to life's sanctity. I do not contend that everyone should be a spiritual adept, nun, mystic or religious professional. A balanced society needs all kinds of people engaged in all types of economic and sociocultural pursuits. My concern is for the overall healthy balance of a society, which is necessarily made up of many individual balancing acts, yours and mine.

The evidence for my concerned contention is found in the medical money trail. Just follow the money and note who also follows the money and how it is regarded by our culture. From the perspective of monetary value, the bulk of charity is directed towards medical care. It is the most respected form of public charity along with educational institutions. The public relations impact made by either of these two charitable efforts is further enhanced if the largesse seemingly benefits the poor among us. While decidedly noble and good, these efforts are sourced in humanity, in our material capabilities to deliver and invest physical wealth in biomechanical repair systems of the fleshly machines called bodies. The medical professionals, from doctors on up and down, are the administering priests and priestesses of biological life enhancement, preservation and disease cure. The gold standard of responsible citizenship is to give offerings to this secular material religion.

Surprising that I use these terms? It should not be. From the days of ancient Greece, western civilization has treated medical care as a divine occupation, and it should be because it deals in life, mortal life. That is qualification sufficient to warrant religious classification; however, it also points out its competitive role, too. That is part of the paradox because all of this advanced medical knowledge can be used to distort the natural balance as well, thus violating the sanctity of life in the name of preserving it.

The modern medical industrial complex profitably contributes to the creation of the huge artificial reality held by billions that medical care is primarily a biophysical exercise. Admittedly, there is a growing sense that health is more than scientific medicine. Partly this has come about because of strained financial budgets. There simply will never be enough money to solve the many healthcare issues humanity faces, and that is because of the inexorable progress towards death made every day by all of us.

The draw to death is an incomprehensible spiritual power drain that affects all of our political, social and economic systems. It is balanced

only by the preponderant momentum of life's essential attribute of being lived right now. Every living organism is designed with built-in mechanisms oriented to live now, to survive instead of to die. In humans, there is a choice involved. We can choose to die or to live. This unique power of human beings gives us moral obligations and considerations. It is a primary indicator for spiritual potential beyond this present mortal existence, yet we are indeed mortal.

This fact of our mortality. This admission that, do our best as we may, that we are not able on our own to naturally live forever is a must requirement to advance significantly in any search for spiritual meaning and power or to transcend the physical into the metaphysical beyond eternity. Many people have purposefully left planned legacies of their mortal lives in the form of artwork, charitable foundations, books and educational institutions as well as through the transient glory of public service and memory in the minds and hearts of others, "a grateful nation."

But the growth in medical science has perhaps best pandered to our unbalanced desires for self-perpetuated, self-empowered immortality. Businesses exist to freeze those with the money in hopes of reviving them later when the biomedical body can be more completely repaired. Movie scripts and novels abound with body bio-machines of robotic or human intelligence. We would not find these concepts expressed in literature and the electronic media if it were not for the enabling culture of high priestly medicine. The great advances in modern medical science fuel the artificial reality fantasies of purchased eternal life or a self-assisted life of temporal immortality. Indeed, every medical institution or organization may be evaluated using the Life-Death Continuum of gray justice based on how well it contributes to spiritual growth. Its balance in the life force is the most objective transcultural measure of that.

Anyone accepting or living the illusion of the false hope seemingly given by medical science will not be capable of psychospiritually advancing beyond mortal existence. They will not transcend the present temporal material existence of human life because they refuse to go through the only door into immortality, which is death. Accepting the inevitable reality of death forces a person to become honest with himself or herself. This self-honesty is essential to spiritual growth, which is impossible without it. It is a key component rationalizing the philosophic and theological pursuit of spiritual answers to physical death, and it is the key fulcrum of faith over fear.

Conflict and Peace

When we approach the metaphysical dimension of spirituality, we inevitably encounter significant differences between the teachings and belief systems of different cultures and faiths. Historically these differences have combined to supply reasons and excuses for violent conflict, including the massive acts of inhumanity to man defined as war or genocide. Over the course of history and ethnography, spiritual differences have been linked to an incomprehensibly vast amount of human suffering around the world.

There are a number of explanations for man's inhumanity to man. Many of them are valuable to understanding the nature of conflict. Without

entering into a deep discussion of this issue, I tend to believe that, most of the time, the religious issues cited are purposefully utilized to motivate the masses to do the bidding for some member of the competing elite club of rulers. Religious differences were used to mask political struggles for economic advantage. Once conflict is engaged, a social entity's objectives range across various levels of survival to dominance within aspired limits or even to global supremacy. Overlying the struggle for physical survival in the ethno-cultural identities of the parties in conflict. These identities are inseparable from their languages, music, norms, values and histories and provide a group's collective strength for the struggle.

In the past, any lasting peace between warring societies only came about or was maintained through outright dominance of the victor over and/or assimilation of the loser. Since strife begins over the material things desired or needed, these contests for power advantage, or even survival, usually result in a rearranging of the competing groups' access to and use of the things fought over. The ending balance of power between the contestants is reflected in how the contested material resources are divided up between the various allies and antagonists when the conflict comes to a negotiated close – though many issues may remain and the struggle may flair up again at a later date. If the conflict process produces frequent adjustments, then the conflict will be less violent and injuries less severe. Rigidity in the adjustment of the balance of power leads to sharp jolts in the relationship between the competing groups much as locked tectonic plates lead to massively destructive earthquakes.

Governments have attempted to enforce peace between warring peoples through strategies that mix a combination of military force and economic consequences only to fail repeatedly. Usually this has been because the motivations of those enjoying temporary dominance have been exclusively one-sided or at least heavily skewed towards their own interests. Peace achieved in this manner only lasts as long as the balance of power that it reflects continues in rough approximation of its structure at establishment. If the balance of power shifts beyond the threshold of a new conflict's perceived cost, then war will rekindle until the new balance of power is reached. In the meantime people suffer and die for various perceived reasons and causes.

Theoretically, it is possible for peace to arrive on a platform of a forgiveness that forgets the past in order to forge a new future for both sides, but this latter option is humanly next to impossible. Several humanitarian foundations attempt to forge the peace of forgiveness through education and cultural exchange - learning about one another, building bridges one person, one family, one small group at a time. If it would work on a large enough scope, then peace would already have been established. Despite its rational appeal, practicality and real though limited success, peace through education and cultural exchange does not seem to prevent mass conflicts in the face of a perceived necessity for economic or sociocultural survival.

Why? Why is it that such a rational solution based on sentiments such as "forgive and forget," "that's in the past, be realistic and look ahead" or "as the brotherhood of man, we all share this same country or planet" fail to do the job?

Peace Requires a Spiritual Solution

The reason that humanity has failed to achieve peace between peoples is that the solution is a spiritual one that must be executed at the metaphysical level and not a philosophical, theological or social one. Neither can the natural spirituality most of us experience in life forge peace beyond the members of an identity group co-engaged in its promotion and practice. Publishing pictures that depict spaceship earth as seen from the moon or social movements to save the rain forest will not lastingly join human hearts in peace - regardless of all the well-meaning sacrifices, good intentions, thoughts of good will and generous behaviors undertaken. The reason peace cannot be humanly achieved is because lasting peace is a gestalt state of grace unearned or deserved that is imparted from the metaphysical dimension upon mortals. Peace can never be the product of material works, such as the rational thought models or effective humanitarian programs that lie within the positive capabilities of natural spirituality.

If pure goodness resides in the metaphysical realm, then peace or justice can only come to earth by the transfer of that transcendently good spiritual power of peace and love from the heavenly dimension to the earthly. Obviously, such a transfer has been withheld from above or impeded by some kind of spiritual opposition at work in the material dimension. A more complete explanation of what I think is happening comes in chapter 6.

While the material dimension presents naturally occurring barriers or limits to spiritual insights and gifts, human cultures often add to them. Our humanly created theologies often complicate spiritual enlightenment and growth - sometimes even as they seek access to the advantages and blessings of spiritual power. But these two factors alone are not sufficient to account for evil on earth or to explain why peace is so elusive. Logically, opposing or competing spiritual forces and/or beings of some kind must be actively intercepting or preventing the transfer of heavenly bounties of peace, plenty and unconditional love.

The above conclusions extend from the almost universal observation that there are two kinds of spirit forces and/or beings at work on earth - one for good and the other for evil. From the natural perspective of biological life, most ancient wisdom sees these opposing forces as being different aspects of one balanced spirit manifested as darkness and light. Just as light exists in seen and unseen frequencies within the electromagnetic spectrum, so they believe that the invisible spirits and spiritual forces existing beyond normal sensory perception compete in the material dimension from the "other side." They see these opposing camps as good and evil spirits operating off of the same power source, which is the life force discussed above. Both of them "come from" the unseen or metaphysical universe even though many belief systems do not divide the metaphysical and physical dimensions of reality. I believe that these commonly held concepts are incomplete.

Theology and philosophy often arise to define this basic observation with doctrines explaining the paradoxical truth of apparent spiritual duality. Different belief systems have settled upon different approaches to the supernatural phenomena that the natural human mind can

grasp. Each one uniquely combines mortal human experiences from the biological, social and spiritual environments to synthesize a cultural construct of perceived reality. The principle of spiritual duality is the foundational challenge to humanity that has inspired the development of most theological and philosophical works seeking to explain spirituality. It is the scholarly, thoughtful attempt to understand and define ultimate reality or truth through reason, study and logic. These efforts may be found in many fields of study such as astrophysics, psychology and many social sciences.

Competing Spiritual Forces

The existence of extremes in good and evil severely challenge the secular materialistic perspective because science provides no possibility for such spiritual contingencies. At this point it is enough to recognize that there are a small number of often highly intelligent people who believe that the scientific method will eventually, if not already, provide an answer from the physical universe for every question or mystery humans experience tangibly or perceptively. My objective does not focus on convincing the materialist that he or she must entertain the existence of a spiritual ultimate reality. For them, death itself is a sufficient ultimate reality to inspire a spiritual response of some kind; however, for billions of other people the existence of a spiritual ultimate reality is self-evident.

The paradoxical nature of spiritual truth is probably best understood in its gestalt opposition as a whole, but humans, especially those from western cultures, like to break stuff down through systematic analysis. This is not wrong. It simply leads to conclusions just as incomplete as the conclusions implied by those who do not try to analyze the spiritual paradox of good and evil. My observations of humanity convince me that everyone has analyzed this challenge to some extent. Although the majority of us have absorbed most of our spiritual understanding subconsciously from our sociocultural environments, I grant that some formal education in spiritual matters is often endured, if not enjoyed, by us as children.

The paradox of spiritual duality offers us five avenues of analytic resolution:

1. Good and evil are a circular continuum of one spiritual force possessing both dark (evil) and light (good) sides. The differentiation between good and evil is illusory because neither can exist except in contrast to the other. Life is a process of learning spiritual discernment between these opposing poles of one force found present within each person and/or other living being. A mature spirituality balances life/light against death/darkness to positive outcome. Since natural life is a messy gray, no choice is perfect: each one is a mixture of good evil. Wisdom is learning to consistently choose a mixture that is more good than evil.
2. Good and evil represent two distinctly separate competing spiritual forces. Good spirit beings, often called angels, and evil spirit beings, often called demons, are locked in a spiritual battle over humanity. Depending on the tradition, these

competing spirits interact with this world on a continuum of indirect to directness. In other words they intervene in the affairs of humans indirectly through their influence of people or directly through the performance of miracles, which are metaphysical forces acting in the physical universe. Miracles usually suspend the laws of nature to some outcome that cannot be explained scientifically. Miracles may either enhance human efforts to ensure victory over an opponent, or they may be autonomous events that unilaterally intervene to change some aspect of material reality.

3. The third option combines the above two explanations in varying proportions.
4. The fourth option rejects both or either #1 or #2 as evidence/explanation for spiritual reality yet provides for the possibility of another spiritual reality ineffable to scientific examination. In other words, neither one nor both options exist as expressions of a metaphysical dimension. The phenomena experienced used as proof for both #1 and #2 can be explained naturally by physical science. Yet, there may be a God, a prime mover or spiritual reality of some kind that exists beyond the material universe of time and space, or at least a metaphysical reality operating at energies beyond the speed of light that humans may never be able to measure directly. A considerable amount of research has been done using mathematical theory in the realm of astrophysics that postulates multiple dimensions or universes, for example.
5. The fifth option accepts one or both options #1 and #2 to varying degrees and maintains the existence of an additional spiritual reality such as God or a Holy Spirit different from the spiritual force typified by the circular continuum of good and evil.

Most of the world's spiritual traditions take approaches #1 through #3. Many scientifically oriented deists and agnostics would find themselves in broad agreement with the fourth approach. Though these people have never composed a large percentage of the general population, they have been a very influential in the development of human history and culture. Usually deists and agnostics remain within the broad cultural faith of their birth, but they "push the envelope" of their birth religion's perspectives on spiritual reality.

The fifth option includes many denominations or religions of the Judeo-Christian-Moslem traditions. Most commonly, their approach embraces option #2. They believe in angels and demons plus a divinely supreme being called God, who is incorruptible by evil. Some conceive of God as a remote Creator so holy that he is unapproachable. Others trump God's holiness with his divine love for a righteous humanity so that a human's spiritual reward in the afterlife is to dwell in his close presence. To others, the holy deity may be thought of as a formless spirit or power beyond comprehension.

Life Force Confused in the West

For the most part, the concept of the life force is not given distinct treatment in Christian theology. Jewish teachings on the issues of soul, spirit, breath and body are more developed due to their methodology of study in the original Hebrew. Christian theology focuses on the Greek New Testament, which is built upon the Hebrew Bible and may rightly be considered a commentary on it. Due to the cultural alienation between Judaism and Christianity from the end of the first century and into the fourth century AD, Christian theology has tended to rely more on Greek philosophy than Hebrew midrash or commentary.

Thus, the focus of western thought, including most Jewish religious practice, has been upon the soul rather than the spirit. The spirit has been loosely and imprecisely conceived of in public consciousness. Given its intangibility, one should not be too critical of any imprecision in the definition of the spirit as distinct from the soul or the Holy Spirit. Since Hebrew itself is a language largely defined by context, I am not surprised that the Greek translation of Hebrew thinking continues that sense of imprecision through using the qualities of the Greek language's more scientifically precise linguistic construct to communicate the implied contextual message or concept of the original Hebrew phrases. All of the authors of the New Testament were Jewish or proselyte Gentiles (Luke).

The primary misunderstanding and danger inherent in this spiritual confusion lie in the increased possibility for deception. Confusion as to the identity and role of the spirit in mortal life primarily leads to a misunderstanding of human nature, including the degradation and/or neglect of the body, and a loss of valuable insights concerning the spiritual purpose(s) for humankind. In other words, confusion over the role(s) and nature of the spirit or life force complicate the search for spirituality as well as inhibit one's ability to deal with the very real obstacles thrown up in the path of one's search. This latter fact is true whether the obstacles are self-imposed or interjected by opposing human or spirit beings as discussed in the next chapter.

For some, anything spiritual is good. For others, anything spiritual except my kind of spiritual is evil and dangerous. From my perspective, truth is once again a paradox: it is at once more complex and more simple than either of those two views. Accepting the insights from the East for the moment, understand that the good and evil mix of the life force may easily give the impression of the one spiritual force being two different spirits – one good and one evil. Many theologies feature a battle of good against evil as spiritual forces and/or beings on both sides compete with or battle against each other. This is also the case for all elemental or natural spiritual forces, which are best managed through dynamic balance towards a resonance of healthy life.

Healthy life means a healthy body and personality, who participates in human relationships that are at least both socially and economically balanced in respectful reciprocity. Anyone seeking to manipulate elemental forces to fulfill personal power goals (or client-purchased outcomes) – whether to good or evil purpose - will pay the price in their own being that comes from the inevitable rebalancing of the life force. On

the other hand, biological life is a good thing, and it is impossible without the life force, so its presence and operation should not be automatically considered evil, as some might be biased by their theology to conclude. Healing therapies that focus on re-balancing a person's psychobiological systems are usually safe and not avoided by those ignorant and fearful of anything to do with the life force. The natural and automatic byproduct of good psychobiological treatment is a healthier life that positively re-balances a person's life force, whether one is aware of its existence or not. It just takes place without specific awareness of the fact.

I want to repeat two important principles here from chapter 4 about the role of the life force in human healing. First, the goal of a healthy balance of the life force at any present moment should ideally fall on the life side of absolute balance in order to offset the immediate experience of mortality, which is the long-term entropic loss of energy towards death in the grand cycle of life. Otherwise, we could not enjoy life or grow spiritually. Secondly, treatments strictly focused on manipulating the life force are not always safe or purely therapeutic. My operating rule based on observation and rational analysis is that beneficial treatments for a person's life force consist of exposure to the massive presence of naturally balanced spiritual forces. Of course, this rule does not apply to chiropractic care, which seeks to restore the body's structural harmony, nor does it apply to nutritional or herbal programs that seek to re-balance body chemistry. Such treatments take an indirect approach to rebalancing spiritual forces by treating the biological factors causing or contributing to the problem. They do not attempt a direct rebalancing through the addition of positive life force energy.

I do not recommend treatments based on the direct boosts of life force energy from some external source of power. Often the patient will experience some kind of psychospiritual high from the purchased direct mediation of spiritual power or the induced spiritual highs from chemical or other bio-sensual over stimulation. Rather than seek a spiritual treatment, or series of treatments, that adds a quick boost or rush of life force power from someone or something else to offset one's present maladies, one should take the more patient options of exposing imbalanced spiritual energies to a more massive and healthier living system, like taking a hike through the mountains or contemplating a waterfall.

Under receptive mental attitudes, a patient's biological illness, deriving from a damaged (unbalanced) life force, will harmonize or gradually become aligned like a tuning fork to its healthy environment. This is a more systems approach of healing the whole person in order to solve a specific bodily ache, pain or illness. The experience most have had in that regard is time spent in Nature. In such circumstances, a person's spiritual energies draw off of the operating surplus found in all healthy, positively inclined natural environments within the natural tolerances found there. Not only does this require the passing of time, it also requires one's conscious interaction with his or her specific environment. Part of the treatment comes from not abusing the source or interface of this natural spiritual energy. It may be something as simple as watering the flowers in the yard or as dramatic as white water rafting, and it could be a more intentional treatment, too. You must be the judge of that. I think the next two chapters will help.

So, how has human nature been affected by the spiritual options discussed above? Down through time, the underlying nature of human moral inclination has been considered good, evil or a mix of the two. Over the millennia, spiritual teachers have offered a number of explanations why humans are the way they are. To sort it all out, I focus on the issue of identity formation in chapter 9, where I address the basic questions of, "Who am I? Why am I here?" Or less personally, "What is the purpose for human life?"

Going back to the basics, none of us asked to be born, nor did we somehow request to be born to certain parents, with certain body types or with a particular spiritual inclination. Modern science wants to place more and more of these options in the hands of future parents, for a price, but even in that case any person born would not have asked for this experience of consciousness we call life. He or she just arrives and then must deal with the environment in which their lives become conscious. In fact, so many regret being born that they spend their lives trying to escape their consciousness with drugs or the single-minded devotion to distracting lifestyles of busy-ness. Many desperately pursue edgy risks that thrillingly stimulate the body and brain biologically enough to generate or force a materialistic spiritual experience of a high from the abuse of psychochemicals or drugs.

Human Nature

How one looks at the basic nature of human beings is vital to understanding theology and philosophy because each option presents a unique set of problems and solutions. This perspective heavily influences a person's ideas concerning what life is all about and how he or she treats other people, from one's family to the nondescript world citizen on the other side of the planet. More personally, it influences the decisions we make in creating our own identity.

Determining the innate nature of humanity is perhaps the area of spirituality that is best examined materially. We have elaborate, though somewhat flawed, historical records from the past millions, and then we have the present billions of fellow inhabitants of our planet. We can investigate how people have lived and live today within the context of hundreds of social cultures and subcultures. There is more objective information upon which we can make a value judgment in regards to human nature than just about any other aspect of spirituality.

So, now it is up to you! What is good? What is evil? Oops. We return to the problem of objectivity. The problem really is not all that difficult. The non-objective, default choice made for each of us is that everything is relative to our own experience; however, we are usually educated differently, so conflicts exist over values both within societies and between them. Humans inherit different cultural value systems. Also, individuals choose differently within those systems, emphasizing a unique set of values and behaviors within their birth cultures. Rarely, they may even choose a new cultural identity. In any case, the differences between us derive from the acceptance of disagreements in the place of agreeing on an acceptable third party authority. This authority could be a respected

person (spiritual elder), social institution or a written and/or unwritten pattern of behavior values present in your social context.

Here we have a “which came first, the chicken or the egg” situation. Depending on the standard of good and evil chosen, the spiritual moral evaluation of human nature changes. If people are basically good, then evil is externally imposed upon us. Good people are judged by a rather tolerant standard or definition of good that only considers egregious cruelty, rebellion, lies and theft or senseless destruction as evil. This approach to human nature encourages a pride that denies the need for spiritual transformation.

Similarly, those who consider human nature to be basically evil must have a relatively broad definition of evil or a very narrow definition of good. Because decent, honest, hard-working citizens are then classified as having an evil human nature with this approach, which poses its own problem: either their naturally inherent evil must somehow be repressed by educational conditioning (with perhaps little spiritual potential for “salvation” or future spiritual benefit) or the definition of “evil” is so broad that it encompasses what most would accept as relatively good. Regardless of official religious doctrine, many people feel this way about themselves. They are afraid to love or be loved because inside they consider themselves unworthy or evil.

Thus, the most clearly distinct standard for good and evil will be developed by those who believe in a balanced proposal for a human nature that is a mixture of good and evil, either of which has a naturally even potential of being chosen. Of course, environmental factors influence the degree of freedom in any choice, but with this option people have the freest wills and the most responsibility for their choices of thought and behavior. The human being in this scenario is an active partner in the development and outcome of spiritual reality. Fatalistic scenarios are severely restricted by the potential for human decision to exercise power upon material reality.

The focus of our discussion now shifts to the question of which is the truest standard of good and evil when viewed from the metaphysical perspective of ultimate reality. In the Judeo-Christian-Muslim family of traditions this means from God’s perspective. There are competing theologies which interpret competing holy books. The existence and use of holy books span just about every major religious tradition worldwide, so there are literally hundreds of holy books and thousands of theological approaches to them. Which is right?

Is there a correct one? Or do they all fall short of the ultimate truth, some more than others? A thorough discussion to reach the answer to these questions is beyond the scope of any one book. Of course, I have my own biases, which I will share later, but a discussion of some broad principles will give you valuable tools that can help you continue your personal search for spirituality.

Purpose for Human Life

Regardless of which perspective on human nature is chosen, most systems of spiritual thought believe that human beings are universally eval-

uated according to an objective standard of good and evil. Someone or something must do this evaluation impartially, objectively and accurately in regard to the actual standards of truth and justice as they exist in the ultimate metaphysical reality. The universal spiritual goal of the human being is to learn how to live now that will best prepare for and influence what comes after death. In other words, we should choose more right thing(s) or way(s) than wrong one(s) from the perspective of ultimate reality without neglecting the practical necessities of everyday life.

Most theological and philosophical systems anticipate that the majority of people will fall woefully short in the achievement of their life purposes; therefore, they provide for a means of correction and spiritual improvement. In most eastern religions, *karma* automatically keeps score of all deviations from and fulfillments of the right practice of life according to *dharma*, the proper way of life as defined by the relevant culture. One is endlessly reincarnated forward or backward along the spiritual path until reaching the perfection of ejection from the endless cycle of rebirth into the whole fullness or vast emptiness of eternity, depending on the teacher followed.

Reincarnation teaches that every soul is an unseen and unrecognized divinity or god. People need to be enlightened to this reality through proper teaching, meditation and right living. The process of enlightenment removes the illusions of sin and the material or bodily separation from the holy. Thus, purification is accomplished by applied spiritual discipline during one's mortal life, which is fatalistically predetermined in its environmental birth setting to provide the suitable judgment for past lives and the perfect school for your present spiritual growth requirements. In other words, your present life is believed to present you with the necessary lessons required to advance spiritually towards the ultimate reality. The key concept is to accept your true nature as part of the holy eternal bliss of universal wholeness or emptiness. In eastern spiritual traditions, a successful spiritual search usually results in losing one's individual identity as it is absorbed or incorporated into an evolving oneness of allness or nothingness, a blissful non-existence.

Some approaches regard present conscious life as the totality of one's experience, so that it is literally what you make of it now. At death there is oblivion or rebirth in another body. Your birth context is simply a matter of chance. As unfair as that may seem, that is reality or truth according to this theory, often defined as a kind of existentialism or existence-life. The existentialist perspective holds the potential for a person to reconstruct actual life experiences into something significantly different from what another might consider or perceive to be the case. Hence what might be a boring life of hard suffering to some is a blessing to another because it offers opportunity for spiritual transformation or growth.

Divine Judgment

According to the biblical traditions and in Islam, God is judge. He judges all humanity at or after death. There are variations on this primary principle. Jesus, as the Son of God, has been given the job of judging humanity in Christian and some Islamic theologies. Sometimes balance scales upon which good and bad deeds are placed figure in the judgment process.

The standard used is the holy book of the faith as defined by it. So the Quran is used by Allah according to Islam, and the Bible according to Christians and Jews. There are also biblical references to a Book of Life, which operates as the entry log of God's grace. Your name in this book provides entry into a blessed life eternal in spite of human shortcomings. How your name gets there varies according to the denomination's theology. In Christianity it requires some form of "faith in Christ."

Heaven or paradise is the abode of the righteous souls who pass judgment. Hell is the place or state of fiery or frozen fiery torment in separation from the divine presence. It is the destination of those who fall short of God's standard or grace – the sinners. Some theologies relegate the damned soul to an eternity in torment. Other teachings provide for an adjustment to the duration and intensity of the torment according to the severity of the sins: once the spiritual impurities are blast-furnaced out, one may be accepted into paradise.

Still others believe that sinners will burn until destroyed, their consciousness ended. The length and duration of this temporal torment is usually proportionate to the degree of evil committed during the damned soul's life on earth. Some populate Hell with Satan and demons, which actively punish the sinners' souls in addition to the environmental suffering. Others simply subject these fallen angels to the same process of punishment as the sinners.

Now I return to one of the more interesting aspects of life's purpose and judgment: the formation of one's personal and eternal identities. It gets right down to the very nature of life and definition of its creative potential. All of the factors described above contribute to the anticipated identity outcomes as defined by various theologies-philosophies. The various sets of factors work together in systemic harmony. This is not to say that the various theological systems are perfect or true depictions of ultimate reality just because they are logically formulated. My point is that there is a rational consistency of functional purpose in how the sets of variables are grouped.

I mentioned above that the eastern approach to ultimate identity terminates the mortally material separation and unique personal identity when a human graduates to ultimate spiritual reality. A variation on this theme is found in some branches of Wicca and the New Age, where the life force shaped by our personal experiences in the flesh flows into or returns to the cyclical totality of nature. In this pantheistic belief system, the whole is a composite of energy and matter together with a spirit that is charged positive and negative, light and dark, good and evil. Within the rhythm of changing time distinctly patterned sets of matter and spirit are expressed biologically in plant and animal beings as well as humans. At death these are re-absorbed and recast in a continuous process. All is connected; there is no real difference between life and death.

The Judeo-Christian-Islamic theological mega-tradition retains individual, personal identity after death. Individuals are recognizable in the afterlife. Friends and family expect to associate in paradise – usually with a perfect harmony not experienced in this life. In other words people continue on pretty much as the same characters but cleaned up a bit. Then, there are the exceptional ones that shine glori-

ously in a revealed magnificence not visible in this life. These are the truly holy ones or saints, teachers and gurus.

Identity Transformation

Now then, what does this have to do with identity formation? A great deal. There are two main theories or approaches that try to explain why a person is who he or she is. I sense here another paradox in truth. Similar to the debate over whether one's personality is more influenced by genetics or by social and biological environment, so the eternal personality or identity is determined by two influences:

1. miraculous transformation or change of nature by God's sovereign gift or grace and
2. the character created by our life's choices from birth to death, the cumulative consequence of our behavioral record of deeds - good and bad.

Spiritual transformation or change of nature innately differs from possession or a spiritual walk-in. Worldwide there is a long history of "lending" one's body to spirit beings. The lender goes by many titles: priest, priestess, medium, host, shaman or channel. The description of the incoming spirit varies, too. It could claim to be the soul of a dead human, a god, an angel, a demon or even the consciousness from an earlier life lived. In each of these cases, the identity of the host has been replaced by that of the spiritual presence possessing the body. Possession is not simply the effects of mass hysteria experienced in a religious mob or rock concert, though there may be spiritual powers at work in both of them that result in the actual possession of one or more people open to it.

When people 'wake up' to what they have been doing to themselves and their loved ones, they do open the mental and emotional doors to the possibility for positive change and growth towards becoming a whole, healthy person. But spiritual transformation is not simply the putting on of new behavior patterns, which is the second manner of identity formation mentioned above. It is not the psychological resolution of internal conflict into a new purpose for life or humble admittance of personal problems or weaknesses so that they can be dealt with. It is not the outcome of the therapeutic treatment of drug abuse, either, although they are all good things to see in a person.

Behavioral success is at best only an improvement in the management of one's human nature; it is not the change of or transformation of one's naturally inherent human nature. That is a miracle claimed by Christianity by the indwelling of God through the Holy Spirit. It is God's sovereign gift from the other side and not something that can be found and obtained unilaterally by any human without some sort of divine intervention.

A change of human nature is a very different phenomenon from a person gaining increased spiritual powers through the manipulation of the life force of focused natural spirituality. The mystical powers of witches, sorcerers and other magi are merely the enhancement or augmentation of the natural forces to boost their existing powers found within a person from birth. They realize a growth in power by securing

external sources such as other people, sacrificial blood rituals, sacred places or objects. Granted that this additional spiritual power is often understood to be drawn from outside of the practitioner's body, but it is still the same essence naturally found within and characterized as being the life essence of both good and evil bound together inseparably. In Digital spirituality, a genuine spiritual transformation of human nature changes the internal spiritual source: it requires a different spirit – one that comes from outside of the material universe.

Important! The potential for spiritual transformation is not the same as inherent capability. There are limits to what is possible from the powers of natural spirituality available to humans on their own, but understanding the mysteries and limitations of the life force (spirit of life) can and often does lead us to the threshold or gateway to the heaven, angels, God and the Holy Spirit from beyond. This is the point at which theology and philosophy expand their discussion and extrapolations of principles observed and experienced on earth in light of the revered sacred books of each particular religion or philosophical path. It is a worthy mental exercise of reason that yields valuable insights, though few travel it.

While one may theoretically travel by philosophic imagination or dream sleep into the spiritual realm beyond mortal reality, it is not naturally possible to enter that realm without supernatural assistance until death. Just as light cannot exceed its speed, so Sidharta Gautama, the Buddha, could not exceed a meditational nirvana and live. He could not enter the ultimate nothingness of the nirvana of his teachings of ultimate reality without ceasing to be present in the here and now. He would sit on the threshold and then return.

True, there is a special sensation of happiness or natural peace possible as the threshold is approached, but that point cannot be passed on human strength alone short of death. Neither does any person born of flesh naturally have eternal life inherent, a divine spark from above sufficiently powerful to enable a transition from mortal to metaphysical body and metaphysical spirit. For that we need outside help. We require spiritual contact with and intercession by those from the heavenly dimension to enable our passage. To inherent eternity, to enter the higher levels of spirituality from beyond the natural universe, we need a way, a door or a mediator.

Above and beyond the natural spirituality that celebrates the multi-dimensional miracle of life, above and beyond the philosophers' and theologians' speculations and rationalizations about the nature of life and its continuation or existence in an eternity of some kind of alternate dimension(s), humans search for personal contact with the source of all life. We search for a spirituality beyond our natural birthright capacity. We reach for the God Concept and hope to connect with a gracious and beneficial spirituality powered from outside the natural realm. From time immemorial, we humans have sought to encounter a spirituality from the other side beyond the speed of light. We have yearned for the spiritual experiences generated by beings dwelling in the realm of eternity. Pneumagenic spirituality is what I call what happens when humans experience genuine spiritual encounters.

Chapter 6 - Pneumagenic Spirituality

Spirituality generated by spiritual sources

What goes on when a fortune is told with cards or some other tool? A lost article is found through dousing? When a medium speaks in the voice of his/her spirit guide? When a private testimony from a dead loved one is heard? When a miracle takes place? Or, an angel appears or intervenes in the affairs of humanity?

Psychology professionals refer to such events as anomalies. They are typified as Gestalt experiences where each piece gains meaning from the whole. Usually the pieces cannot be proven scientifically but the whole cannot be denied. Consequently, many respected and famous psychologists have supported scientific research of anomalies over the past 100+ years with some success: statistically significant results have been documented, but not as much as is required to remove a certain disreputable stigma from their study, called parapsychology. "To see the world in which anomalous experience happens, we need to temporarily abandon a view of the world in which rational thought happens."¹ It is like that famous optical illusion of the faces and the vase: you can see either image but not both at the same time.

Several other observations are commonly made about parapsychological anomalies that conform to my own personal experience in spiritual encounters as a youth. The effectiveness of the extrasensory powers (ESP) is not related to God or a particular religion, but it is proportional to the intensity of emotion experienced by the participant. Uninvited telepathic communications or visions often occur during life or death events or in association with sensations of intense anxiety, danger, fear or love. Sensitivity to ESP is enhanced with the depression of normal sensations (sight, sound, touch, smell, taste and time). Anomalies are almost impossible to duplicate and do not lend themselves to neutral scientific testing. Dreamtimes provide good consciousness states for increased sensitivity to ESP. The direct experience of ESP is like knowing and not knowing at the same time. As I express it, being close to the border between life and death enhances sensitivity to the life force at work (ESP).

Current research also focuses on how mind literally affects matter. The Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research project is one of the leading ones you can look up. A number of authors have discussed relevance to quantum theory or Albert Einstein's "spooky action at a distance" where subatomic particles exhibit long distance linkage for no current scientific reason. In general, there is a great deal of fuzziness when discussing or researching this area professionally that is due both to the nature of the subject matter as well as the connoted stigmas for seriously considering such material publicly. Nonetheless, multiple millions of

¹ Mayer, Elizabeth Lloyd, **Extraordinary Knowing: science, skepticism, and the inexplicable powers of the human mind**, (New York: Bantam Books, 2007), page 140. This book provides a good discussion of the issues and an overview of the scientific research done.

dollars have been spent on researching parapsychological phenomena because there is something to it.

Even Sigmund Freud's theories of sexual repression as revealed through dream interpretation relate to this research. Freud favored dreams because he believed that they reveal the subconscious thoughts of the mind, which are normally suppressed by the self-imposed limits of our active rationality. His research was controversial because of a pervasive sexual theme, yet this should not be a surprise because sex, which presents the strongest forces of creative biological life, is deeply tied to emotions and the life force. Sexual ecstasy even suspends some vital physiological functions for a while.

Sexual behaviors and moral codes have been culturally regarded as sacred since the beginning of time because sexual union is the deepest biological expression of life. I theorize that the biological energies of sexuality are deeply joined to a person's essential vitality, and hence some how closely aligned with the life force. This is why balanced sexuality within borders is important and why sexual abuse is so damaging. A balanced sexuality evidences an internally balanced life force. A person suffering violated sexuality suffers from a damaged balance of life force. A society exhibiting promiscuously excessive focus on and trade in commodified sexuality is dying from the internal hollowing out of its cultural vitality or collective life force.

My Story

I will begin to explore the realm of answers and explanations to the above questions from the perspective of natural spirituality. To do this, I must depart from the concept driven, essay discussion format I have used so far and share a bit about my own search for spirituality. Honestly, I could not write what I have or have yet to put to paper without the input of my whole life experience, which includes a great many mistakes and much sorrow as well as growth into a level of sufficient understanding to justify writing about these matters. Today, my life is relatively free of material entanglements, yet I still work to feed my family. I also enjoy substantial inner peace and happiness with my immediate family, but that has not always been the case. As a youth growing up in the 60s, I encountered and participated in pneumagenic spirituality, though there is not enough in those experiences to write a separate book about them.

What I have written here comes from reflecting on those experiences. In that process of reflection and some further study, I came to understand better what occurred to me in my early youth to teens, why I experienced those pneumagenic events, and what to do about it. I was born with weak leg muscles and joints that gradually improved through grammar and junior high school. It took a long time to learn to walk, and I can still remember my younger brother by two years being able to outrun me until well into grammar school. By high school, I competed as a member of the cross-country team. Prior to ninth grade, I grew up in the New Hampshire countryside mostly without anyone around my age. I went to public school, and I was regarded by most of my classmates as the iconic, tall skinny weakling, egghead of the class.

My memories of self-awareness and asking questions go back to my crib. I can still remember lying in it on my back and wondering about what this was all about. It was a feeling that asked questions like, "Who am I? What is life?" Please note that I wrote "feeling" as I was not able to speak or use those words at that time in my life. As a child, I had always had a very strong connection to my mother. I was very sensitive to what was going on inside of her, though she did not talk about it much. I seem to remain sensitive to her welfare, though I do so from a distance of over 1,500 miles today.

I also had and have strong emotional attachment to living things in nature. I have never carelessly walked or picked pieces off of plants or injured animals. I am strategically uncompromised when it comes to pests: I kill or remove any mosquitoes or other biting insects from my body. At the same time, I was brought up on the concept that the necessities of survival meant people first, and I learned to fish, hunt and slaughter animals, some of whom I raised. I did not enjoy that part of growing up and have not purposefully eaten meat now for almost 7 years.

So, from my earliest years I seemed to know things, was able to anticipate events, and could douse pretty well. Sundays were spent in one of those huge old granite churches that you often find near the center of New England towns and cities. I am thankful for the teachers who read the Bible stories to us; however, those stories inspired a great many questions because I did not see happening in the church what I heard and read about in the Bible. Where was the power in today's church that I read about in the Bible? Why did Jesus teach "love your enemies" yet everyone had been building bomb shelters all my life? I believe that there is a definitive relationship between these two questions that I will discuss later.

Although I did not totally give up on the church, I began to search for answers elsewhere. I did a great deal of reading about astrology, UFOs, hypnosis, psychics, prophets, secrets of thinking to bring wealth and success, ancient mysteries and parapsychology, which is bona fide scientific research into psychic phenomena. At the same time, I had become involved in Cub Scouts and then Boy Scouts, which was very good for me physically. Before I started on my Eagle, I earned the God and Country award. The young pastor who led our class was very nice, thorough and attentive, but he did not give satisfying answers to my questions. Later in life, I found some answers that at least partially satisfied my early questions, and I share them in chapters 8 and 9.

Looking for spiritual power outside of the church, I began to experiment with games, cards, dice and other feats of psychic prowess that I had read about. I was successful in my search. Even discounting greatly for youthful enthusiasm and the natural inclination to see what one wants to see and believe what one wants to believe, I participated in valid psychic activity of a variety of kinds. I do not recommend my course of action or much of what I did, but these experiences have materially contributed to what understanding I am able to share on this subject. Let me also state that I am not writing this book so that I can sell my services as an expert in this area, either. I share what I have learned freely so that others may be free spiritually.

The reason I do not recommend that anyone actively just dive into the world of ESP and other psychic events is because it is deceptively dangerous. At some point in my search, I am convinced that I was getting "help" from spirit forces outside any person's natural capacity for ESP: the level one might experience naturally just being alive with a functioning life force. Activities requiring more intensive concentrations of natural spiritual power usually step over the fuzzy line of balance and open one up to encounters with spirit beings that are mostly unfriendly in purpose – though they may at first seem to be helpful, even solicitous. When I began to withdraw from engaging the psychic world, I encountered considerable resistance, mostly in the form of psycho-spiritual conflict, depression and externally sent impulses to commit suicide. It took some years to disengage from those issues with residual challenges continuing well into my 20s. I would spare anyone from these negative experiences.

As a result of these psychic trials, I completely avoided anything to do with ESP and naturally psychic capabilities for decades. About 19 years ago, I had gotten to the point of being secure enough to re-explore some of these areas. Truthfully, I went back and forth a bit on some things before coming to my present understanding and approach to the metaphysical dimension of reality. It would have been confusing to an outsider watching what I did or listening to what I said. I was struggling to differentiate between what may be called the normal operations, capabilities or fruits of the life force and what signifies the intervention of a spirit being, like an angel.

But in my 20s and most of my 30s, I did not understand enough nor trust my internal warning system to let me know when I was getting too close to the border. There is a border. The world is full of invitations, gateways and shortcuts to involvement with spirit beings – sort of like an express elevator to high contact with the other side. We are surrounded by their varied appeals interspersed with our own individual mixes of struggles, challenges, vanities and desires, which combine to make each of us more open to one form of spiritual experience or another. We have personal preferences in our flavors and fashions of spirituality. You might think of them as being different doors to spiritual power trips with the techniques used in hypnosis to reduce the time required to put a subject into a hypnotic state or trance. I also believe that my activities indirectly and negatively influenced the spiritual environment of others around me. I was determined not to let that happen again.

Of course, while all of this inner activity was taking place, my life moved on in the external world, too. I learned a great deal. Some of it I learned the easy way from others. Some of the lessons I learned the hard way through painful experience including business failure and divorce. One of the more important lessons, that also applies to the search for spirituality, is that I cannot fix anyone or anything else. I can only make spiritual decisions for myself and bring my path into alignment with the greater spiritual purpose being laid out for me and with me. If I am successful in this personal journey, others will be blessed as an automatic by-product. They will benefit without my knowing, or I will be spiritually enabled to provide some small help materially that blesses

us both in a brief gestalt balance of the physical and metaphysical dimensions of ultimate reality's eternal abundance.

I cannot impart spiritual gifts to others, but they may be inspired by my example to receive their own. I can live a conscientious life of slightly risky kindness, doing my best to exercise social and environmental responsibility, without feeling the necessity to judge others or to try to extricate them from out of their self-imposed bondage of spiritual confusion or ignorance. I teach what I believe to be truth, though incomplete and probably replete with errors because I also know that all human systems are imperfect. So, my expectations are lowered, nor do I entertain thoughts anymore about saving the world from its sociocultural systems' production of greedy violence, environmental exploitation and human oppression. These matters are beyond the capability of one person or all humanity on its own because the sum total of the life force, regardless of its massive scope, is still the null – the emptiness most often experienced as death.

Some Rationally Inductive Answers

Here I should recap the main points of my proposed synthesis of the universe's structure and ultimate reality. I believe that the boundary between the physical and metaphysical dimensions of the universe is the speed of light as measured by science. Beyond that speed electromagnetic radiation cannot travel. It is a real border, an absolute. These two realms of the universe are energized by one spirit bifurcated by the temporal reality known as time, which thereby limits its power and efficacy on this side of the speed of light. I believe that the life force, physical energy and matter are created and sustained by God. The entire universe is interrelated mathematically from the highest fullness at the throne of God through various levels of intensity, frequency and wavelength variation to an emptiness beyond absolute zero. While I base this concept on what we can observe and measure in the electromagnetic spectrum, my hypothesis cannot be proved one way or the other scientifically.

However, I find inductive evidence that the natural life force, the spirit power of the material universe, is generated out of the originating spiritual source of the universe. It functions as a fifth dimension of timeless consciousness added to the four testable dimensions of space-time. This makes the life force a material spiritual force that links to eternity because it exists and flows as a radiating spiritual web between the physical and metaphysical dimensions. If you were to draw a very fine line of no width between the physical and metaphysical dimensions, the life force is like a broad fuzzy field or sheet that overlaps this line to extend a bit over the line and into the physical side of reality. This part of it travels parallel to (and I suspect aligned in synch with) light/electromagnetic energy at light speed. It is a moving, flowing transition zone that keeps the metaphysical realm in contact with the physical realm of the universe. Of course, it cannot be measured by science from our side, but sensed clearly from the other side because I suspect that it fills the 11 dimensions of string theory similar to the way time or length characterize the material universe.

If correct, then the life force is the medium by which the metaphysical interacts with the physical. It is the almost timeless ether in which ESP operates by intangibly connecting minds and bodies of people and animals through the life force. The life force is the medium molded by distinctive patterned sets of human thoughts. It is the intangible collective well of human innovation. In it, people decisively create their individual souls (personal characteristics) as wave patterns or spectral signatures impressed in the natural spirit that powers the material universe and is limited by it.

If so, the operational power input that sustains the universe flows "downward" with decreasing levels of power from eternity to temporality through the life force. There is no evidence that the opposite direction is possible. The reason may be as simple as the Second Law of Thermodynamics, where higher energy levels can dissipate or break down to lower ones but the reverse does not happen, just as lead does not become uranium. This is the problem that alchemists faced in trying to make gold out of base metals. They realized that they had to reverse the natural tendency to dissipation of energy. That is why most alchemists became preoccupied with manipulating spiritual power: They studied all kinds of old books on the occult, magic and mysticism in order to find some way to add enough energy to raise a base element like lead to higher, more valuable one like gold. They realized that they had to go outside of the closed system of the physical universe to get the extra energy required to transform lower energy elements to higher ones and still make a profit.

Just as the speed of light is a barrier to measurable electromagnetic energy, there also exists an absolute barrier to the spiritual possibilities of natural humanity. The role of the life force in sustaining the material universe makes it a material spiritual power with temporal limits, though the maximum possible since it operates at the speed of light. This spiritual essence is automatically inherited from the start of biological life. There is no escaping it. We cannot live without it, yet the life force seems to be greatly limited in its potential for resolving large-scale human problems. This is the bottom line lesson from human history. Principally, true love and enduring peace are only created by and sustained in the context of the divine spiritual power of pure unconditional love. Pure unconditional love can be approached, but not attained, through the life force due to its structure as an inseparable admixture of good and evil, light and darkness.

Most humans suspect that another spiritual power exists in the metaphysical realm, which has what it takes to solve these insoluble problems of the human condition – both as individuals and as societies. Humanity realizes this universal truth subconsciously, which is why we seek it out, but success in finding effective eternal spiritual solutions eludes most searchers. Because of our natural limitations, we are easily confused or deceived about spiritual matters, and it is difficult to discern between the good (always beneficial) from the bad (ultimately destructive) spirits.

Human impotence in the face of real problems drives the search for a spirituality beyond our everyday experience of the material universe, and sometimes, we find it. When we actually encounter pneumagenic

spirituality, we experience something generated by nonmaterial spiritual powers and beings external of, or alien to, examination by the disciplines of physical science. These encounters invariably involve a concentration of the life force through a spirit being, which acts in an intensifying manner similar to how a lens focuses sunlight to start a fire.

Of course, science can and does study the consequences and outcomes of the spiritual phenomena that humans experience. From this genre of scientific study we know that many "spiritual" experiences are caused by psychotropic hallucinations, mass hysteria, imaginary illusion, sleight of hand or deeply emotional wishful thinking. Such honest revelations do not debunk spirituality. Rather they help us to focus on genuine spiritual matters that cannot be scientifically examined or explained. They reinforce the contention that life-changing spiritual encounters with something or someone from the other side actually take place. Indeed, massive evidence testifies of their existence throughout history and so merit further inquiry.

Pneumagenic Encounters

For the average person, pneumagenic spiritual encounters are a rarity. Because of that, most religions came into being as a result of some kind of pneumagenic encounter. I suspect that the most common causality of religion is some form of interaction with a spirit being – an angel, demon, god or God. Another way religions could be born is through the intersect of human imagination with the material spiritual forces of life - perhaps some fortuitous vortex of the life force being at the right place and time during an important point in a social group's history.

I also believe that most religious experiences and assemblies do not involve genuine pneumagenic encounters. Strongly felt emotions are interpreted by the participants as spiritual presence. A religious experience may seem otherworldly, divine or even miraculous to those closely involved with it, but that feeling by itself is not proof of a pneumagenic act or spiritual encounter. Intense emotional experiences are similar to spiritual experiences in their external evidences, such as feeling. Intense emotions often accompany genuine pneumagenic encounters, and emotion plays an immense role in most religious or spiritual celebrations.

Emotional experience closely parallels and may be in some way linked to the life force, riding the waves of natural spirituality, perhaps. But emotional intensity is not proof positive of a genuine spiritual experience, nor is it a sign of faith. Absolute faith may be evidenced by deep quiet and calmness rather than by intensely dynamic or catatonic performance. Spiritual worship or the exercise of spiritual gifts does not require strong emotional involvement by humans either. A sovereign deity can choose to act through or to bless someone who is not emotionally worked up. Attitudes of humility and thankfulness seem to be more important than emotionality.

Remember, I distinguish between the phenomena of natural spirituality, which are manifestations of the material life force, and the activity or manifestation of spirit beings. The life force exists throughout the biological, material universe. It is the spiritual balance wheel that powers life and consciousness on this side of eternity. It is the evidence for

the existence of the metaphysical reality beyond light speed. Humans may utilize the natural spiritual forces without even being consciously aware of any special technique, such as in the projection of a positive mental attitude or natural confidence in something – even one's self!

Various cultures have recorded techniques of methods of how to use the life force for health, for seeking spiritual help, and for the practice of positive living in the here and now. Such teaching may also include eternal implications, and this is where discernment issues enter. We cannot naturally or sixth sensually differentiate between the temporally bound life force and any eternal spirit from beyond time's boundary. As long as these humanly discovered and applied techniques for managing the life force operate within the bounds of restoring balance, they are safe; however, many people do not stop at that hard to distinguish line. They seek spiritual power beyond a natural balance in order to solve problem or acquire some thing according to their own personally determined and desired standards of justice or concepts of what is good.

Whether the motivation for additional spiritual power is altruistic or selfish, at this juncture their spiritual search must engage an intermediary of some sort in order to be successful. The intermediary may be a human professional, such as a shaman, or it may be some willing spirit that reveals itself in some manner directly to the seeker without an intermediary, too. Seekers of spiritual power often experiment with different mediating techniques in order to discover what door or gateway to the supernatural works for them.

When successful, they encounter high concentrations or extreme balance distortions in one direction or another of the natural life force. I term this category of spirituality pneumagenic or "generated by spirit" because the agency of a spirit being is necessary to produce paranormal manifestations or make the miracle happen. It is irrelevant whether the spiritual work done is considered good or evil, white or black. It is the unnatural imbalance or greatly increased focus of spiritual power that is the prime indicator of a spirit being's intervention and/or presence. Such concentrations are required to suspend or extend the physical laws of the natural universe.

The difficulty comes in accepting the limits of natural spirituality. Modern attitudes especially seek immediate results with minimal effort or changes on the part of the customer. We are an impatient, shallow, hurry-up culture that does not understand spiritual matters, nor does it seem to really want to. We see the problems of this approach to life most obviously in the issue of weight loss. Billions have been spent in research to find the right pill to do what works almost every time for every person – improved diet and increased physical activity over time.

I think that enough scientific work has been done, or testimonies verified, to prove that certain kinds of ESP anomalies are natural capabilities of the life force not requiring the borrowed external power boost or agency provided by "spirit guides" or angels. It is possible to cure certain illnesses caused by imbalances of the life force without the help of spirit beings. In some cases, spiritual imbalances are paralleled by nutrient and/or anatomical imbalances that may be treated with biological enhancements such as herbal supplements, pressure points, bodily

massage, skeletal adjustment, acupuncture and some forms of electromagnetic therapy.

In each case, some kind of deficiency is treated by supplying a natural excess utilizing methods that function within the overlapping, fuzzy border that exists between the life force and its biological analogs. For example, science identifies nervous energy as being electromagnetic pulses moving along physical nerve tissue. I suggest that the electromagnetic force field also blurs into the life force a bit even as they exist separately in parallel structure. Similarly, the breath of life finds biological analogs in oxygenated air and blood.

Spirit Beings

Pneumagenic spiritual encounters often involve spirit beings such as angels, demons, gods or other beings from the realm of eternity beyond death. Manifestations or miracles generated by concentrations of the life force often accompany the appearance or intervention of a spirit guide or angel. Holy angels are sent by God with a specific mission to perform. Most seem to be designed for specified functions with only the highest orders given more general objectives and capabilities such as communicating with humans.

People often initiate contact with spirit beings by using professional intermediaries. The religious professional or medium often establishes contact by calling on the spirits are called on by name to intervene on behalf of the client – especially if the medium is working with more than one spirit entity. Not every experience, perhaps not even most experiences, with these professional intermediaries is genuine because they cannot really control what a spirit being might do. To keep their clients happy and paying, most psychics have become experienced applied psychologists and artists of illusion out of financial necessity. They have learned how to use their clients' psychological and emotional hot buttons as well as how to contact the other side.

Some mortal intermediaries follow a learned incantation and/or set of rituals to apply the forces of nature to some task, a difficult healing perhaps. If more conventional treatments fail, witches, shamans or sorcerers may call upon the faceless forces of earth, fire, water or air spirits to aid them. If the goal or need requiring spiritual power lies beyond the natural balance of life, then any success will be due to an unnaturally strong concentration of the life force. The human seekers may or may not be aware of the spirit being(s) aiding them.

In these circumstances, it is entirely possible for the humans to think that the spiritual power manifested is controlled by themselves, but in truth the incantation and ritual does not work without the help of an obliging spirit that chooses to "play along" with the illusion that the humans' formulaic chants and rituals potently influence the spirit being's actions. If a spirit being does not reveal itself, then humans are sensually blinded enough about spiritual phenomena to facilitate self-deception. Rationally, he or she should know or sense an unnaturally strong spiritual intervention. An objective exercise in logic should lead to the conclusion that some spirit being was at work.

This is where the natural law of spiritual balance between light and dark, life and death, comes to the aid of understanding. The natural balance will not be distorted without some form of supernatural intervention. There are limits of time and energy to what may be accomplished naturally. Improved technique may make the natural life force operate more efficiently or with better focus on the problem, but people will still die. Great good or great evil will eventually be balanced to the null. Dramatic success in miracles of one kind or another come about by temporarily distorting the natural balance in order to attain what is desired or paid for.

The human proclivity to desire or covet some objective beyond what is justly balanced leads to formal or informal "contracts" with real spirit beings willing to oblige such requests for a price. As we will see, there are short-term prices or sacrificial gifts, and there are long-term, ultimate consequences, which may be hidden from those seeking spiritual power – and even from their human intermediaries. Very few make conscious contracts with the devil or some other spirit being. Most assume that they are just accessing and better utilizing natural, impersonal spiritual forces, but they have really gotten in deeper than they think.

These would-be adepts operate under any number of deceiving assumptions blind to the real strings attached. First, they fail to realize that a spirit being is required to accomplish what they desire because that desire lies beyond the bounds of natural balance. Second, they think a particular ritual, spell, offering or behavior will give them control of natural spiritual forces just waiting to be accessed so that they can realize their dreams of power or supply some perceived or real need. Instead, they will one day discover that they have unknowingly engaged a spirit being that is more than willing to make something happen according to a person's favored manner of incantation. The strategy is to get people hooked on the power and the results so that at some point they do make a more conscious deal. All along it is a self-imposed forging of obligation and psychospiritual addiction until it is time for pay-off, which means the destruction of the addicted, which is the ultimate proof of a demonic spirit being's involvement.

So people encounter real spirits intentionally and unintentionally. The spirit encountered may be a good spirit or a bad one - an angel from heaven or a demon from hell. My research to date indicates that intentionally seeking to contact an angel only seems to attract demons that masquerade as angels. God seems to send angels when He wants to and not when we ask, thus the universal advice on pneumagenic spiritual encounters is caution. Most cultures leave the realm of spirits to a few professionals who serve their community as needed. The role of professional spiritual leader or go-between is globally prevalent throughout human history because the consequences of dealing with the spirit world can be dangerously life threatening. Most normal people do not want to offend or anger the spirits out of ignorance because the consequences are horrendous. Following certain rules seems to reduce the risks of seeking their help.

Research into the paranormal has exploded over the past 50 years. Bookstores have numerous shelves loaded down with books on magic and the occult. Hollywood makes millions with their dark, often evil

and violent movies on this subject. The amount of information is overwhelming and unreliable. One wonders how much of it, or if any of it, is true. It should be obvious to everyone that there seem to be innumerable and varying approaches to harnessing the powers of the spirit world. How could they all be correct?

The difficulty here is that we are dealing with nonmaterial reality, where things work differently than in the world of science. To a very large degree, it does not matter **what** one believes but that he or she **does believe in it**. "Faith is the evidence of the unseen," says the Bible in Hebrews 11:1. It is the proof and the tool of spiritual application, and it works in the psychobiological realm, too. Confidence, belief and attitude have a tremendous impact on human health and performance.

Therefore, when I consider the power of natural faith in conjunction with the testimony of spiritual professionals, it seems that there is significant variety of ways to "master spiritual powers." The observation of equally effective but contrary systems of spiritual power runs contrary to what we know about the laws of the physical universe. The laws of nature operate very precisely and consistently without regard to one's educational or social status, belief or faith in whether it works or not. Gravity works whether you know about it or not, properly understand it or not, and so do spiritual laws.

Therefore, I have concluded that spirit beings are required to facilitate access to paranormal powers to fulfill human desires on demand and that they are apparently willing to operate on a variety of terms and formats. It may be that some have preferences, which have been expressed over time, place and culture historically so that the professionals of a people learn them and teach others to conform to them. Thus, it would also appear that long relationships become established between certain tribes or societies and particular spirit beings, which are identified by name(s) as the god(s) of that culture.

Spiritual Doors or Gateways

The general requirement of encountering spirit beings is to push the human envelopes of consciousness and mortality. As one nears death, the barriers between the two dimensions seem to thin by many reports. Likewise, near death experiences usually involve some contact with spirit beings. Objective judgment regarding the validity of these reports is impossible without the use of a third party references. Most of these spiritual authorities are established by custom. They may be professional stewards of tradition (wise woman, shaman, priest, etc.) who examine the evidence from the perspective of an established theology or other psychospiritual standard. The determination can only be taken by faith or by weighing the fruits of the encounter against the universal standards of life and death, good and evil.

The specific styles of how a person pushes the envelope of consciousness and mortality are determined by culture and by individual aspiration or chosen path of study. I will not be able to give you a long list of detailed examples, but I will provide some key principles used by a number of different proponents of seeking spiritual encounters with the ultimate. If you keep these principles in mind while evaluating the

various spiritual paths, you will find that they apply and quickly sort things out into predictable patterns.

So how do people push the envelope of mortality and consciousness? Here is a list:

- **Empty Mind** – a mental emptying of personal identity and will, often through some form of meditation, hypnosis or drug use. Nature hates a vacuum. If you marginalize or eliminate the “you” in you, then some other “identity” will possess the void you created. This category includes “regression therapy.”

- **Tuning Fork Principle** – the creation of antenna patterns of body and brain. Just as the radio or TV waves require suitable antennae for reception, so the life force and spirit beings are drawn to congruent patterns of thought, posture and behavior. The positions of yoga, theater and dance have the potential to naturally strengthen life force patterns as well as to attract spirit being contact. The line between the two is fuzzy and involves the principle of balance. Repetitious prayers, motion, poetry, dance, music or song et up and engrain patterns that not only affect the body but also the brain. With the passage of time or by training, these repetitious behaviors reduce the mind’s hold on the brain/body. Mental and emotional patterns also establish spiritual congruency: disturbed patterns attract disturbed spirits.

- **Mortal Exhaustion** – stressing the biological body or brain to the point of mortal weakness near unto death. There are numerous methods employed to this end from fasting to sleep deprivation, drugs natural and manmade, to the beating, cutting and bleeding of one’s self or another living creature (animal or human) or the deprivation of air. Besides bodily abuse, exhaustion may be achieved through mental abuse, punishment or ritual that induces shock or extreme terror.

- **Games and Imagination** – voluntary acceptance of another identity either as a desired go between or as a (from temporarily to permanently) preferred role player. There are many card and board games where the players (Children and young adults are especially vulnerable.) take on another identity or identities. Those identities may seem either good or bad. The problem comes when the player begins to desire to use the power of their imaginary or virtual role model for some purpose or to solve some problem in real life. It simply may be that the fantasy created by one’s imagination is a more desirable “place” to be than in the real world. Drugs, especially alcohol, facilitate these activities by reducing inhibitions and the exercise of disciplined willpower.

- **Obsession or Addiction** – an unbalanced pre-occupation that leads to an unnatural and unbalanced insatiable desire. An extreme manifestation of idolatry that opens the person to self-commodification: he or

she will do or give up anything in order to acquire the desired object or goal. This may include a physiological or psychological addiction to drugs, adrenalin, sex or euphoria. This category includes any edgy thrill or high of some sort due to risk factors such as total loss or gain of wealth or power, the experience of intense speed or undertaking activities involving potential injury and death.

As you can see, there is some overlap in how these how these doors or gateways work. Some of the same concepts or tools of spiritual contact consistently show up in the list, which is not complete. The main underlying themes involve:

1. The exhibition of human spiritual weakness that attracts demons
2. A setting aside of one's identity, personality, rational consciousness, will or power of decision in favor of some kind of spiritual encounter
3. May be either sought by an individual purposefully or experienced as a result of involvement in some group activity where individuality is weakened. This may be a socially conforming activity such as taking part in a religious tradition or by participation in a mob.

Astrology: Digitized Life Force

The universal presence of the life force throughout the natural world has not been ignored by spirit beings seeking influence over the affairs of humanity. They do this for a number of reasons, but the principle purpose involves an organized rationing and access to the life force, which is important commodity necessary for the spirit world to function. Just as every species of biological life on our planet requires food in order to live, so the creatures of the metaphysical dimension need to be "fed." I use here a concept borrowed from ancient religions. A metaphysical being's real food is not the visibly edible foods offered but the life force released by the sacrifices traditionally presented by the priests to their gods or idols. I develop this concept further in other chapters.

Participants and priests ate the bodies of the sacrifices, but the worshipped deity absorbed the life force power released at the death of the sacrifice. Many eastern traditions pay attention to the concept of consuming living foods rich in sun power as opposed to dead animal foods, which are considered lower quality foods delivering less efficient nutrients with questionable health and survival benefits.

When ancient peoples worshiped or conformed their thoughts to their gods, the spirit beings were nourished. The more followers a spirit had, the more life force batteries or antenna fields for increased power collection there was for them to draw on. I do not think that matters have basically changed much over the thousands of years. Today, rock concerts are probably higher quality sources of life force "food" for fallen angels than most other public assemblies, for example. Sure, the details of expression and method have changed, but the power needs of the

spirit beings have not. Like all parasitical phenomena on earth, there is a constant trade-off of benefits between host and parasite. In the end the parasite always wins.

From the evidence briefly referenced above, I find it useful to think of the life force as operating very similarly to the electromagnetic spectrum. Thus, it has the capacity to carry digital messages like a cell phone and digital signatures like spectral lines. In the last 20 years the hi-tech industry has become very skilled in using light beams to convey multiple data streams through digitized frequency. Information may be carried concurrently on multiple levels at a number of frequencies. The key to control is to have an antenna and receiver set to the proper frequency to receive your data. Of course, it can be stolen, and that theme makes its way into a number of movies.

Electronic transmission on multiple levels models my hypothesis of how astrology describes the spiritual influences of the material world. The classic view assigns astrological power to the heavenly bodies whose influence on people's lives changes with the movements and positional relationships between the sun, moon, planets and stars. Pagan gods and goddesses are correlated with these various observable lights in the sky as well. I believe that these traditional associations are real and that they refer to fallen angels calling themselves gods or goddesses. The life force they focus like lenses is not their own but borrowed or redirected to them for rebroadcast in the exercise of their nefarious undertakings.

Depending on your zodiac readings at birth, your antenna is set with that first breath of life when the life force is oriented to its birth environment. A digitized signature/record of who you are spiritually begins with this first breath, and you are exposed to the modulating influences of the mighty spirit beings represented by each planet or star. I characterize this influence as but one of many that impact our daily lives as human beings. Our interactions with others, our chosen and habitual character and the divine influence of God through the Holy Spirit are also at work. Ultimately, each person's power of decision trumps any and all of external influences - spiritual or otherwise. We can never say that he, she or the devil "made me do it." Nor can we exclaim, "I guess I just can't change! My zodiac sign and ascendant moon make me that way." There is no excusable escape from personal responsibility. Each of us is responsible for what we do and believe in life, though we can come to better understand why we succeed or fail in some aspect of life.

The angels of the zodiac are fallen ones. Fallen angels or demons have names, but their real identity is expressed in their behavior patterns. Angels do not have the creative, imaginative, artificial reality forming capacity that humans have. They are behavioral mechanisms with hard-wired intelligence that is irreparable once broken. Angelic righteousness is behavioral in nature and judged by actions or deeds. Demons are similar to robots with corrupted programming or rabid animals: it is impossible for them to do produce net positive or intrinsically good fruits. Each fallen angel had once been designed for a specific purpose, and each rebelled in a specific way. The pattern of their rebellion creates a permanent distortion in their metaphysical body, which operates as a combination lens and re-broadcast device. Since each lens is shaped by the manner in which the fallen angel rebelled, their identity is the

specific variations of its deathly dark good and evil mix. The evil they inspire in humans, or are attracted to, is set in the antenna-like pattern of their broken circuits.

Angels are battery-capacitors and agents of focused metaphysical power discharge. No angel – holy or fallen - is a power source; they must get their operational power from outside of their metaphysical bodies. One source is the Creator God, from which the loyal, holy angels receive their power to live and work. The other spiritual power source is the life force. Fallen angels (demons) get it from two sources: by tapping into the natural distribution of the life force used to sustain the universe and all biological life in it, and/or by stealing it from some living being.

Satan, formerly Lucifer (Hebrew, *Cheyl ben-Shachar* “force and son of the dawn”), is the most powerful fallen angel. He (it really) takes the life force from many sources and redistributes it according to the organizational power of his kingdom. Jesus taught that Satan or fallen Lucifer’s kingdom is organized. (Luke 11:18) The heavens are orderly, too. As the sun moves through the zodiac, Lucifer/Satan’s redirected life force energy flows through and reinforces his chief demons’ powers. The different demonic lieutenants have their own hour(s) of blended dominance. The structure of astrology reflects how the earth’s life force is distributed throughout the natural system. No one astrological system gives the full picture, for there are multiple influences at work at any one time. Certain chief demons or particular behavioral powers are more enhanced at the structured appointment of more favorably positioned or intersecting lines of power as modeling in the moving alignments between the planets and stars.

Each demon-lens has a measured priority access to the life force, which will be distorted and radiated in accordance with their unique signature of rebellion. The broadcast is general, and it can be overcome through the exercise of human choice and character. Astrological influence is real. Perhaps to be aware of its existence is valuable, but to follow the daily, monthly or birth chart readings robs a person of liberty in identity formation. Studying, reading or receiving astrological guidance aligns the tuning fork of our personal life force with the sinful behavior-identity pattern of the demons associated with those planets and stars, and such an alignment can lead to destructive servitude to the consuming spirits of the dark void whose ultimate interest lies solely in feeding off of your destruction.

Spiritual Discernment

The tricky part of this whole discussion is that pneumagenic spirituality does not play by any rules. It is unpredictable. This in itself is a sign of warning. Natural spirituality does seem to follow operational laws that are dependably predictable after they occur. In other words, the life force is impersonal and follows laws incompletely understood at present. Like the rest of the universe, this is due to design. The life force is naturally intertwined with biological physiology. Just as the latter operates according to observable laws of science, so the former operates according to the spiritual laws of the metaphysical realm. Medicinal herbs and acupuncture and prayer work to improve health because they

involve balanced aspects of the physical and metaphysical dimensions of the universe. Their tie to the material makes their operations predictable and safely useful to the limits of natural balance. Going beyond those limits can be problematic. Breaking the natural laws of balance threatens life at all levels from a single person to earth's entire population.

Discernment is vitally important and not always easy. If a spiritual encounter is spontaneous or not sought out, I believe that it has a better chance of being beneficial. One problem is that a single event is not enough to go on because the evil spirits draw on both good and evil to deceive. Remember, the best lies begin with the truth. Another problem is that we really do not know with certainty what the natural mind of human beings is capable of when working solely with the natural spirit of life without the interference of evil spirits.

There seem to be genuine spiritual connections between people who love each other, such as a mother and a child, spouses, etc. "Cries" for help or "call me" are commonly heard psychically. Short-term premonitions may fall under this category, too. Do remember that humans are naturally inclined to a material self-fulfilled prophecy and/or other encounters of seeing, feeling, interpreting or experiencing what we want or desire to be a genuine spiritual encounter or exercise of power, so we generate and believe in a lot of false positives when it comes to our powers of ESP.

Nonetheless, a search for spiritual encounter with spotty results is as addictive as the lottery. There are just enough payoffs to keep you hooked. Most of the early ones are innocent enough – more of an exciting, "Wow! What do you make of that!" than, "Let's go sell our souls to the Devil and pay for it with a real blood sacrifice." While the latter does happen sometimes, mostly people are first hooked on the "innocent fun stuff." The strategy is to give just enough to keep you coming, but not enough net gain to cure a real problem or to rationally justify the real risks against the addiction that comes from experiencing a temporary surge or induced flow of spiritual power.

The moment of reckoning can only be delayed by ever-increasing sacrifice, for which innocent victims are secured – both willingly and unwillingly for that purpose. Anyone involved with fallen spirits begins to lose his or her unique identity as the patterns of their thinking and behavior conform more completely to that of the spirit guide, demon or god(ess). An increasing portion of a person's identity structure is lost with each increased level of occult induction with promised higher levels of metaphysical power. Sometimes that power is delivered for a while. In fact, it comes as long as the assisting demon is fed with ever-increasing doses of life force – either from the desiring participant or from his or her animal or human victims. Once this path has started, there is no material escape but death because eventually no amount of devotion or sacrifice can satisfy the yearning demonic maw of life spirit consuming destruction. Under this pressure, the demonic devotee goes methodically destructive himself, insanely preoccupied with filling the demanding voices in his head with the deaths of others until his own is sacrificed, too.

In other words, the life of the victim is stolen to replace what the perpetrator has pledged from his own future. The excessive power used today is robbed from tomorrow or from someone else – a victim. The

perpetrator pays for today's benefits out of tomorrow's life – his own or another's: the future is robbed by the unnaturally enhanced consumption of today. All humans can "burn the candle at both ends biologically, but the life force can only be similarly distorted in sufficient amounts to do "miracles" through the intervention of spirit beings. Since they are not power sources themselves, a price ever remains to be paid, which is forcefully taken from anyone vulnerably accessible.

Most pneumagenic spirituality occurs due to the spiritual manipulation of the life force. These manifestations can be very powerful and dramatic, but the spiritual power is not internally sourced by the spirits or the human agents. It must be drawn from the natural environment, and people are the best reservoirs of life force energy to tap into. Therefore, down through the ages appeals are made to the battle of good against evil, light against darkness, but there are no winners in this distracting illusion because the end is always a neutralized null that erodes to death and dissipation of energy. The spirits constantly demand more and so do their human minions.

When humans resort to the use of spiritual intermediaries, then what happens is most likely is either a forgery or a genuine pneumagenic encounter with evil. The intermediaries may be sincere professionals (shaman, fortuneteller or medium). Even if they are indeed sincere, they remain mere tools of spirits, agents used to communicate with the uninitiated to expand the influence of the fallen spirit world. Spiritual intermediaries make use of and advertise trance-inducing focus points such as spinning wheels, fire or points of light. Other may feature board games, cards, dice, sticks, mirrors or the reflection at the bottom of a well to get your attention and/or your money. If they correctly predict the future for you, increase your wariness. Don't be deceived by that apparent success.

Demons have the power to influence the future but not to guarantee it. Sometimes small prophecies do come to pass because the event is within the spirit being's control or influence. Similarly, if they were familiar with a person who is presently dead, they can imitate him or her voice and transmit "private" matters that other people might not know about, but remember, they watch, are present invisibly throughout history and do not forget details. Their key motivation for affecting a miracle or faking a dead relative is to enrich their human intermediaries and to gain more followers as sources for power draws. The ultimate high for these metaphysical parasites is a tortuous death. The more people and/or animals involved the better. I perceive the dark signature of involvement in a number of horrendous serial killers' lives and in driving young people to commit such unnatural tragedies like the Columbine high school massacre.

Pneumagenic spiritual experience is not predictable. Unless one is truly given over to some spirit being, most attempts to access the spirit world through proven doors or gateways do not succeed. Those who do experience more consistent results from their spiritual guides, by whatever description or name, are pushing an imbalance in the life force that will come back to equilibrium with a vengeance sooner instead of later. It can happen because the life force is materially and temporally bounded spirituality that can change, being impersonally good and evil in how it is used. The life force is not eternal and absolute; it is a part of the 7 metaphysical dimensions of the universe beyond space-time.

Pneumagenic spiritual energy does not balance out in the natural realm or in regards to humans because the demons remove it from the biological sources (victims). The loss of life force weakens the target resulting in disease, despondency and death. The pneumagenic spiritual rush experienced in the midst of a pneumagenic event is like burning the human candle at both ends: it depletes the participants' biological and psychospiritual reserves. It depletes a person's natural spiritual battery quickly. Continued demands eventually exceed the carrying capacity of the life force's supporting web of spiritual energy.

The desperate choice forced upon a demon devotee facing his or her own destructive spiritual devouring, becomes urgent and inescapable. One can either surrender to the rapacious and demanding demonic void sacrificing one's own life in an implosive destruction of who you are as an individual and living person or desperately obtain substitute sacrificial sources of biological life force energy to take his or her place in filling the void. This process is similar to the more familiar downward spiral that comes with chemical or drug addiction, but in this case, third party victims are destroyed. They might be willing initiates submitting to occult ritual resulting in spiritual enslavement, or alternately, the unwilling victims of sexual abuse, sadistic violence up to and including mass murder.

Ever-increasing demands, requirements or levels of exaltation are a warning to the honest seeker of spirituality to avoid that spiritual deathtrap. Spiritual balance is a law of natural life and death, and any imbalance is a major indicator of pneumagenic activity, which more often leads to ultimate harm than not. The evidence of spiritual balance combined with phenomenal conformance to biologically tied predictability are the best tools to independently guide the seeker of spirituality. Their use will help you to avoid many of the pitfalls of modern life. They may not directly lead you into eternal life, but they will help you to maintain a rational control of your life. You will be less enslaved by the world and keep considerable spiritual confusion at bay.

As stated above, internal perceptive objectivity is a near impossibility when it comes to a humanly rational analysis of spiritual phenomena without appeal to an accepted or proven standard of reference, such as a holy book or spiritual professional. In either case, the rational seeker must first evaluate the validity and genuine authority of the reference available, desired or chosen. To evaluate religious reference authorities would take us back to an endless meandering down the halls of theology, so I will not do it here.

My own bias leans to an independent reading of the Bible divergent in approach from what most Judeo-Christian theologies consider to be the gospel truth. As part of this perspective, I read in the Bible that God's presence in this world manifests itself through a Spirit distinctly different from the life force. According to the Bible, God's true, Holy Spirit is inherently just, good, loving and without limit in spiritual power. God is an incorruptible source of an omnipotent and incorruptible Spirit made accessible to humanity through Jesus. Discussion on these distinctly separate spiritual power choices comes next under the heading of Digital Spirituality.

Chapter 7 – Digital Spirituality

The power of a person lies in his/her decision.

Besides satisfying natural curiosity, Digital Spirituality provides a model of understanding ultimate reality that works. It enables us to search out that which is scientifically unsearchable as well as provide pragmatic guidance in day-to-day decisions. We are better equipped to engage Ultimate Reality despite knowing that our understanding is by design incomplete and our lives dependant on forces outside of our total control because we die. The conscious experience of personal life within the context of total human experience reveals this latter fact in the contemplation of our mortality. It is potentially a good thing if properly embraced by our decisions to choose life in the hope of attaining the transcendent consciousness of an eternally creative identity within the context of unconditional love, which is the ultimate and only sustainable joy couched in deepest peace.

Digital decision-making is designed into the fabric of the universe. By being alive you have no choice but to participate consciously or by passively reactive default. How you participate in the process determines whether your life is delimited to one of the enslaved paths to destruction or whether you create an eternal identity of elevated liberty in love. You must take responsibility for your decision making process. If you don't, the decisions made for you portend to eventual destruction, only delayed and temporarily detoured, if at all, by your desperate reaction to circumstances as a result of a brief realization of what is happening.

Those delays and detours are reminders that you could more directly participate in the process of temporal life through the exercise of your consciously creative power of decision. It is the most powerful tool of ultimate reality and goes hand-in-hand with faith, which is to act on your decision in hope of success. It is the creation of a potent temporal reality by imagination that is both fulfilled in matter within the context of time and space as well as contributing to a unique expression of ultimate reality, a part of eternity.

In simplest terms, it is a choice of life or death, being or non-being, light or darkness. Digital Spirituality is a guidance process to make more good decisions than bad ones, to choose a liberty of faith instead of the chains of fear, to substitute an experience of life more aligned with ultimate reality by recognizing the deceits and desires of all the many artificial realities present in human social, economic, religious and political systems as well as those that lie between our own ears. (Yes, mine, too!) Some gaping pits in the road of life may indeed be avoided, though it seems that we must all fall into some of them in order to learn anything of deep spiritual value.

It is not possible to eliminate all artificial realities from our consciousness (awareness) and belief systems in this life, but the goal of Digital

Spirituality is to come as close as possible to doing so with the recognition that our decision paths in the journey towards ultimate reality is by design and purpose a bit different for each person's experience in the material dimension. This means that the search's scenery will be a bit different for each of us. We are not to judge but to help and encourage one another. God does judge, and the gates to ultimate reality are narrow. Fortunately, humble persons of spiritual potency are smaller still. In the meantime, we can choose to build a parallel metaphysical paradigm with eternal consequences to how this life is experienced in the flesh instead of merely suffering the wretched consequences of failed societies or cultural systems even though we ourselves have lived lives of natural spiritual balance.

Let me try to illustrate this concept with an imperfect analogy. If the ocean is the life force, we want to surf it at its crest all the way into shore. We do not want to hold back and do nothing until we tire and sink to the bottom of the bay to be rolled onto the shore drowned dead. We do not want to experience an over concentrated energy of the wave so that we are pounded into the surf when it breaks apart, as all artificial realities built out of unsustainably imbalanced concentrations of energy do. By riding the crest of the surf, we have learned necessary skills and go with the flow plus, that is we are not merely floating on the waves waiting for life to happen to us, but we have seized the opportunity decisively by adding energy of our own to catch the ride provided by the natural, or perhaps social, forces around us.

Of course, no one catches the first crest that comes by successfully. Learning requires repeated conscious effort through multiple failures until some success is attained. Catching and mounting a wave does not preclude additional falling off before reaching the shore. Some fall soon after a bit of success, and some falls may be brutal. The important thing is to get up quickly and not just sink in despair trying to figure out the failure too deeply. Figure it out while getting up lest you miss the crest just behind you. Good waves come in cycles. Too much time lost in feeling too tired from self-doubt could result in being swept towards the shore by the currents of life and caught unawares by a tumbled demise. Obviously, the closer to shore when you fall, the more quick of a recovery is required, but even that is possible so that the ride in can end riding the crest of the wave instead of being crushed by it. Every successful surfer falls many times. Some of my own falls have been very brutal. I don't totally forget them, but I decide to put them out of my mind replacing them with present focus on the coming waves and catching one lest I get hit from behind unknowing or swept crashed upon shore because I waited too long for the perfect wave. We do not all catch the same wave, and the perfect wave for each of us is the one we catch and ride successfully to shore, heads and bodies above water.

The truth is that the materially real ocean of life that we smell, see, feel, hear and taste is only part of reality's picture. An undetected parallel ocean of ultimate reality surges around us concurrently. Somehow it affects the waves we deal with sensually. Our interaction with the ocean we know materially has implications for the one we cannot directly sense, yet we cannot choose to remain ignorant of it without suffering the consequences. We can ride the fleshly felt waves to shore and still

be tumbled by the crushing surf of ultimate reality at the end. It is a different kind of ride not fully visible now, and not even seen by others on reaching the shore.

The truth is that we will not really know if we have caught the ultimate reality wave along with the natural one until we hit the shore. If we have, then its crest will carry us out of others' sight or sound, over the shore and sand hills and even the mountains reaching to heaven. The two are parallel, and the latter more consequential than the former. As you have probably heard before, the power of ultimate spiritual reality is evidenced only by its secondary by-products, as a strong wind blows leaves through the air. We can see the leaves but not the wind.

The tricky part is that you can buy a leaf blower to make those leaves fly, too. There are a great variety of leaf blowers for sale and even more already in use by others. You do not need to buy one for yourself. Most people just feel the secondhand wind of someone else's blower. Some of these artful leaf movers are so beautiful that people just sit sensing the awesome breeze in mistaken wonder, not seeing that they are mere fans instead of the true wind. That is what artificial reality is all about: it deceives by imitating the visible manifestations or behaviors. The clue to knowing which is which lies in the nature of the price paid.

More technically phrased, Digital Spirituality is the binary mathematics for the metaphysical dimension of the universe as applied in the material world. In other words, all spiritual disciplines and phenomena can be understood to reflect either a "yes" or "no" event, state or condition. Thus, all paranormal and traditional spirituality can be simplified into phenomenal components defined by combinations of these "Yes" and "No" elements. I have yet to find a psychology, religion, morality, philosophy or other "spiritual" manifestation that does not yield itself open to better understanding by applying systems approach of Digital Spirituality to its functional performance and essential essence of being.

Since we cannot totally trust to our own sensibilities in perceiving and understanding spiritual realities, we need a reliable and objective source of guidance to help us. If an honest and truly genuine metaphysical guide, it will itself be subject to multiple comprehensions that will differ from person to person and yet provide tools to help minimize self-deception as well powerful guideposts through the maze of decision-making called life. When examined with the eyes of broadest human experience and knowledge, it will provide the required basis for making right decisions that consistently trend toward life and the perfect ideals of ultimate reality that Plato and other great philosophers have discussed. Every person faces the intangible challenges of a chaotic cosmos of competing claims or manifestations of spirituality, some of which derive from a spirit world too potent to trust by simply relying upon our own wits and abilities.

Thus, I have come to regard the Bible, as attestable by archaeology, to be the oldest and most dependable spiritual book in the world. That Word of God is confident of its truth and victorious life changing power. It invites each of us to test it. (Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 38:4) Furthermore, it is the only collection of holy writings to speak authoritatively from beyond the grave with the promise of eternal life through its chief

spokesperson, Jesus – Yeshua in the Hebrew. (John 1:1-18; Romans 1:3-4; 1Corinthians 15:1-19; Revelation 1:5-8) To those who seek it honestly in faith, the Bible promises a consciously dynamic eternity as an individual transformed into a unique, personal and identifiably creative expression of God's unconditional love as defined within his holiness. These divine guarantees are given through covenant agreements originating and empowered by a Creator God so that our success is not limited by our own inabilities and weaknesses.

Digital Spirituality is a fresh approach to an old message derived from my study of the Israelite and Christian scriptures, which reveal the foundational truths and principles utilized in the creation of the universe. This approach is first represented in the Garden of Eden by the two trees. The Tree of Life is the "Yes" decision, for it represents the spirit of pure light in which "there is no darkness at all." (1John 1:5) In the Bible this spirit is referred to as the "presence" or "fullness" of God. This "Yes" spirit is also called the Holy Spirit and is referred to as the pure Light or personified Eternal Life/Love inherent, the One Who is also transcendent of the physical universe.

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is the "No" or "Null" spirit empowering mortal and angelic life in the biosphere. It represents the emptiness, which is a state of death because its two equal and inseparably bound components of light and darkness balance into nothingness like the Asian yin-yang symbol. The Great Deception has been to focus humanity's attention on the more readily accessible spirit of good and evil to the exclusion of the Holy Spirit of pure Light and incorruptible goodness of divine love. The deception lies in presenting the "light" or good side of the life force as being the "true Light of God" in order to hide from human access the existence of One Holy Spirit of the God of Israel.

This deception has enslaved humanity to terrible suffering and an ultimate destruction. Illusions of power and eternity can be generated by distorting the life force even though it can only provide people with a mortal life lived under an eternal death sentence of indeterminate timing. Consequently, most religious traditions consist of behavior-based rituals and techniques that try to battle or balance the evil side of us to a positive net experience of the immediate now. They ignore, distort or falsely claim the Holy Spirit of divine goodness and eternal life revealed in the life of Yeshua/Jesus, and thereby they add to the confusion if not also to the deception.

The "Law of Attraction"

I am going to illustrate my point through the example of that perennial favorite of self-help gurus and spiritual hucksters, probably best known today as the "Law of Attraction." Because western Christian traditions have mostly ignored the life force in the Bible, the general population, including Christians, has been easy prey for this poorly understood, incompletely applied and potentially dangerous spiritual phenomenon. It is a perfect example of how the organized Christian set of denominational churches has failed its followers as a result of rejecting and/or ignoring the biblically Jewish foundation of the Christian faith.

The Jewish approach to Bible study takes the original Hebrew words and roots well into consideration when developing theology. Granted that most Jewish people are as ignorant or more so of their heritage religion as about 90% of Christians, I can still find multiple discussions of soul (*neshamah*), life force (*nefesh*), spirit (*ruach*) and body (*guf*). While I might have some disagreements with Jewish scholars over the specific meaning and application of these terms in everyday life, I could at least have a discussion with the expectation of intelligent engagement and a probable outcome of learning something from them. I cannot say that about most Christian scholars, with the probable exception of some Catholic Jesuits. This is very sad to me, because I do not consider myself a professional scholar but merely a person who has asked some questions and thought seriously about some answers that reflect theoretical possibility that makes pragmatic sense. I guess that comes from being in business for so many years.

By ignoring the biblical references to the life force, Christianity, to my knowledge, is analytically silent about ESP and other psychological anomalies. It has been compromised by secularism and sold out to the material abundance of Globalism. Christian religious leaders too often subordinate their idealism temporarily, (of course) to the security of salary and benefits. I am certainly aware of a vigilant minority of Christian pastors and evangelists who warn of the dangers of dabbling in the occult and commend their work, even though I may not agree with all the fine points of what they teach. They are at least warning of the very real dangers that most people ignore or treat with ignorant secular dismissal. There is much more to evil than intrapersonal psychological struggles or the shock effect and debatable artistic values of symbols culturally associated with the devil or death! Do not be deceived. Even proponents of the "Law of Attraction" would agree that if you set your mind on evil matters and surround yourself with dark themes, you have tuned your psychospiritual antennas or set welcome mats out to receive evil visitors or at least bad karma - harmful things into your life.

The fact is that paranormal anomalies do not fit into conventional theology, so anyone experiencing such a phenomenon must essentially work it out on their own. There is no orthodox guidance. Maybe that is good from one perspective, but from another, it opens up the sincere searcher for spirituality to great danger. I do not mean just a difference of opinion as to the nature of reality or other doctrinal detail. I mean real harm - both physically and psychospiritually. All eastern traditions that I know about point out and treat as real the potency of prana, qi, chi (or other name for the life force) and its channels in the body and mind. Each has its own, broad traditional approach to dealing with it. Most have ways of dealing with evil spirits, while Hollywood's expression of commonly accepted beliefs can't get beyond **The Exorcist** and other aspects of Catholic rituals dealing with possession.

Some Christian mystics recognize the existence of good and evil spiritual forces. Most embrace the battle of good versus evil. Some encourage one to embrace his or her dark side to achieve wholeness, a mystical unity with God and the creation. The latter risk being condemned for rebellion against orthodoxy. I can agree with the concept that perhaps they have substituted their own definitions of what is good and evil

for that of organized Christianity. I am not so concerned with their disagreement with human organizations as I am with a possible disagreement with the Creator. While the role of other humans and collective wisdom is pragmatically vital in the exercise of humility, it is not final.

The biggest error in Christian dogma has come in the understanding of original sin. It is not sex. It is the choice of the good and evil life force Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil instead of choosing the Tree of Life eternal, the Holy Spirit. Herein lies the great deception. The good side of the (life) force deceives one into tapping into the whole system, which also contains the evil. The good side of the life force obscures the existence of the good only Holy Spirit so that people do not realize all of the options available to them. In this intentional confusion, most make bad choices and the power of their decisions works against them. This is the primary reason why Satan the Enemy has more followers than the Creator God of Israel.

The "Law of Attraction" has been re-packaged and sold under many names. It has been called, "the Power of Positive Thinking," "Unleashing the Genius Inside," "Psycho-Cybernetics" and lately, "The Secret." Just like ESP and every other parapsychological anomaly, the Law of Attraction cannot be substantiated scientifically. Furthermore, it is undetermined by each person's subjective experience of this "law" at work in his or her life. It is simply too easy to convince ourselves that it is working when the issue may be simple circumstance – we got lucky at the fight time. I wrote extensively about this latter phenomenon in my book, **God is Not a Slot Machine**. There are many scams and pseudoscience delusions sold in this world. With an Internet search just minutes away, I am surprised that more folks do not search before they leap. The following comes from Wikipedia on looking up our topic:

Proponents of the modern Law of Attraction assert that it has roots in Quantum Physics; according to the law of attraction, thoughts have an energy that attracts like energy. In order to control this energy, proponents claim people must practice three things:

1. Know what one wants and ask the universe for it.
2. Feel and behave as if the object of one's desire is on its way.
3. Be open to receiving it.

Proponents say that by abiding by these, and avoiding "negative" thoughts, the Universe will manifest a person's desires.¹

My guess is that you have already figured this one out, if you have been reading in this book for any length of time. The dead giveaway is the potential for either good or bad, positive or negative things to be attracted. By now, you know this refers to the life force, to the realm of natural spirituality and the necessity to balance within natural bounds any request made of the "universe." Any fulfillment beyond what the immediate spiritual environment can supply, any concentration of power that comes in conjunction with a metaphysical artificial reality,

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_Attraction, retrieved June 22, 2007.

requires outside spirit help to make it happen. With that there is always a price to pay – sometime.

What is the potential problem here? The big thing is that people typically ask for what they want, for what they think is good for them. However, just like small children, we adults do not really know what is good for us. When it comes to spiritual matters, we are all children. We can see it when it comes to our own children – usually, but we have a hard time when it comes to our own wants and desires because human nature is naturally selfish, self-centered and rebelliously autonomous. We do not want to be told what is good for us.

The truths of this observation are part of the deep meaning connected with Jesus' advice to "become as little children" and His observation that each person chooses whether to serve God or materialism (mammón). One or the other takes precedence in how life is lived as a whole as well as in the many little decisions that make up the whole. Too often, what we want for ourselves is bad for us – physically and/or spiritually.

Look at our predominantly obese and overweight profiles or at the typical American house so full of stuff that most have garages they can't put their cars in, so we rent public storage units. The "Law of Attraction" works, and it can be used lawfully, or it can be used to create destructive artificial realities that also lead to spiritual slavery and the destruction of our potential to live as an eternally unique expression of perfect love. It is possible to destroy who we could be for eternity by attaining what we want now temporally/momentarily in the material dimension. This kind of present, motivating desire may be experienced for a heated instant or for a lifetime: either choice is but a flashing moment in the course of eternity.

Natural Faith is Hard Work

Many manifestations of the Law of Attraction are really just good preparation. "Be prepared for success" is a concept I have read in many sources. When we focus our lives on matters that we find interesting, hard work takes place mentally and physically. Our brains operate very much like goal-seeking behavioral computers. Using the power of decision, our minds operate as goal setters and innovative artificial reality builders. We use our natural innovative capacity to imagine that which does not exist from the design of a piece of art, a room arrangement or a new gadget. Once the vision is in mind, the brain goes to work to execute it using the resources at hand. Faith is not hoping or wishful thinking; it is hard mental work. Faith is confidence in the capacity to execute as well as acting on and being open to the conceived goal or perceived reality – artificial or otherwise. In other words, faith is a natural tool of the mind and brain that may operate in either the physical or metaphysical realms of the universe.

Some aspects of my comments above are rather obvious. If one wants to succeed at some undertaking, he or she prepares by studying, reading resources, paying attention to what is going on around them wherever they are and putting oneself into the proper environment or social context where the desired object or activity is more likely to be found. In other words, you notice opportunities missed by others who have

either not prepared themselves or are not focusing on their declared goals, and you don't go fly fishing for trout in a desert sand pile. That stated, it is also true that some of the greatest discoveries take place in the presence of the overlooked obvious. The mechanics are plain: for any new artificial reality to be effective, others must be ignored or destroyed. The uncovering of false assumptions always leads to new discoveries, some of them very profitable. Here again, we encounter the witness of paradox to pragmatic truth.

Success then is a good measure of hard work in gaining essential knowledge, learning vital skills, assembling resources or assets, managing expectations and execution of a good plan to apply all of the former. There is nothing mystical about this, but confidence or faith is essential to achievement. The frontiers of understanding lie in the realms of poorly understood science and natural spirituality. I am sure that there are biomechanical aspects of human physiology relevant to successful behavior that remain to be discovered. I am also convinced that a human mind draws on forces not measurable or perceivable by scientific methods, although evidence for these spiritual forces' existence is observable and have been experienced by thousands for millennia.

Advances in brain research often take place in dealing with cases of severe injury and/or diseases of the brain. How the brain works around the facts of absent functionality has been very instructive to scientists because it reveals potential capabilities and functionalities that uninjured brains do not need to draw on because they are able to use normal, more efficient options. Physiological responses of subjects studied while under hypnosis or eastern meditation also offer other opportunities to learn about how the brain works. While the latter reduces or shuts off aspects of mental activity, the former substitutes the hypnotizer's artificial reality for that of the subject's. Under hypnosis, decisions about what is and is not real are made for the patient/subject. If he is told that he is cold, he feels cold and his body responds physiologically. In real life, the power of suggestion, self-talk or the pressures of peer opinion evidence the same effects: one acts as if or responds to the externally determined perceptions of reality as if they were indeed true, such as in the Ugly Duckling stories. (Do not take these observations as suggestions or recommendation to volunteer for such research: it could be dangerous.)

My purpose of the above is to de-mystify faith and separate it from the true mysteries of spiritual search and discernment. In short, the presence of faith does not necessarily testify one way or the other to spiritual presence, access or encounter; however, faith is often mixed up with spiritual matters and never seems to be far away when psychological anomalies take place. The three points given in the Wikipedia article for the Law of Attraction to work are essentially the same points that parapsychologists give for successful repetition of ESP phenomena.

Even the biblical references to faith conform to this pattern of concept development. Extract some verses from context, and they sound like they are parts of a psychological training program for material success in life and business:

1. "Ask in faith without any doubting..." (James 1:6)

2. "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17)
3. "Show me your faith by your works..." (James 2:18)
4. "Faith is the assurance (evidence) of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

So faith is a technique, a protocol or psychological tool to get the mind, brain and body to work effectively as an integrated whole by overcoming self-restrictions otherwise known as fear. Human nature's drives of self-preservation are sourced in the fear of death and its companion, fear of harm or partial death. To accomplish any feat of note in life, one must overcome fears as well as the negative opinions, active opposition and all other kinds of dis-encouragements dished out by others around you and/or opposed to you.

But Hebrews 11:3 states that the Word of God using faith created the world. That verse gives away the critical factor for those engaged in a search for genuine spirituality instead of merely material success - not that material success by itself is evil or undesirable. The focus shifts back to the human power of decision applied to where and how and for what purposes one uses the powerful tool of faith. The Law of Attraction appeals to "the universe" and maintains that negative as well as positive energy may be attracted, so it works solely in the material realm - on a psychobiological level that easily overflows into the realm of natural spirituality and the life force. "Asking the universe" can also open doors to pneumagenic spiritual encounters when a person forces demands beyond natural balance. As I discuss below, angels - both good and bad - are super power tools when it comes to the transfer and application of higher concentrations of focused spiritual power. Their activities distort the fabric of the physical realm to create miracles tiny and mighty.

I believe that the human mind will naturally use the immediate contextual life force energies available to accomplish a strongly desired and specific goal without going to any particular effort or applying some necessary "magic" ritual to get it to do so. The danger lies in asking out of balance. Natural spirituality flexibly provides for a positive-forward balance without disturbing the natural order or stealing the essentials of life from others. I think of it as a healthy set point to partially counter entropy in action, which is the natural and scientifically confirmed dissipation of energy or trend to disorder. Life requires order. Biological health requires healthy cells, organs and systems to function properly, orderly. But human beings have a history of repeatedly creating harmful artificial realities through the assembly of too much power and energy in one place so as to distort the natural balance creating an ever-building imbalance that will correct at some point. The greater the distortion created, the more difficult, painful and potentially destructive the (over)correction to balance.

The lesson is that people cannot ignore the lessons of natural spirituality built into the physical environment and jointly operational in the metaphysical, neither should the wise usurp God's role in defining what is good for him or her. What is good for one person many not be so good for another: it varies from person to person. We handle different chal-

lenges and temptations differently. God seeks to build our strengths and manage our weaknesses if we will humble ourselves to give Him the opportunity to do so. This means the surrender of my life, not anyone else's, to the ultimate spiritual parent, God the Father, who wants only good for us. Our challenge is to see things as He does, but there is help to do so. The revelation of a second spiritual force that is inherently good, that can only enable that which is goodness to all involved, seen and unseen is what the Holy Spirit is all about in the Bible, though maybe not in most organized religions. It is the true secret of life, an eternal life of unconditional love that is being hidden from humanity.

Reducing the Complexity of Spirituality

Human life is naturally experienced as a conscious state measured by time but possessing no self-sustained future. It is an existence where every good has an inseparable, counterbalancing evil. The spirit essence represented by the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is also referred to in the Bible as the "breath of life" shared by man and animals. The life force that energizes our nervous and spiritual identity being is by analogy compared to the air we breathe that empowers our physical biology.

As I have mentioned before, the scientific integration of the metaphysical into a vision of an ultimate reality continuum that includes the physical realm is an untested and immeasurable exercise in reasoning. As my surfing analogy frankly illustrates, the accuracy of my paradigm will only become apparent after death, if at all. Trial deaths do not count as those experiences are subject to manipulation by fallen spirit beings, which by their track record are unmasked to be deceiving enemies. However, I find my theoretical construct remarkably useful in pragmatic application to daily life and how to negotiate the maze of humanly created artificial realities to make decisions that trend more towards life than death. I believe that they also create eternal consequences.

The confusion and complexity of humanity's spiritual understanding derives from our own spiritual position in the metaphysical universe. Due to the events recorded in Genesis, our naturally received position in metaphysical reality is found solely within the null spirit essence; therefore, we lack the tools, ability and opportunity to discern on our own the spiritual orientation (identity of the power source and agencies) and functional mechanism of metaphysical phenomena as they occur. It is impossible for us to directly access the yes spirit of God on our own terms. Since human nature does not possess the innate ability to objectively sense or control even the null spirit of good and evil, how can a person rationally and spiritually comprehend God without help?

Study of the natural universe through the eyes of science reveals much about spiritual reality. Natural spirituality presents itself as the most universal approach to begin the search for spirituality. Even the Bible admits the validity of this approach:

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (Romans 1:20)

Instead of relying on revealed information from sources that can be trusted, we humans have followed our natural inclinations to rely on what we discover experientially: we try things out to see what works. This is a painful and confusing way to learn, and it is often fatal for eternity. Our incomplete success in understanding the spiritual dimension of the universe has given rise to a diverse set of conflicting and confusing theologies and spiritual traditions derived from differing cultural and individual experiences. Each focuses on the practices of their one slice of the picture so that a person can literally spend a life away in moving from one sliver of incomplete knowledge to another without ever coming to the fullness of truth or discovering that there is another spirit, the Holy Spirit of the God of Israel.

The facts upon which Digital Spirituality is based have been revealed from an external source possessing clear perspective of the metaphysical dimension - the Bible. Even with access to the biblical revelation we can at best only approach a description of the metaphysical due to the natural limitations of our brains and sensory organs. The Bible itself states that without the intervention of God's Spirit, a person cannot accurately comprehend the spiritual messages of the Bible.

For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. (1Corinthians 2:10-14)

Out of love God has attempted to communicate what we cannot naturally perceive about spiritual realities. His mission has been to deliver truths based on evidence and a purpose that lies beyond the vague yearning or potential for realization that we experience naturally. God accomplished that mission first by sending His Spoken Word into the Creation itself. Then He gave Israel His Written Word in the Law or Torah, and finally He came Himself in the birth, life and death of His Living Word made flesh, His Son, called Salvation, who is Yeshua in Semitic languages or Jesus in most western ones.

The other primary factor for our inability to clearly understand spiritual matters is due to the fact that, as in binary mathematics, the metaphysical chain of simple yes/no decisions describes a complex universe of created and evolving systems that interrelate and interact with each other multidirectionally during any single event or instance of time. To grasp what is occurring, we would be required to analyze or break down these complex metaphysical systems into discreet chains of

unique factors that can be traced or followed in the direction of their impact or manifestation. This is not possible for humans on their own spiritual power. We cannot naturally grasp the whole spiritual picture, so we are forced to rely on external spiritual sources of information - many of which cannot themselves be trusted. Through the systems approach of Digital Spirituality, we can test the nature of the sources and generally predict outcomes of spiritual disciplines or exercises despite our human limitations.

Digital Duality

The universe is constructed out of multiple, hierarchal sets of dual components. Each component has two options – on and off, light and dark, yes and no, etc. At the highest level is the choice of spiritual power source: Holy Spirit or life force. The latter is the default setting and within its parameters provides many opportunities for choosing towards health and life or towards sickness and death. The good and evil, light and dark aspects of the life force seem like two different spirits to the natural human being.

Throughout history, a minority of people have intentionally chosen evil. For most people, the spiritual issues have revolved around discerning between the two goods, when both are known, but as previously noted, the vast majority of the planet's billions are either willfully ignorant of the Holy Spirit or unknowing victims of the Enemy's great deceit and power. As I will explore more fully later, Lucifer (now Satan) is responsible for the negative or black spin of the life force. He exercises its influence worldwide through the spiritual atmosphere as organized by the various traditions of astrology.

Although the finished product challenges our mental powers with its extreme complexity, it can be broken down into systems of twos just as binary mathematics can describe any physical reality. These sets of components operate in systems where their innate qualities function predictably according to a variety of interrelationships governed by the laws of the universe. A systems grasp of the components, their functions and rules of interaction provides insights into, and tools for, creative problem solving. With them one can build a useful road map in search of healthy and balanced spirituality.

God structured the universe with built-in dual realms set up under laws that function in a manner that forces the exercise of decision. The metaphysical or spiritual realm is made of unchanging substance that lasts forever by operating at frequencies and energy levels significantly beyond the speed of light. The physical is made of matter, which is subject to time and exhibits a changeable, cyclical nature. Time travels in a straight, but bendable or curved line like light but manifests itself in cycles linked to the movements of planets, stars and galaxies. The best model I can think of to at least partially illustrate time's straight line yet cyclical characteristics is the Möbius Strip:

The Möbius strip has several curious properties.

A model of a Möbius strip can be constructed by joining the ends of a strip of paper with a single half-twist.

A line drawn starting from the seam down the middle will meet back at the seam but at the "other side". If continued the line will meet the starting point and will be double the length of the original strip of paper. This single continuous curve demonstrates that the Möbius strip has only one boundary.

If the strip is cut along the above line, instead of getting two separate strips, it becomes one long strip with two full twists in it, which is not a Möbius strip. This happens because the original strip only has one edge which is twice as long as the original strip of paper. Cutting creates a second independent edge, half of which was on each side of the knife or scissors. Cutting this new, longer, strip down the middle creates two strips wound around each other.

Alternatively, cutting along a Möbius strip about a third of the way in from the edge, creates two strips: One is a thinner Möbius strip - it is the center third of the original strip. The other is a long strip with two full twists in it - this is a neighborhood of the edge of the original strip.

Other interesting combinations of strips can be obtained by making Möbius strips with two or more half-twists in them instead of one. For example, a strip with three half-twists, when divided lengthwise, becomes a strip tied in a trefoil knot. Cutting a Möbius strip, giving it extra twists, and reconnecting the ends produces unexpected figures called paradiromic rings.²

God dwells in eternity, but He can see all of the four dimensions of space-time and the 5th dimension of the life force laid out as some multi-dimensional dynamic web. In fact, He can see both sides of the strip at once, as it were. We experience time as a straight-line progression from present into the future leaving a trail behinds us called the past or collectively as history. We mark time by the multiple concurrent cycles represented in the motion of heavenly bodies as they relate to us. This includes the daily rotation of the earth, the month based on the moon's orbit around the earth and the year based on the earth's journey around the sun. The seasons mark the moving angle of sunlight striking the earth's surface based on the changing face our planet gives to the sun in its annual orbit due to its 23½° rotational axis tilt.

The linear and cyclical nature of time provides a primary argument for those who believe in the reincarnation of biological life. This idea correctly recognizes the organic link of the life force with time, because it is a spiritual power that operates in the material realm. Human beings cannot see this characteristic of time or measure it directly because we are a part of it. We can reason, make rational extrapolations of models based on observable phenomena, but we cannot prove it or measure it precisely, which makes predicting the future impossible for any being except God. Fallen angels or demons are totally caught up in the metaphysical dimensions of the life force and dabble in the material realm, so they are a part of it, too. From their perspective, they can see more than we can, but they cannot see the whole thing or comprehend what

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mobius_Strip, retrieved 6-24-2007.

God might or could do to affect the unfolding of time. Righteous angels carry prophecies only when sent by God and communicate only what He wants people to hear. Even then, the message and/or visions can be subject to multiple interpretations and multiple fulfillments in types and anti-types as the cycles repeat.

Consciousness, the Sixth Sense

Human consciousness resides in the 5th dimension of the universe, which is also the breath of life or life force. Consciousness is born from the activation of the body and brain by the breath of life. Living minds exercising conscious thought create wave patterns of character and personality impressed into this natural spiritual medium. A physical example of this process is evidenced in the banded spectral signatures of digitized light.

Distinct digital signatures of whom we choose to be as unique persons are constantly created through every moment of time. These woven spiritual impressions flow outward from us moment by moment preserving a record of every conscious word or deed in the fabric of the physical universe. They are carried by the natural spiritual energies pulsing parallel to light and at its speed. Thus, each life moment of **NOW** is indeed an eternity – at least until time itself ends or is destroyed in a black hole.

Of course, this web of spiritual fabrication consists of all human and animal energies, which makes it very complex. If correct, this theory means that our lives convert into a digitized, time streamed, natural spiritual life force of indivisibly melded good and evil. It remains somewhere in the universe until called back to the stage of mortal consciousness – planet earth. It is from earth's historical experience of human consciousness amidst biological life that these wave patterns are created. Science cannot detect them, although some forms of String Theory, or the "Theory of Everything" mathematically predict the potential existence of up to eleven dimensions in the universe. I add one more - a twelfth, which is the Source of All – the Third Heaven of God's Throne. The dark line in the table below represents the speed of light.

The 5th Dimension is the transition zone between the four dimensional Physical Realm of Space Time and the 7 dimensions of the Metaphysical Realm. There are 12 in all, which is consistent with the Rosetta Stone of the Bible discussed in Herbert Stollorz's books, **Apocalypse Prophesied** and **Mystery of Tammuz 17**. Other Hebrew Alphabet Number System principles, mentioned in these books, underlie biblical linguistic concept structure are found to be consistent with this proposed structure of the universe.

For example, the four dimensions of length, width, height and time-distance plus the 5th Dimension at light speed follows the $4 + 1 = 5$ rule that brings humanity to the doorway to heaven. Eleven (4+7) dimensions of the universe are locked in rebellion and will eventually cease to exist. Many physicists theorize on an eventual end to the present universe after some large number of billions of years. In discussing angels and the metaphysical, the Bible should not be ignored as an important source of information on spiritual matters.

Comparative Structure of Reality						
Reality Continuum	Metaphysical Realm	Mystics' Seventh Heaven	Bible's Third Heaven	12 - God's Throne of Eternity	12 Dimensions / String Theory / Energy Levels	
		6	Bible's Second Heaven or the Fallen Angelic Dominion. Good angels must battle their way through this to reach humanity.	11		
		5		10		
		4		9		
		3		8		
		2		7		
	1	6				
	Light Speed/ Life Force Boundary - 5					
	Physical Realm			Bible's First Heaven of the Physical Universe		4 - Time
						3 - Height
						2 - Width
						1 - Length

Again, God is aware of each point in time because He can surf all dimensions at will. He can access and pull any part of it up instantly. He can wipe out sins of the repentant or the name-digital signature of an incurably evil sinner forever. He created and commands the universe effortlessly "traveling" its breadth and depth as needed. Thought is not bound by time or place because it travels the 5th dimension. Similarly, God is not bound by any of the 11 dimensions cascading through gradually lower energy levels from His creative penthouse of the 12th dimension, the Third Heaven (or Seventh according to some traditions) of His presence.

As long as the universe exists, this present moment of your consciousness, and every other moment in your life and others', will continue to exist somewhere in the expanding flow of space-time and the life force. The Bible predicts a final judgment when all people who have ever lived will be resurrected to mortal life again to face Jesus as the Judge. The process of that judgment is not described in enough detail to satisfy human curiosity. I will speculate on some reasons why later. But the Bible explicitly describes the end of the present universe in an incredible burning lake of fire that consumes everything – heaven and earth. Such a judgment would not include the Third Heaven of God's Throne out of which a New Heavens and New Earth will be made from spiritual material that is good only instead of the present good and evil life force as described in the final chapters of the book of Revelation. No evil whatsoever will exist in this realm because of its structural design.

Free Will

God also built free will into the structure of the universe, which means there is a decision process where in simplest terms, sentient beings

choose between two options. From real life experience we know that the decision process takes place on disparate levels in animals and humans due to their diverse qualities of consciousness. People have a greater capacity for change than animals do as well – particularly in the configuration of who we are.

What we recognize as one decision is actually composed of many elements or sub-decisions. It is a series of yes-no answers to each one of these elements, which is like a black and white gradient picture. Each picture is made up of thousands of pixels, some white and some black. Together the picture is mostly displayed as shades of gray. Similarly, most decisions are neither totally good nor evil but a complex mixture of the two. People usually make decisions in a manner where this yes-no decision tree is collapsed to a congealed conclusion absent conscious awareness or distinction of the small steps.

This characteristic of human nature operates as a constant continuum between good and evil symbolized by a circle in traditional cultures. Thus every decision made is an imperfect mix of varying amounts of light and darkness. In other words, human beings experience lifetimes typified by varying shades of gray – some lighter than others. Some may approach full darkness or full light, but because the continuum is an oscillating circle, our nature is inseparably attached to the whole of it so that a pure light or dark state of being is not humanly possible. Thus, the Bible states that all persons are bound by nature to sin to a varying measure.

What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, "There is none righteous, no not one..." (Romans 3:10-11)

Duality is an ever-present theme in the Bible - just as it is in the natural universe. In the beginning there is light and darkness, day and night. In several places the Bible reveals that the physical world is an image of the metaphysical. What we see in our world of material temporality mirrors what exists beyond the speed of light in spiritual realm of eternity. Thus, man is made in the image and after the likeness of God, and the Israelite Tabernacle and Temple are modeled after heavenly originals.

Two trees stood in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3) These two trees presented Adam and Eve with a choice between two spirits. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil represents mortal life and its empowering spirit - the life force of good and evil, light and dark, yang and yin, which always ends in death. The two aspects of this powerful spirit cancel out each other as the neutralized mixture of good and evil - light and dark, a null/off answer in the binary math analogy. The yes/on answer is the pure Spirit of only light represented by the Tree of Life. In the Bible eternal life is empowered by the inherent, omnipotent and divine nature of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit of pure light is the essence and being of a perfect God, who by His very being and nature defines justice, goodness, peace, joy, grace and love.

This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. (1John 1:5)

Thus, on earth we are working with mortal bodies and the potential presence of two different spirits. The born with natural life force is temporal and inherently an indivisible mixture of good and evil in balance. The other Spirit is eternal and incorruptibly pure goodness in character not born but consciously chosen in resistance to opposition. The former may be bent to the purpose of the user according to the exercise of free will, while the latter conforms always to the bounds of God's nature and will of perfect unconditional love.

By analogy, the model of mortal bodies and the life force is paralleled by metaphysical bodies and the Holy Spirit that have some kind of distinct structure and location. It is beyond the scope of this book to definitively conclude that God the Father has a distinct body like the Son, Jesus, but Genesis 1:26-27 discussed shortly below gives us a model to work with in understanding metaphysical life forms. Briefly, the Father may be understood to be structured with metaphysical body and spirit (image and likeness) or be the Holy Spirit alone. The latter case could be possible by an exegesis that Jesus (the Second Adam) was the model after which Adam was made. (1Corinthians 15:45-47) Regardless of how it may truly be in heaven, John chapters 14-16 make it plain that when one receives the gift of the Holy Spirit, he or she has both the Father and the Son present in that Spirit.

The Bible refers to the "third heaven" as the location of God's presence and throne, where only His divine love of pure goodness is resident. (2Corinthians 12:2) There is no darkness at all in God, so no evil can exist in His presence. Since evil is not permitted in His presence, only the Holy Spirit empowers the third heaven. The life force of good and evil does not operate there. As we will see below, it seems that the life force is in some manner a lower frequency, less powerful aspect of the Holy Spirit in that God created it and sustains the universe through it. How and where it becomes a separate force is not specifically stated in Scripture, but there are references to God sustaining the universe through Jesus. (Colossians 1:16-17) Its inseparably good and evil qualities are necessary for the experience and exercise of free will.

Thus, both spirits are present and operate in the metaphysical dimension outside of God's immediate presence (outside of the third heaven) in what is deduced as being the first and second heavens. The earth's natural atmosphere is the implied first or earthly heaven, and the second seems to include the first because Satan is referred to as the

"...prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience." (Ephesians 2:2).

Tripartite Structures

Beyond duality, the Bible also deals in tripartite structures or concepts of trinity. The tabernacle and temple are often used in the Bible as vehicles to describe what takes place in spiritual reality. Part of this is a matter of overlapping dualities, and mainly a tri-unity recognizes that a new whole is created when two parts are united. In a tripartite entity each of the two parts is distinctly identifiable, and their union creates a recognizable third construct of being separate in terminology and function that possesses unique properties only possible due to the union

of the two components. In one of the most common examples of life, a man and a woman marry creating a family capable of bearing children. This concept may obviously be expanded to wholes made up of more than two parts, too. In the Bible writers refer to individuals as being “members” of a spiritual or organizational “body” and “stones” of a “temple.” As we will examine later, both human beings and the temple are described in tri-partite terms.

I understand the use of the term “soul” to be the unique tri-unity of two parts – a body and a spirit. The soul is the whole of intangible identity of a being. In the Hebrew Bible, the word “soul” (Hebrew *nefesh*) may also refer to the body alone, whether the reference is to the souls of people or animals. This is because the pattern of our decisions and/or behavior creates a uniquely configured identity that is more reflected in the body than the spirit. Whether the body is composed of flesh or spirit determines whether the soul is mortal or immortal.

Animals come in a wide variety of body packages and levels of consciousness, but each consists of a biologically alive body that taps into and uses the breath of life or life force. The fundamental difference between animals and humans is that humans were, created in the image (internal psychospiritual character) and after the likeness (general external form) of God. As discussed earlier, people naturally possess the creative powers of dominion through decision that we refer as “imagination.” In this dimension the human capacity for imagined ideas enables individuals and cultures to create alternative realities, which may be imaginary in relationship with or even alien to the natural environment. In the creation stories preserved around the world, this typically human characteristic is reflected in the universal recounting of giving names. Humans have classified all of the plants and animals giving each species a name. People are given names following birth. On an individual basis, our inherent creative capacity also makes possible the potential for transformational identity shift into the metaphysical ultimate reality known biblically as heaven.

Image and Likeness

Digital Spirituality focuses on the nature of the two-part make-up of any three-element whole. The binary mathematical structure reveals key insights to how the spiritual world works and why. A systems approach to the structure of life in the universe simplifies biblical theology to the level of commentary. It is still subject to human misinterpretation and error but not to the same degree as elaborate theologies that obscure the power and meaning of the Bible with their many layers of human analytical and philosophic thought, imagination and speculation.

Human identity is the intangible synthesis of a material body and the breath of life. Consequently, the Buddha seems to have come a little closer to the truth about the transitory essence of the mortal human soul than Plato’s attribution of personal identity to immortality. Similarly, the atheistic concept of human life existent only in the material here and now is more accurate than variations on mystical myths about divine structures shattering in the mists of a pre-temporal age that gave rise to the individual sparks of immortal light now imprisoned in human flesh

Spiritual Synthesis or 1 + 1 = 3

$$A + B = AB$$

$$A + B + AB = 3 \text{ units in one}$$

Mortal Body + Life Force = Living Soul (Animal or Human)
Metaphysical Body + Life Force = Angelic Being

Bulding of Stones + Holy Spirit = Temple
Mortal Body + Holy Spirit at Conception = Jesus/Yeshua
Transformed Body + Holy Spirit Restored = Son of God by Resurrection
Metaphysical Body + Holy Spirit = God

Mortal Body (Likeness of God) + Life Force = Living Human (Image of God)
Human Mortal Body + Life Force + Holy Spirit = Living Human Born of Spirit

Linked to Metaphysical Body in Heaven

called souls. We are not hidden spirits or nonphysical beings temporarily occupying visible fleshly bodies.

In the Bible, death is described as the separation of body and spirit. It does not mention anything else in that verse, so a proper study needs to be made of the whole 66 books to come up with an explanation of that one verse.

For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. (James 2:26).

In short, the soul is the union of the body and spirit. It is not naturally immortal. Rather it is a synthesized identity that is consciously real for a measure of time. Its power is bounded by the natural limitations of the body and the physical forces of the material realm. Who we each are as an individual is created by the set of decisions we make and the consequences there of, which are reflected in one's body, health, social relationships, the work we produce and physical environment we impact. Thus, people should pay attention to their material existence and its interaction with the natural and social environments. Even the Bible states that there are time-bound benefits for taking care of our health and every good deed we do. In fact, we are obligated to dress and keep the gardens of our lives.

The above verse by James (Jacob the Just), Jesus' brother and the leader of the early Christian church, is deep. Its application to our subject is vitally significant to understanding a number of areas concerning life and spirituality, and it affirms several statements that I have already made. James 2:26 defines death as the separation of body and spirit. Thus, it identifies the two basic components that must be joined together in mortal life to function with consciousness. Mortal life and, by extrapolation, eternal life require a body joined to a spirit essence or force in order to be consciously "alive" as a unique identity. The process of separating the two results in death.

Another cardinal principle from this verse is that faith or belief is manifested in action and that behavior and thoughts (works represent anything generated by our own powers, mental or muscular) reflect belief.

This third principle will be revisited when we discuss transformation of spiritual identity.

For the living know they will die; but the dead do not know anything, nor have they any longer a reward, for their memory is forgotten. (Ecclesiastes 9:5)

The corollary to James 2:26 is that death terminates consciousness as we know it and can relate to it. There are a number of scriptures that discuss what happens to humans after death. As in all matters spiritual, we are dealing with a subject that is beyond direct access and experience, so we will gain insights into probable process function within the context of some definitive principles. Confusion between process and principles has led to many books of theology, some strange and sorrowful doctrines and considerable debate – even strife - between denominations.

With the above in mind, Genesis 1:26-27 provides some of the most important insights into understanding both existing the spiritual and physical aspects of human beings as well as the form, structure and quality of eternal potential for each person:

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

"God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

People materially reflect the form of God being made "according to" His likeness. We know that image refers to the spiritual dimension of the human being because of the exegetical principle of parallelism. Image is repeated twice in the first position, and likeness is aligned with "male and female" because human bodies are unlike God's in that we are naturally either male or female when the genetics are not damaged. God is not male or female: He is both but neither.

I also see this gender distinction as a biological design feature that accommodates the male-female, yang-yin nature of the life force to create balance within the family of humanity as well as provide for the natural cycle of reoccurring life, which is a temporal form of eternity. The genetic, biological and cultural chain of life continues from generation to generation through sexual reproduction. Here we find the source for sexuality as a symbol of eternity in most human cultures. This is also why it played a central role in so many natural religions.

The divine body of God has no gender duality just as the Holy Spirit is only good. Admittedly, the bias of divine appearance tends towards the male in the projection of an individual being while the collective whole is often referred to in female terms. Such depictions are consistent with the description of the Holy Spirit as being Light without darkness and the global association of yang/light with maleness. It is a mistake to take this superficial appearance and association too far. God is both but neither gender, and persons of male or female gender are just as imperfect by nature. Neither statement is meant to eliminate discussion on the

existence of certain broadly female or broadly male propensity to any mortal weakness or strength.

Soul and Spirit

The word "spirit" used in Genesis 1:26-27 is not referencing the soul or some kind of inner spiritual being as some mistakenly believe. In 1Thessalonians 5:23 Paul the Apostle writes,

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here the faithful Christian is described using tri-partite terminology. Each believer's essential components consist of a spirit, soul and body. I understand this quote to refer to the following aspects of the true Christian: the spirit as the impersonal power of biological life or life force, the soul as the unique identity of the whole person and the body as the materially functional and behaviorally interactive vehicle of consciousness. The soul of the born-again believer includes the Holy Spirit's presence. This distinction is an important key to understanding why the soul is specifically used in the context of this verse.

The concept of soul versus spirit is a problematic one for most who try to understand the Bible. This is because our western culture conceives of the soul as an immortal, inner divine spark, which is a concept inherited from some of the ancient Greek philosophers' use of the word. "Soul" actually refers to being in the New Testament Greek (*psuche*, soul, life or mind). In the Hebrew used to write the Old Testament, the word used is *nefesh*, which is applied to both man and beast.

The Hebrew term given to the natural spirit of the life force was the breath, wind or spirit of life. It is the impersonal spiritual power of the biological creation and physical universe. It is neutral to the point that it can be used for good or for evil. The Hebrew word used interchangeably for wind or spirit is *ruach*. The body of a man or animal is given the breath (*neshamah*) or spirit of life (*ruach chayyim*) to create a living soul (*nefesh chayyah*).

...and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life (*nefesh chayyah*), I have given every green plant for food; and it was so. (Genesis 1:30)

Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (*nishmat chayyim*); and man became a living being (*nefesh chayyah*). (Genesis 2:7)

Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life (*ruach chayyim*), from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. (Genesis 6:17)

So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos of all flesh in which was the breath of life (*ruach chayyim*). (Genesis 7:15) [Transliterations from the Hebrew text are mine.]

Death is sentenced by the removal of the breath from the body of flesh in Genesis 6:17 agreeing with James 2:26. The Hebrew use of *nefesh* for soul also includes an implication of total being, which can be either living or dead souls.

All flesh that moved on the earth perished, **birds** and **cattle** and **beasts** and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and **all mankind**; of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the **breath of the spirit of life** (*nishmat ruach chayyim*), died. (Genesis 7:21-22)

Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die. (Ezekiel 18:4) [Emphasis and transliterations from the Hebrew text are mine.]

That souls can be destroyed is confirmed again in Matthew 10:28 where Jesus is quoted as saying,

And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (*geenna*, hell or unquenchable fire in Greek).

Jesus teaches that mortal life of the body ends with the removal of the spirit/life force and that the destruction of both body and soul is not only possible but permanent. Once the spirit is separated from the body, consciousness ends in what is called the first death. The Bible also mentions a second, fleshly resurrection to stand judgment and possibly suffer a second death. The Bible makes plain that there is only one mortal life to live.

And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment...(Hebrews 9:27)

Animals are not mentioned in this second resurrection to mortal life, so they are not judged morally on the same spiritual plane as humans, which is consistent with them not being created after the likeness, nor are they in the image of God.

For true judgment and painful punishment to take place, people must be conscious and physically alive. This means a union of a fleshly body and the natural life force. To live forever in paradise, a person's name must be written in the book of life. Those who have totally rejected God are not written in the book of life. Those who had served Jesus and the Creator in their mortal lives were part of the first resurrection at Jesus' return about 1,000 years before the second resurrection. How God will determine the fates of those in between these extremes will be loving, just and merciful. Beyond that, the Bible is quiet except to say that God's love will save all that is possible, but there can be no evil or darkness in His presence either.

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.

And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and

another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-15)

We can get a better grasp on the Bible's contextual and intentional use of the concept of soul by learning a bit more about the spirit of humanity, the natural life force. These two aspects of our personness often appear close together in Scripture.

When Paul spoke to the Athenians, he hints at the analogous relationship between the life force and breath. Then he gives some of the most encouraging news for anyone in search of spirituality, God may be found because He is not far from us in being. As a part of His creation, we are sustained by Him as is all life. This is not pantheism, in which God exists within everyone and everything being a part of His very person. No, this verse states that God supports the life, energy and integrity of everything in the material universe because He made it and will fulfill His purpose with it.

The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself **gives to all people life and breath** and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would **seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist**, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead. (Acts 17:24-31)

For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and **we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.** (1Corinthians 8:5-6) [Emphasis mine.]

Furthermore, all of the families of humanity are His children, being made after His likeness and in His image. The Athenians knew about the Jews and Israel. Paul here implies what he states plainly elsewhere, that God worked through Israel, but His purpose is to love eternally every person of every family of humanity. The spiritual image every natural person is born with enables the search.

The Sprit in Man

First of all, the life force activates and powers the brain to understand, imagine and create on the human level, so it is termed the spirit in man. It also enables the impression and spiritual recording of the identity we each create and live by while in the flesh. Because it is impersonal, a mixture of good and evil, the dominant spiritual force of this age and influenced by Satan, the prince of the power of the air, it is the spirit of the world.

But it also puts a spiritual essence within us that can be oriented to God's Spirit and be enabled to understand spiritual matters. The written words of the Bible are Spirit. They can only be properly understood through the perspective of the Holy Spirit. The help of God's Spirit coming near us is like putting on the correct glasses for the first time. It is like having an instant translator of a foreign language speaking in your earpiece.

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Ephesians 6:17)

We need contact with the Spirit of God to understand the things of God. He gives us two living witnesses during our own lifetimes: the written Word and His Sprit working with our natural spirit, but the latter resists the former so we must ask and then humbly follow what God reveals to us.

"For My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being," declares the LORD. "But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word." (Isaiah 66:2)

For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men **knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man** which is in him? Even so **the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.**

Now we have received, not the **spirit of the world**, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.

For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD,
THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the
mind of Christ. (1Corinthians 2:10-16) [Emphasis
mine.]

God has given life to the natural universe through the spirit or life force. At death it separates from the body and returns to the cosmos, which is God's. The net result of human life is vanity – emptiness! There is nothing because the structural outcome of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is null since its two aspects cancel each other out. Mortal life ends with the separation of the human body and spirit ending consciousness at death.

For man goes to his eternal home while mourners
go about in the street. Remember Him before the sil-
ver cord is broken and the golden bowl is crushed,
the pitcher by the well is shattered and the wheel at
the cistern is crushed; then the dust will return to the
earth as it was, and **the spirit will return to God who
gave it.** [Emphasis mine.]

“Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher, “all is vanity!”
(Ecclesiastes 12:5-8)

While the life force is a universal and impersonal power, it seems to record a spiritual signature of our life's totality somewhere in the meta-physical dimension. Without a body, this patterned spirit essence is not conscious, but it preserves a unique digital signature on the life force, which will function as a personal identity formula, a combination spiritual-genetic code reserved for and activated by the second resurrection to mortal life. It does not interact with anyone or anything in the universe. The eternal fate of this personal identity or soul is linked to that of the mortal body of material flesh. It is a mortal soul.

At the judgment God is able to recreate the body and being of the mortal person from the digitized signature of this spirit in the same way that an element can be identified and mapped from its spectral signature in electromagnetic radiation. In some way the record of our decisions is remembered and impressed into this spirit as well as our genetic profile. Judgment demands a bodily resurrection unlike religions that teach reincarnation where the body is not important and neither is individual identity. Eastern thought seeks the elimination of individual personality with its absorption into a divinely universal wholeness or emptiness. Spiritual progress is automatically monitored through the concept of karma, which is a kind of spiritual scorecard.

The Bible speaks of an eventual New Heaven and New Earth. It is described in the final two chapters of Revelation. In verse 2 of chapter 22 the only tree mentioned there is the Tree of Life. To me, this indicates that God “makes all things new” in order that the entire universe is pure goodness. He must eliminate the good and evil force that powers the present heaven (outside of His immediate presence or throne) and earth. Thus, this new creation will come into existence powered by only one spirit: the Holy Spirit. When the physical universe passes away, all physical matter and energy will cease along with the life force, so too will any mortal soul's potential for any future consciousness, if the

person's name is not found recorded in the Book of Life, he or she will cease to exist or even be remembered.

Mortal or Immortal Soul?

Do you have a mortal or immortal soul? Answering that question is an important part of any credible spiritual search.

Paul teaches that to enable eternal life one needs a metaphysical body made of immortal substance, which is an immortal soul. Since it is not possible for people to secure immortal, metaphysical bodies by their own power, knowledge, learning, righteousness or good deeds, God had to provide a transfer mechanism. Human beings need a catalyst to make this transformation. The biblical term is mediator, and there is only one capable of facilitating the mortal to immortal transition of one's transformed or spiritually perfected personness or identity.

This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. (1Timothy 2:3-6)

Jesus was the Holy Spirit born in a fleshly body. His body was powered by the Holy Spirit, the tree of life, instead of by the natural life force of good and evil. This is how He was able to exercise the submitted character to live and die sinless. From the beginning God has set before humanity a choice: life or death. Every decision we make trends more in one direction or the other. At times it may seem unfair that we were born into a world already corrupt and not into the Garden of Eden. The big decisions may seem to have already been made.

To be fair, God has given a testimony of His purpose for people in writing and in the flesh. The Bible is the Holy Spirit in written format, and Jesus was the Holy Spirit in the flesh – now resurrected to immortal life as the Son of God with a metaphysical body empowered by the Holy Spirit. Through Jesus the Second Adam, every person has the opportunity to re-enact Adam and Eve's choice between the two trees:

1. a mortal life of our own unique combination of good and evil motives and deeds that ends in death, or
2. an eternal life uniquely conformed to the image of God.

The first option is the default at birth, which is our human heritage from Adam and Eve. The second one is up to us to choose in faith. I will discuss how transformation takes place in the next chapter. Meanwhile, read this startlingly plain revelation.

But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. **All flesh is not the same flesh**, but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish. There are also **heavenly bodies and earthly bodies**, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the

glory of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for **star differs from star in glory**.

So also is the resurrection of the dead It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, **the spiritual is not first, but the natural**; then the spiritual. **The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven**. As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly.

Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory.

"O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?"

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 15:38-57). [Emphasis mine.]

Just as flesh differs from flesh, so glory will differ from glory between metaphysical bodies. There are heavenly bodies analogous to earthly ones. Heavenly bodies need spiritual power just as earthly ones do. In heaven that power is the Holy Spirit, which is universally the same omnipotence in divinely defined expression of love, but it shines uniquely through each spiritual body. If we would live forever, we must first exchange the image of the earthly, the natural life force for the image of the heavenly, the Holy Spirit.

Our catalyst in this change is Jesus, who came from heaven. In other words, His Spirit from conception came from heaven instead of coming from earth like yours or mine, our spiritual heritage from Adam and Eve's fateful decision. This creates the potential and process for the transformation of a person's mortal identity to an immortal identity by

linking us to a metaphysical body in heaven, which will reflect all of the good deeds of this life executed by the power of God through us. In the resurrection our mortal bodies are either transformed into the spiritual one, the ultimate reality, or our immortal bodies are activated by the power of the Holy Spirit being joined to them immutably forever. This changing event is what the Bible calls the first resurrection.

Throughout the history of humanity, individuals have sought for spiritual knowledge outside of the context of the biblical revelation for various reasons - lack of access being one of them. We have also sought to control the spiritual powers extant in our world in order to make them work on our behalf - according to our desires and purposes, but people have mostly failed in their search due to a lack of objectivity of perspective. Survival and self-interest have blind-sided our research and practice of spirituality.

Today, the preponderance of spiritual research is totally out of control. The advances in the physical sciences, in genetic biotechnologies, the explosive growth of population and advances in digital computing and communications technologies enable humanity to effect the total destruction of our planet. We are choosing to do so through the creation of global artificialities that are not sustainable in the long term. It matters not which social ideology is motivating which part of modern civilization. It could be called Globalism, Secular Materialism, Mystical Humanism or any one or a combination of the world's religions. Prophetically, the most successful latter days' delusion will look like Christianity but will instead worship a false god whose identity will not really be known. Once again, the Spirit of the Knowledge of Good and Evil will be presented as the "Holy" option to be worshipped due to its verifiable miracles, powers, signs and wonders. This last and greatest deception will come close to destroying all of humanity by violently pitting one nation and religion against another.

Yet, there is hope. There is a way to escape from this certain destruction and that is to exit the maze of the null spirit's ins and outs, twists and turns, lies and half-truths. Today, you may indeed enter into the realm of the true Spirit of Light by faith in Yeshua, Jesus, the One sent by the Creator God who revealed Himself through historical intervention and who promised Himself to Israel as given through the prophets and written in the Teaching Law and Covenants.

The God of Israel is the known God of the Jews. Your exit ticket has been paid for by Him on the tree of death, and it is executed through the forgiveness of all of the sin that binds and blinds you, me - all of us.

"Repent," He says, "and believe the good news that in Me you may have personal access into the Holy Spirit of 'Yes', of Eternal Life inseparable from Love, Joy, Peace, and every good imaginable and beyond. So be it unto you."

The Search is now simplified. Each one of us is born with a mortal soul and body empowered by a temporal spiritual life force, which cannot give us eternal life, and we need to become immortal souls with immortal bodies powered by the One Holy Spirit of eternal life. How does a person make this transition?

Chapter 8 – Spiritual Mediators: Moving from Darkness to Light

He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end. (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

Conscious of Eternity

Although the timelessness of spiritual awareness resides in the heart of every person, we mostly fail to grasp the ultimate reality of God and his work. Instead, humans create artificial realities that confuse and deceive. To escape this auto-woven trap, we seek the aid and guidance of spiritual mediators. To find answers to the big, enduring questions of life, most human beings look to those few who seem more in contact with the spiritual or metaphysical domain of the universe. Others look within themselves becoming philosophers, at least in part.

One of the most famous ancient philosophers was Solomon, usually considered the author of the following words:

I know that everything God does will remain forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for God has so worked that men should fear Him. That which is has been already and that which will be has already been, for God seeks what has passed by.

Furthermore, I have seen under the sun that in the place of justice there is wickedness and in the place of righteousness there is wickedness. I said to myself, "God will judge both the righteous man and the wicked man," for a time for every matter and for every deed is there. I said to myself concerning the sons of men, "God has surely tested them in order for them to see that they are but beasts."

For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of beasts is the same. As one dies so dies the other; indeed, they all have the same breath and there is no advantage for man over beast, for all is vanity. All go to the same place. All came from the dust and all return to the dust.

Who knows that the breath of man ascends upward and the breath of the beast descends downward to the earth? (Ecclesiastes 3:14-21)

By definition God inhabits immortal eternity, and humans are temporally mortal. God's identity and personness as a self-existent omnipotent being is expressed in the created universe observant and metaphysical. His promises, purposes and works endure forever, which is a function of time, because God is the Designer and Sustainer of time. From earliest times humans have attempted to leave their names and other impressions of their creative powers behind as they move through their brief wisps of materially timed existence. Such efforts may be as biologically simple as children reared to adulthood or as complex as successful organizations that transcend centuries.

Aware of our own mortality, humans question the permanence of the Creator's natural universe that seems to endure throughout time even as the earth itself cycles forward from season to season. Observing the natural web of life, we question how can, or why are, humans any different from the other sentient animal species?

Materially or scientifically, no one can present hard evidence for the existence of the metaphysical realm, of spiritual reality. Hard, measurable facts do not exist concerning what happens after death, or that death is all that different for people than it is for animals. By definition, spiritual matters transcend the material and are not themselves subject to material observation and measurement, although evidences of spiritual activity are subject to scientific investigation.

For the same reasons, I cannot concretely provide answers to these questions that stand up to scientific standards of proof either, but I seek to provide a rational examination of intangible evidence through observation of the natural world. Despite the present impossibility of providing material proof for spiritual reality, we humans still look for its ineffable evidences in a quest for ultimate truth. Animals do not do that. Most biologists do not think that animals are aware of time beyond the immediate present plus or minus some minutes, possibly hours in some cases. Animals do not behave in a manner that is conscious of the past or future, being guided by instinct. Even primates do not ask uncoached questions about eternity.

The above is not the only quote from the Bible that describes human life as naturally being little more than that of animals. There are really quite a few. Indeed, the Bible consistently warns of and describes the judgments of God – sometimes within a historical context of observed and experienced mortality and sometimes within the realm of eternal judgment. The matter is further confused biblically because the biblical "eternity" often means something more like "as long as the earth exists" or "as long as the sun, moon and stars shine and the earth rotates daily as it orbits around the sun." Here are a couple of verses that also state human life is similar to that of animals:

But man in his pomp will not endure; he is like the
beasts that perish. (Psalm 49:12)

Man in his pomp, yet without understanding, is like
the beasts that perish. (Psalm 49:20)

In chapter 4, I described a life force or breath of natural, material life that is shared by all living things. In particular, this description implies that humans and sentient animals share the breath of life in a uniquely common way. In the Genesis description of the Great Flood, Noah and his family build a huge barge to carry representatives of all animal life with them through the rising waters. Specifically mentioned is the fact that the animals share the breath of life with humans – that our biological metabolisms are closely related. (Genesis 7:15, 21-22)

Getting back to Solomon's opening observation that humans and animals similarly die and that the breath of life (spirit) expires from both. He asks, "Who knows that the breath of man ascends upward and the breath of the beast descends downward to the earth?" (v. 21)

His question rises from the prevailing belief of his age that humans somehow had a spiritual future but animals did not. Solomon's point is that no definitive, materially demonstrable proof can be provided to answer those questions. As far as we can scientifically determine, people die just like animals die. However, humans have a sense, an expectation or hunch that there is more purpose to one's consciousness than the brief vapor of a biological life ending in a certain and endless death due to the loss of the life force for one cause or another. This mental outreach for the spiritual both created and molded the intervening role of mediators – human and otherwise - throughout the course of civilization.

Human mortality is a scientific fact. God's purpose in making us mortal was to inspire a humble admission of, and action on, truth. Mortality gives each of us a tool to stop fooling ourselves, to break the psychological images of false reality that bind us in spiritual darkness. If a person can accept the truth of his or her mortality, that one truth can lead to others, which is the path towards the creation of a truly liberated immortal identity forged from the true, unshaded immortal light of unconditional grace and righteous love described in Chapter 9. This process of balanced physical growth and spiritual maturation also requires mediation.

Natural Human Need for Mediation

This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. (1John 3:19)

...God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. (1John 1:5-7)

Many people do not desire any mediation or any mediator messing with their lives. They are well pleased with their lives. Their love of darkness is anything but a yearning for the light. Nonetheless, I think that most people are not happy about living in dark neighborhoods of inner consciousness and/or having to socially interact with others under confusing contexts of good and evil, which often result in suffer-

ing, hard feelings, fear, hate, loss, oppression, abuse – in other words, anything but happiness and peaceful well-being.

This disconnect between light and darkness, between human ideals of what is good and what people actually experience, creates a gap requiring mediation to bridge it. The Bible states this truth plainly: God is pure light with no darkness whatsoever. Everything else has a varying amount of darkness, which means it is not pure light. By this analogy, the spiritual goal of each person, of humanity, is to move from darkness (or a deceptive darkness that seems like light) to the true light of God.

Modern western thought generally conceives of God as good. As a civilization, we are deeply divided in how each of us defines what is good or evil. We often consider ourselves to be spiritual beings living in fleshly houses illuminated by a uniquely colored artificial light of our own choosing, though significantly influenced by the circumstances of birth. Politically correct perspective proclaims that all of these colorful variations are simply different shades or frequencies of the same light source. I agree; however, the natural light source for every person alive is the dark light, the light mixed with darkness, the black luminance of the Dark Lord, which itself is a false light, an artificial reality light frequency of the spirit of inseparably forged good and evil spiritual power. Satan still thinks he is Lucifer, the father of that light because he "created" it by his rebellion of inserting shadow sins of deceptive distortions. Every being alive, human and angel will soon learn the truth about the Father of Lying Light.

Digital Design Means Decision Options

One of the great mysteries of beginnings is how both the physical and metaphysical realms of the material universe (dimensions 1-11) became a balanced mixture of light and darkness, good and evil - if it all came from, or was created by, a source of pure goodness. By design, beings with spiritual potential must make choices. Just as light is digitized to carry many different messages, so the life force carries a smooth gradient between the nodes of pure dark and pure light, pure void and pure presence. Human beings are never purely evil or good. The digital nature of light and the life force thus create a demand for constant decision making at many levels. Since evil, suffering and death are much worse than neutrally pleasant, there must be a greater purpose for their existence than to exist as mere foils for what is good. In other words, we do not need to experience evil in order to experience goodness: goodness is not merely defined as the absence of or opposite of evil.

How did evil come to be when the Bible states plainly that the Creator of the universe is pure goodness – pure light without any darkness? How can evil proceed from pure goodness?

This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. (1John 1:5)

The universe extends from God's throne of omnipotence and pure light to the absolute zero of the minutest particle. Digital Spirituality contends that the universe is one, that the physical and metaphysical realms

compose one continuum of reality supported by a similar continuum of power analogous and more extensive, yet parallel to the radiant electromagnetic spectrum. The physical universe is filled with supernovas and black holes, matter and anti-matter, energy and dark energy, matter and dark matter. Brought down to earth, human spirituality is full of the life force, the yang and yin, chi and prana of biological being and more. All is held in a balance according to universal physical laws, not all of which we understand.

How did this all come about? What is its purpose, if anything? What clues does it give us in our search for spirituality?

Natural Spirituality sets the balance of the life force as its goal or definition of success and health, but the life force does not itself transcend beyond a perceived immortality of the now, which is theoretically achieved at the speed of light. For people to approach the transcendence of the life force requires the mediation of spiritual experts and/or the intervention of spirit beings that operate beyond light speed, as well as the sacrifices (extreme effort, if nothing else) and dedicated focus of the searcher. And what may be achieved?

Experiential evidence is limited to unverifiable perceptions of psycho-biological sensations interpreted as being spiritual transcendence or transformation; however, despite all of the literature and workshops, every participant remains mortally the same and subject to death. The only probable exception is Jesus/Yeshua, the Messiah of Israel and proclaimed Son of God by the resurrection from the dead. (Romans 1:4) If He did not come back bodily from the dead, then Paul wrote that the Bible becomes mythology and the promises of God untrustworthy. (1Corinthians 15:1-14)

Theoretical contentions that the soul is itself an immortal shard off an immortal wholeness that is God, or that death is but a doorway to reincarnation cannot be verified objectively either. Billions of people believe in reincarnation but differ in their explanations of what happens because no one really knows. What we have is indirect evidence that is not objectively verifiable and repeatable physical or even metaphysical law. The indirect evidence is interpretative, which means it is subject to human fallibility – whether individual and/or collective in origin and dogma.

The digital spirituality model postulates a recycling of the life force and the decomposition of bodies. Since the soul - our individual existence/personal identity, is the intangible product resulting from the temporally real biological intersect of the life force and a body, it ceases to exist when body and spirit are separated at death. The personal thought and experience impressions we make on the life force travel away from the present and cannot be recalled naturally. Time radiates with light in straight motion even though it cycles. The result is a constantly new present with patterns from the past due to the intrinsically constant, indivisibly melded good and evil nature of the life force. Because the source of human nature does not change, the permutations from that source repeat themselves in the lives of many separate persons. Each of us is indeed unique, but sets of our similar personalities and character profiles are identified and classified for marketing and psychological study.

All of the experiential evidence testified on behalf of the soul's immortality could have been fabricated in one way or another by deceitful fallen angels, so we must be cautious in assigning significance to documented testimony of perceived former lives. Spirit beings, unlike humans, have lived throughout the ages and possess data memories to the finest detail about every person and event they were around or influenced. They can easily draw on these memories to impersonate someone. Memories of former "lives" or séance visits of "dearly departed souls" can be easily faked by any fallen angel. The behavioral melding of demons and people from heavy influence to possession has been documented and experienced from transcultural antiquity. It would be easier than taking a character role in a movie for a demon to impersonate anyone of the many humans they had known or possessed – regardless of the degree of influence or possession.

Every traditional human culture presents abundant evidence for the existence of angels, demons and spirit beings of other names. I believe that they truly exist and have blessed humanity with miracles and gifts, but they have also plagued us with much suffering, sorrow, deceit, destruction and death. The debates between humans simply revolve around which angels or gods are good and which ones are evil. It is a circular conundrum caused by the relentlessly reoccurring attributes of good and evil, light and dark, male and female qualities of the life force. By its intrinsic nature, the life force is at once wholly and severally any gradient combination of these opposing qualities.

So the seeker of positive or healthy spirituality has a choice to make. Does he or she accept the very real good and evil limitations of the life force and endeavor to practice some golden balance for the length of one's natural life? Or does one risk faith in a mediator and/or way of mediation in order to transcend the limitations of the natural balancing act and enter into the mystical kingdom of supernatural perfection? Does one accept the evil with the good and try to create a personal reality of temporal balance to the positive? Or does one seek entry to the eternal realms of pure light and bliss, which is not the same as a reward typified by a boring indolence of surfeited intellect or sensuality.

Such a choice currently exists for individuals, but our modern globalized society is headed for total implosion and violent destruction. I sincerely doubt that all of the well-intentioned people in the world can prevent it from happening, though we should try to do so. Even humanly, we should never give up doing what is good – the best we know, though the metaphysical structure of our planet's present situation makes the future dark unless there is a divine counterbalance. The maw of consuming evil is steadily but inexorably, overwhelming nature as well as any naturally balanced spiritual systems operating among the human population.

Ultimately, the good intentions of spiritually balanced people will be used against all of us. All humanitarian organizations and philanthropic works will be captured and manipulated by the angels of darkness who are driven by necessity to consume the life force of our entire planet. They do so in a vain effort to put off the inevitable end of their fall from heaven, because that fall was not a one-time event but a process

that even now continues into the certain future of eventually hitting the prophetic pavement of their de-energized demised.

Death Defined Systemically

If goodness is defined as that which trends towards life, and evil is defined by that which trends towards death, then the Kingdom of Darkness is the Kingdom of Death. To understand the Kingdom of Darkness better, we need to understand death better. By analyzing the components and process of mortality and death in the physical realm of science and nature, we will gain valuable insights into the nature of evil and its spiritual perpetrators. We face a real battle, and we should know our enemies well enough to strategize effectively against them.

In simplest terms, death occurs once a certain amount of energy or heat is lost: death is the result of terminal hypothermia. Biological systems require a certain level of heat to function that is particular to that system. This is true whether we are considering an internal biological function or an ecosystem of many organisms. In the largest sense, the earth is alive because of the energy it receives from the sun. All biological life on earth depends upon the successful conversion of solar radiation in all forms to usefully consumable biological fuels or food. This is what chlorophyll, food and metabolism are all about. Without food we die of starvation.

If our metabolism cannot convert stored body energy fast enough to sustain functional warmth in the face of external environmental cooling, we also die. This is what happens when a person falls into cold water: it is a metabolic race between the body's capability of generating heat to its limbs and core and the physical equations of heat transfer and absorption from the body mass into the much larger water mass. Survival strategies for dealing with cold-water accidents are founded on these axioms.

Energy always flows from hot to cold, high to low intensity. That is what weather is all about. This fact effectively challenges heating and cooling any structure. It is the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics at work, and it applies to the smallest one-celled organism and the largest star. It may also be conceptually applied to economic and social systems. A business must make sufficient profit to account for its operational inefficiencies and variations in its external environment (suppliers, competition and customers, etc.). A continuing enterprise must also provide for innovation, continuous employee development and leadership succession to survive over any length of time.

The loss of heat below sustainable levels, which means growing at a sufficient but not too high of rate, in any subsystem affects the whole system. If it is large enough, then it can kill the whole system. If a person loses air or too much blood, death occurs. If a business loses suppliers, death occurs – even if everything else is operating at top levels. Similarly, economic systems suffer and fail when they cannot productively apportion and use resources in a manner that supports business growth and development. The causes could be many, such as when insufficient currency, unjust - unwise taxes and/or improperly regulated markets do not efficiently effect the authentic transactional exchanges needed to deliver the goods and services required for a society to more than just survive.

Because of the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics, homeostasis in natural systems cannot be functionally defined as evenly balanced: they must be biased in favor of growth levels sufficient to compensate for the natural attrition experienced in the physical realm of the universe. Statistical tools exist that help managers to anticipate where attrition is likely occur over a projected period of time, but it is impossible to foresee all of the specific instances, their timing and degree of systems impact. The specifics cannot be fully predetermined and planned for without some inclusion of general contingency in excess of balance in the form of natural redundancy, reproductive surplus or profit.

This observation holds true for all 11 parallel dimensions of the universe. Both physical and metaphysical dimensions of the universe experience a downward, entropic flow of energy from source to void, from the birth of a galaxy to the all-consuming black hole that destroys all matter and energy entering it. Of course, we cannot measure or observe the specific function of black holes. We do not know if they are transfer mechanisms between dimensions or otherwise, but what seems true on the smallest scale holds true for the largest scale that we can observe and describe mathematically.

How did this come to be? Does energy somehow eternally recycle in a pulsing steady state of existence? Alternatively, did everything come from a Creator or First Cause that is an eternal, unending, self-generating source of power in the form of pure light in which there is no darkness? My bias is obviously the latter conclusion, but we should be open to consider and respect other opinions even as each must answer these questions for himself or herself. In concluding that there is a Creator as I have, I must answer the obvious question, "How does evil come into existence from a purely good source?"

At best, my answers must be considered by the materialist to be unprovable inferences, because even the Bible gives few facts about the beginning of everything. Those facts are a bit cryptic as well, but I find the concept of reality that I have built from them plausible and hence tested as true within the context of spiritual laws that explain much more than anything else I have encountered. Importantly, they create fewer unanswered questions than anything else I have encountered. More importantly, they contribute and trend to life through pragmatic application in everyday living. Perhaps they will make sense to you, too.

What is a Mediator?

It is time to stop and get some definitions. The concept of mediator and mediation is broader than most of us think when we hear the word. How we define "mediator" is greatly influenced by the context of our lives, including experiences past and present. Here is a selection of definitions that highlight some of the aspects discussed in this chapter.

me·di·a·tor, noun¹

one that mediates; especially: a mediating agent (as an enzyme or hormone) in a chemical or biological process

¹ "mediator." Merriam-Webster's Medical Dictionary. Merriam-Webster, Inc. 29 Jun. 2007. <Dictionary.reference.com/http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mediator>.

<substance P, a neuropeptide *mediator* of analgesic stimuli in peripheral sensory nerves —D. R. Robinson>

mediator, noun²

a negotiator who acts as a link between parties

mediate (mē'dē-āt)³

To effect or convey a force between subatomic particles. The gauge bosons, for example, mediate the four fundamental forces of nature.

mediate, adjective⁴

1. acting through or dependent on an intervening agency; "the disease spread by mediate as well as direct contact"
2. being neither at the beginning nor at the end in a series; "adolescence is an awkward in-between age"; "in a mediate position"; "the middle point on a line"

mediate, verb⁵

1. act between parties with a view to reconciling differences; "He interceded in the family dispute"; "He mediated a settlement"
2. occupy an intermediate or middle position or form a connecting link or stage between two others; "mediate between the old and the new"

Mediation between this world and the next is an almost universal requirement in all spiritual disciplines. As mentioned several times earlier in this book, the barriers between the two are real and significant. The concept and function of mediation is broader than most of us understand and use the word. Like all words, aspects of the broader concept are focused by context into more specific functions or roles performed in the process of mediation. This is why I inserted a selection of definitions. The theme of the word is the linking or connecting of two entities that would naturally be distinct and separated as well as the transfer of some force or power between two entities that would not otherwise take place.

The vast international resources of science and the military have addressed some important material challenges presented by the barriers of physics when it comes to the transformation of matter into energy and vice versa with some explosive but limited success. Some theorize the possibility of body or material transfer devices or travel at speeds exceeding the speed of light through a "hyperspace" made so popular in science fiction, but reality is far more complex. The barrier of light speed seems impossible to breach. The best technology can only approach the

² "mediator." WordNet® 3.0. Princeton University. 29 Jun. 2007. <Dictionary.com <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mediator>>.

³ "mediate." The American Heritage® Science Dictionary. Houghton Mifflin Company. 29 Jun. 2007. <Dictionary.com <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mediate>>.

⁴ "mediate." WordNet® 3.0. Princeton University. 29 Jun. 2007. <Dictionary.com <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mediate>>.

⁵ "mediate." WordNet® 3.0. Princeton University. 29 Jun. 2007. <Dictionary.com <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mediate>>.

speed of light, and perhaps particle accelerators create collisions that send bits and pieces of atoms into another dimension, but we have no instruments capable of measuring where they go. Scientists develop mathematical models that theoretically hypothecate probabilities of transfer. Philosophically or scientifically, we cannot even be sure that an electron floating in and out of its shell around an atomic nucleus is even the same one, though there are no indications that anything changed as far as the stability and properties of that particular atom show.

According to the thesis presented in these pages, the search for spirituality must minimally access the natural life force operating at the speed of light in order to experience a sense of eternity. Since the speed of light is slowing down, we know that both light and its speed are material, meaning that at some point all energy will be lost, so the perceived sense of eternity that we can achieve on our own is still temporal. The barrier between temporality and eternity is one that spirituality must address. The other is the matter of eternity's quality – how is it experienced. No one is interested in eternity for eternity's sake: living forever is only desired if that life is expected to be pleasant, interesting and creatively dynamic.

Removing evil is one of the great objectives and purposes for the barrier between temporality and eternity. My thesis is that temporality is a training ground where evil is permitted so that it may be eliminated by exercise of free will and the human level of forgiveness required to reboot one's life after suffering loss or failure. Every training or learning program demands the exercise of experience where good is perfected and performance hindrances are forgotten or eliminated. Spirituality's second challenge is to transfer the beneficial capacity for choosing and being goodness only created or accomplished in this life into the next. Since learning is always a process, the transferring mediation from this life into the next must be dynamic and flexible. It must secure positive advances in some areas while other necessary spiritual objectives or characteristics yet remain unattained.

The Creation & Reconciliation of the Universe

God is pure light without darkness, life, the standard of love, truth and justice, eternal Holy Spirit. (John 4:24; 1John 4:7-8) God created the universe out of physical nothing. (Hebrews 11:3) He spoke, and it was so. (Genesis 1; Hebrews 1) Through the Word spoken, Jesus was present, and so Paul writes that the universe was created through and for Jesus. Jesus/Yeshua is the central, focal Mediator of all that is, has been and will be. Jesus revealed the invisible Father God to humanity, and perhaps to the angels, too. Throughout all history, one of the most often noted and unusual facts about the God of Israel was his invisibility. No image of God was permitted. The only image of God ever on earth was the ONE Mediator between God and humanity, Jesus.

What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life. And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to

Chapter 8 - Spiritual Mediators: Moving from Darkness to Light

us. What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete. This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. (1John 1:1-5)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. (John 1:1-5)

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. (Colossians 1:15-20)

Jesus/Yeshua plays a pivotal role in God's creation. Besides reconciliation of humanity to God, his blood on the cross also reconciles "things in heaven." Jesus is the ultimate and only Mediator of the divine Holy Spirit. Later in this chapter, I will show the connection between Jesus' shed blood and the Holy Spirit poured out upon those who repent in order to facilitate their immortal and sinless, identity transformation. The Bible has a great deal to say on this topic. Chapter 9 discusses the key Bible verses on how creative identity transformation takes place, its changed nature and why it is important.

But what kind of reconciliation is needed in heaven? The answer to this question also answers why a material universe of time and space even exists. The Bible reveals more details about the restoration of the universe, referred to as the New Heavens and New Earth, in the final two chapters of Revelation. The fact that a restoration is needed reveals that something bad happened earlier. The structural differences of the New Heaven and New Earth from the universe we live in today may be rationally deduced using the basic premises of digital spirituality.

Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit,

yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever. (Revelation 22:1-5)

Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed.

Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers. (Genesis 2:7-10)

Notice the recurring themes of trees, rivers and garden. Compare and contrast that which is the same and that which is different. The tree of life and the water of life refer to the Holy Spirit of Life Eternal. The breath of mortal life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil refer to the natural life force of the material universe. In the New Heavens and New Earth, the Bible only mentions the tree of life.

The only spiritual force present in the perfect goodness of New Heavens and New Earth is the pure light of the Holy Spirit. It is out of that spiritual resource that they will be created. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was present in the Garden of Eden due to Lucifer's rebellion. It did not exist before then and will not exist after Satan is destroyed in the lake of fire that does not go out until it has consumed the entire material universe of time and space. (Revelation 20:10, 14-15)

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. (2Peter 3:10-13)

So I deduce that the created material universe's parameters of being subject to time (mortality) and suffering the existence of

both good and evil must have come about in conjunction with a twisting distortion of the pure truth, power and purposes of God. Somehow darkness was introduced into the pure light permanently defiling it. God permits the material universe, which has been separated from him, to exist in fulfillment of his great plan for humanity. Through Jesus, the material creation will be restored and reconciled to God through its own physical process of fiery death and transformation. The universe must die and be reborn just as person must. People have the opportunity to die in faith, which includes repentance and obedience as well as acceptance of God's grace through Jesus without doubt. Just as Jesus and the saints are resurrected in Holy Spirit power alone, bearing the name of the Father, so the New Heavens and New Earth will be constructed out of the Holy Spirit's pure light power.

In the New Heavens and New Earth, perpetual healing (eternal life), absence of curses and the immediate, perceivable presence of God are standard, everyday, normal occurrences. Everything is obvious and orderly, not confused. Evil is absent. Choice is still free, but guaranteed righteous in love perfected. The Saints are named with the Name of God, which is his very nature and Spirit.

This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:11-19)

Both the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were present in the Garden. Adam had to make a choice between the two for himself, Eve and their children. This power of choice and its consequences made Adam the most significant Bible mediator after Jesus. Adam's choice of Eve's deceived choice, subjected all of humanity to death because every person is born indwelt with the breath of life, the dark light spirit of good and evil. Jesus is called the Second Adam because he provides a way through faith of choosing the tree of life, the Holy Spirit of God through faith in Messiah, instead of remained captive to the mortal sorrows of the natural life force, which is irreparably darkened so that any good a person can think, say or do cannot be totally separated or detached from evil. Good men die just as dead as bad men. Why?

Birth of the Kingdom of Darkness

Lucifer, the “star of the morning” or “son of the dawn” was the most important angel in God’s Kingdom before he rebelled. Literally, the Hebrew his name is *Heyl-el ben Shachar*, usually translated Venus the son of the morning dawn (Morning Star). The root derivation of the name *Heyl-el* communicates the “force, strength or bravery of God” like the Hebrew *hey-l-avir* translates to “air force” where *avir* means “air.”

So the force of God shone through Satan as is also described by the Latin name, Lucifer or “light carrier.” God is light, and science teaches us that light is digital power – everything as depicted by the rainbow over God’s throne.⁶ When Lucifer rebelled, he became Satan the Adversary. The act of Lucifer’s rebellion introduced darkness into the spirit power of God going through him to sustain the universe. Lucifer’s sin more quickly than instantaneously separated himself and everything under his dominion from God. (Isaiah 59:2)

Bang! The material universe, as we can examine it today being subject to time, came into being. About one third of the angels rebelled with him, and they “fell” from God’s throne, or the Third Heaven, into the temporal spiritual realm of the Second Heaven (the universe in all of its dimensions), which includes the first heaven of our earth’s atmosphere. When the angels sinned, they earned an immediate sentence of eternal destruction, which has been suspended in the temporal realm of the material universe now sustained by the dark light of the good and evil life force. Satan remains the mediator of the life force and continues to promote the lie that it is holy. Most demons call themselves gods or goddesses.

The only reason that God permits the existence of fallen angels and evil is that his plan will not work without it. Satan is the best instructor in the ways of evil because he invented it! So he and his demons are permitted to operate evilly among the nations of humanity. Through this school of hard knocks, God inoculates the saints against any inclination to choose evil once born to eternity by allowing us to suffer its consequences now in the flesh as mortals. As a result, the saints freely choose God’s definition of love and righteousness. Unfortunately, there have been, are and will be some who become so distorted by evil that they reject God’s ways. Their fate is to be destroyed with the devil and his demons.

The following verses taken from biblical contexts communicate on multiple levels. The verses have historic applications to real persons as well as prophetic applications to future persons that I will not describe here. Most Bible scholars agree that they also refer to the fallen angel known as Satan, who was once named Lucifer, “star of the morning.”

How you have fallen from heaven,
O star of the morning, son of the dawn!

You have been cut down to the earth,
You who have weakened the nations!

⁶ By the way, that rainbow would show all of the bands of electromagnetic radiation – both this side of light speed and the other – perhaps 12 bands in all according to the Rosetta Stone ratio of 7 bands of color on this side of light speed and 5 bands on the other as postulated by Herbert Stollorz in his books **Apocalypse Prophesied** and **Mystery of Tammuz 17**.

But you said in your heart,
'I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God,
And I will sit on the mount of assembly
In the recesses of the north.

'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High.'

Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol,
To the recesses of the pit. (Isaiah 14:12-15)

You had the seal of perfection,
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

You were in Eden, the garden of God;
Every precious stone was your covering:
The ruby, the topaz and the diamond;
The beryl, the onyx and the jasper;
The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald;
And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and
sockets,
Was in you.

On the day that you were created
They were prepared.

You were the anointed cherub who covers,
And I placed you there.
You were on the holy mountain of God;
You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

You were blameless in your ways
From the day you were created
Until unrighteousness was found in you.

By the abundance of your trade
You were internally filled with violence,
And you sinned;
Therefore I have cast you as profane
From the mountain of God.

And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub,
From the midst of the stones of fire.

Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;
You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor
I cast you to the ground... (Ezekiel 28:12-17)

And He [Jesus] said to them, "I was watching Satan
fall from heaven like lightning." (Luke 10:18) [Added
for clarity.]

The Bible is silent about when Satan initiated his rebellion, when it/he (Satan is not male or female, but English traditionally defaults to the male gender.) was removed from its/his exalted position, and when God started to plan for the reconciliation of His universe. But the best conclusion is that Lucifer's fall occurred prior to the creation of people, Satan started a rebellion in the Third Heaven. The Bible indicates that millions of angels rebelled against God, which I interpretively paraphrased in my poem, **The Song of Odomo**. This massive rebellion spread throughout the universe, and it is not over yet. Why did Lucifer rebel?

Perhaps God was invisible to the angelic beings. Speaking and communicating to the seemingly empty throne of an invisible boss requires absolute trust and obedience. Just as Heaven seems to be empty today to most mortals, so it was to the angels. Even Jesus mentioned that He would ascend to sit “at the right hand of the power of God.” (Luke 22:69) If true, then God was not perceived directly – only indirectly. The orders from Him also came indirectly – mediated through the three cherubim that surrounded His throne: one on each side and one above, covering it. Israel’s Ark of the Covenant showed the remaining loyal cherubs at each side of the otherwise empty throne, but the third covering it from above was gone. (Exodus 25:17-22) The missing third angel over the mercy seat was Lucifer, the “star of the morning” or “son of the dawn.”

Dark Mediator of the Life Force

Heyl-el ben Shachar originally mediated God’s power to the rest of the heavenly realm. Pride entered into his mental operations corrupting them permanently. Unlike God and humans, angels are behavioral beings not created in the image or after the likeness of God. Disobedient behavior breaks them functionally in a way that permanently twists and distorts their cybernetic operation. As I will show later, the Bible states that all angels were created to execute a range of tasks, which functionality was built into their metaphysical bodies and brains. The inclusion of something not originally built into them or the damage, distortion or removal of something in their structured being breaks them beyond repair. It would be like punching extra holes, twisting or otherwise modifying those old computer cards that guided the operations of early computers and mediated the input and output of data to them.

As the highest cherub over the throne in God’s apparent absence, Lucifer began to represent to the other angels that the power of the throne coming through him was his. In an all-out attempt to sit on the throne itself – to speak his own orders instead of obeying an unseen voice - *Heyl-el ben Shachar* became Satan, the Adversary. At the moment of his rebellion, Satan was cut off from the 12th dimension, “falling” into the lower 11. He or it was no longer the mediating transfer agent of God’s divine power. He became a consuming void, a spirit power vacuum in the voracious consumption of the available life force stolen from the residual operation of the universe in order to continue the now twisted execution of what he was designed for – power transfer. His malfunction spread to the angels under him and to any angel aligning itself to *Heyl-el ben Shachar*’s mediating transmission of collected spirit power.

Through Satan - the Mediator of the Life Force, the purely good divine power had been transformed into an inseparably good-evil admixture of his lies or artificial realities and the true light of God. This potent spiritual force infected its receivers with varying forms of evil mixed with the good introduced with it. Satan’s malfunction spread faster than the most egregious computer virus. Millions of angels rebelled with him becoming demons. Demonic identity now fixed in the manner of their distorted deviation from their divinely purposed design. Their original behavior, corrupted by the particular flavor of their rebellion or sin, became their new identity. They sought to replicate themselves by

conforming others to their form of deviance – both among other angelic beings as well as among humans, once they existed.

Perhaps Satan had boldly lied that the invisible Godhead had become visible in himself: that he was God. God found himself embroiled in the midst of idol worship around his holy Throne. The Eternal Creator saw His most perfect and powerful angel in open rebellion. His holy Name and authority were disrespectfully polluted by the rebels' arrogance. Instead of order and beauty, turmoil and violent unrest erupted everywhere as the whole creation entered into chaos. When evil entered a good creation, darkness became part of the life force - changed from being only light to a balance of light and darkness.

With Satan and the demons becoming roaming, consuming power voids, short circuits in the sustained operations of the universe, God needed to add power to the system to permit life to continue, which He did through a re-creation of the physical realm as recorded in the first verses of the Bible. Out of chaos, God created a biologically life-sustaining environment of plants and animals, balanced in natural laws now described by science. The necessary operational energies of the universe eventually became stabilized by a self-adjusting balance between light and dark forms of matter and energy because the Creator decided to sustain a universe in rebellion in order to accomplish a higher purpose.

Comparative Structure of Reality					
		Mystics' Seventh Heaven	Bible's Third Heaven	12 - God's Throne of Eternity	12 Dimensions / String Theory / Energy Levels
Reality Continuum	Metaphysical Realm	6	Bible's Second Heaven or the Fallen Angelic Dominion. Good angels must battle their way through this to reach humanity.	11	
		5		10	
		4		9	
		3		8	
		2		7	
		1		6	
		Light Speed/ Life Force Boundary - 5			
Physical Realm		Bible's First Heaven of the Physical Universe	4 - Time		
			3 - Height		
			2 - Width		
			1 - Length		

God would create mortal beings who could make mistakes and not necessarily be permanently broken. Possessing the capacity for creating artificial realities, they could learn from experience within the context of a material universe that by nature was limited by time and the kinds of energy available. They could change the shape of their images, and this

feature provided the potential to birth self-directed beings who would freely choose his nature and definition of unconditional love over every other conceivable alternative, which was now being offered as spiritual truths by Satan and the demons. The humans' exercise of free will creativity would lead to the birth of a multitude of beings like himself – each a unique expression of his kind of love.

These mortal beings would freely choose to discover and exercise personal expressions of divinely defined unconditional love instead of inventing their own definitions of love by re-writing what is right and what is wrong. His purpose was self-determination and definition within the bounds of eternal love undefiled, holy: people who would choose an identity from how he or she expressed the Father's love instead of by how they deviated from it or redefined it. Because their choice was freely exercised, they would learn not to rebel while living in the flesh, which mortal composition also served the function of potential damage control. Strength of character established and preserved within a fleshly body subject to the seductive allures of fallen spirits in a fallen world would possess the tempered quality that could not, because it would not, become corrupt throughout eternity.

God re-established control of His government by removing all rebellious angels from His presence. Any who had violated His name or broken His commands were suddenly gone from the Third Heaven, relegated to the 11 dimensions of descending power. Describing this event as a "fall" refers to the falling energy levels typical of the descending dimensions and not to a descent in atmospheric altitude, except by analogy. From the day of their rebellion, Satan and the rebellious angels had failed their test of loyalty to God's high standards of serving love. When they "fell" from His grace, they also began their fall to powerlessness because they were cut off from the source of all. Because they did not obey their Creator and Ruler in sightless faith, He cut them off from direct access to His throne of emanating power: they "fell" from the Third Heaven of God's presence into the Second Heaven of the parallel dimensions around the earth.

Those angels who did not rebel had passed their test. They remained directly part of the Third Heaven, trusted agents of God's throne and powered by the pure energies of the Creator's transcendent love, the eternal light. Among other things, this history teaches us the permanence of sightless faith in this dimension. One lesson from this event for us as humans is that we will never experience the metaphysical in a manner sufficiently tangible so as to eliminate the sightlessness of faith. If that were to happen, then God's principal tool of character development would be eliminated.

Satan and the demons were only permitted direct access to God's presence when He had some role for them to play in afflicting human trial as a part of His overall plan for humanity. (Job 1) Otherwise, they were cut off from the power source of pure light, goodness, joy, peace and love. All fallen spirits became desperately dependent on acquiring access to the reduced intensity power levels of the "lower" 11 dimensions of the universe. They became power parasites fighting over life force batteries or concentrations of spiritual heat. They became "heat-seeking" dynamos of destruction.

Astrology

I think the astrological system describes how Satan has organized the power-sharing features of his kingdom of darkness, thus astrological phenomena fall within the biblical description of Satan as the prince of the power of the breath of life, the air. If this is true, then his demonic host would be lower agents of the same power.

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. (Ephesians 2:1-3)

All limited resources must be rationed. To the fallen angels or demons, Satan remains the "light-bringer" who dispenses the general powers of the universe to them. In both ancient religions and their various astrological teachings, Satan/Lucifer has been consistently identified with both the Sun and the Moon deities. Other major deities were associated with various planets, brightest stars and constellations. Astrology interprets how the positional relationships between these heavenly bodies in the sky influence or direct affairs between people and nations on earth. My hypothesis proposes that the organization and position of the major 'lights' in the sky, being planets, comets, asteroids, stars and constellations of stars, reflect how Satan organizes the competing use of the life force charge he can collect and redistribute. That is how Satan maintains what order there may be in his domain or kingdom of fallen angels/stars.

The Bible often refers to angels as stars. (Revelation 1:20) Jesus implied that Satan's kingdom was indeed organized in a hierarchy. (Matthew 12:26) Each astrological transfer team of demons retransmits their own distorted variety set of good and evil attributes that are generically aligned with the life force frequencies of each person's body. If significant radiations of the life force come from transfer sets of angelic stars in zodiac constellations as they relate to the movements of the sun and planets, then astrology could rationally be a way to try to describe how their competing demands and influences on humans are apportioned as bounded by time. Those influences could be compelling but not determinate in a person's life since the power of human decision seems to be greater. Moreover, the assumption is that the demons are never satisfied with the level of power that they have so they continually roam about seeking to devour more through close association and possession of animals and people.

I suspect that this natural spiritual alignment is set at first breath when one's life force antenna inclines a person's receptivity towards certain positive and negative personality traits at birth. Both positive and negative natural inclinations can be overcome humanly through the exercise of the power of decision. One's zodiac sign cannot be used as a cop-out excuse for one's human failing anymore than should a sign's good points be consciously cultivated in order to increase one's power, ben-

efits and influence in this world. I do not think that a small amount of astrology study is necessarily harmful because it reveals the strategies of the enemy and may reveal some of our own weaknesses to watch, but astrology should not be studied in depth as a dependable resource for life decisions and spiritual growth. It should not be used as a resource for daily, weekly, monthly or annual guidance. To do so subordinates even the natural powers or our human identities shaped by a free will to the powerful lies of those that would destroy us.

Eventually, Satan and his accomplices will be permanently removed from their jobs. To fill these vacant positions, God is in the process of creating new beings to inhabit eternity with Him from among the humans on earth; meanwhile, God permits Satan to afflict and tempt people with evil. God realized that this test was necessary. *Heyl-el ben Shachar* had been created perfectly. I think of him as a metaphysical cybernetic, behavior-based being whose hard-wired software went permanently bad. He could not be repaired or re-programmed, so he had to be discarded; however, God found a purpose for evil's existence and so permitted it free reign within prescribed bounds.

In His love, God decided to develop a process that would build incorruptible character from within that He could count on for eternity. The presence of evil in the material world provided an opportunity to learn its destructive nature within controllable bounds. Unlike metaphysical body substance, fleshly minds or brains could learn from suffering and change their orientation through the exercise of free will – the power of free decision. Unlike angels who became permanently broken from their first behavioral glitch, humans could learn to choose good over evil from the suffering of evil.

By placing this trial with the dimensions of space-time, God placed terminal limits on the existence of evil. People could only live so long, and a universe populated by rebellious angels would only last so long. Faithful obedience in the absence of His visible presence could be tested and used to reveal the true heart or internal workings of humans. From the angelic rebellion, God had learned that He could trust only Himself to mediate His power and perfect love. He also realized that the one-third failure rate (according to most scholars) of perfectly created angels was too high. He required zero defects in His government, so He came up with a way to perfect beings similar to Himself who would not be corrupted by familiarity with the divine or their own exercise of power.

The Three Classes of Human Evil

I can understand the perspective of skeptics who question the existence of an all powerful God or whether the promises of the Bible mean anything beyond one's inner world of psychological perception and (mis)belief. History and human experience testify unequivocally that the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus did not put an immediate end to evil. The social institution of Christmas observance has not brought "peace on earth to men of good will." Neither has organized religion, human rights movements, socioeconomic reforms or political governance in any format.

History testifies to an almost continuous parade of great injustices since Jesus walked among humanity. My observation is not a judgment of those who have ever worked for the improvement of human life, but a statement of fact. Although some individuals have been generous with their time and resources in furthering peace and understanding between peoples, only a little material progress has been made under recent history's relatively enlightened socio-economic-political hegemony of western nations despite their dominant military power. Many millions have prospered under forms of government and economic systems that have rewarded their citizens somewhat more fairly than in past generations. Unfortunately, a faceless many have borne the usual panoply of consequential costs so that an elite few may enjoy superabundance. Elsewhere, I discuss the deceitful prosperity and promises of Globalism and expose them for how they destroy the humaneness of humanity as well as an individual's potential for spiritual growth and development.

To answer these very important questions, I have observed three material classes of evil as originated and experienced by humanity in the physical realm. They are:

1. **Institutional Evil** imposed, inspired or encouraged by human sociocultural institutions
2. **Psychobiological Evil** derived from the structure of biological human consciousness
3. **Intentional Evil** perpetrated by a person's decision to think and/or do evil

Human society is an artificial reality system occupying specified space and time intersects that are constructed out of social institutions. Human societies and their institutions require constraints to keep them in balance. Effective constraints enforce a desired discipline according to the voluntary choice and application of healthy spiritual principles by all participating parties. Natural Spirituality defines evil as a systemic imbalance severe enough to trend the whole and/or one of its major components towards sickness, dissolution and demise.

The major subsets of human societies compose sociocultural complexes that may be referred to as civilizations, cultures, economic blocks, ages or empires. Human civilization has suffered from great evil. Although the definition of what is evil may be debated between persons and cultures, that evil exists in the human sphere of experience and nature is universally admitted. Human society, as an artificial reality of social values, beliefs, mores, traditions, laws and other formal or informal contractual interactions between its members, exists within the universal cause-and-effect context of ultimate reality. In other words, the dissonance between the particular society's values, laws, etc. and those of the natural universe is what make the social reality artificial – manmade in the face of natural spiritual, economic and or other social laws rooted in essential human nature, the physical laws of the universe as well as its metaphysical principles. If God exists, his nature and purpose are built into all aspects of ultimate reality, which includes the physical universe as humans encounter it. (Romans 1:20)

Social institutions and social systems may operate in deviance of natural laws for a relatively short period of time due to access to external sources of additional energies, wealth or power. Hence, empires expand at the expense of the externally conquered or dominated and disintegrate due the internal factors and stresses that build up from its artificial constructs of reality. Nature's omnipresence supports natural laws – both physical and spiritual. Anything out of harmony with the natural context requires additional energy input exponentially proportionate to the degree of deviance from ultimate reality. As Creator, God is the external support and energy source for the universe and all of its natural systems, laws and forces. (Colossians 1:13-17)

Societies and their institutions of behavior, value systems and economic survival operate through human interactions often referred to as social contracts. Social contract terms are the expectations held by the participants according to their place or systems role in a relationship or organizational set. Some social expectations are formally detailed in a third party media such as written contracts or moral and legal codes. Some are simply assumed, believed or understood by the parties based on personally generated ideas defining what the social situation is all about. Of course, problems arise when any of these terms are violated or perceived to be violated. The severity of the problem is directly proportional to the disconnects between informal expectations and/or the severity of any violations of written agreements, laws or culturally enshrined moral behaviors.

Ultimately, the cause of evil is spiritual in nature and rooted in the metaphysical structure of the universe as well as being strongly affected by the activities taking place in the metaphysical realm of reality. The three material classes of evil listed above relate to how evil manifests its presence in the lives of people as experienced on earth throughout time. At this point, I will expand my description of each of them:

1. **Institutional Evil** imposed, inspired or encouraged by human sociocultural institutions.

Institutional means socioculturally organized evil perpetrated by a group of people through the practice of a set of behaviors executed in conformity with their socially referenced authority figure, which could be a political, business, family or religious leader. Institutional Evil usually sources from a false ideology perpetrated to effect a power concentrating false reality for a beneficial identity group of adherents. Hitler's Nazism is a good example of Institutional Evil from relatively recent history. There have been many others. Institutional, structural or systemic racism is another good example of Institutional Evil at work.

No religion, educational system, government, political, philosophical or social movement is immune from the possible practice of Institutional Evil. The participants in Institutional Evil usually believe that they are doing a good thing when, in fact, they are serving the powers of deprivation, destruction and death instead of abundance, peace and life. Presence of Institutional Evil is proved when an organization must force its members to conform to its rules of behavior and/or belief

structures. The force applied is most social in nature but may also be material. Members who disagree with the ruling social order risk of their own position or social status within the organization - perhaps even to the point of risking their biological survival, which is when the institutional compulsion becomes material.

2. **Psychobiological Evil** derived from the structure of biological human consciousness.

As related in Chapter 7, James 2:26 reveals the structure of human life: a material or physical body made conscious by the life force or breath of life, the union of which creates a third entity called the soul. Souls are naturally mortal because death separates the body from the spirit or life force. While the flesh is neutral in regards to matters of good and evil, its function creates appetites or energy needs. Since the life force is an indivisible, gradient meld of good and evil in various proportions that ultimately balance to a null, no deed or thought can be purely good or purely evil.

Accompanying these natural pulls of the flesh and mind is the very human proclivity to self deception. We rationalize our thoughts and behaviors according to self determined or socially inherited/adopted standards of what is right or what is wrong. We persuade ourselves that our chosen definitions for what is good or evil, love or hate are the true ones. Often this process relies on submitting to or identifying with sociocultural institutions (a religious organization, philosophical school of thought, social/humanitarian movement or political party, for example) as reference authorities that confirm morals and beliefs already held dear (or newly chosen). This process is founded on and is sourced from the natural spiritual strength of one's psychological conviction, moral necessity and/or social acceptance preferences.

Because it is sourced in the life force, the net product of human self deception is the creation of a god to reflect our synthesized standard of love (definition of good and evil). Usually any person's concept of God represents a subset of a collectively shared sociocultural image. By making "God" in one's own image, the need to repent and change is eliminated or melded into something humanly chosen rather than divinely imposed. This subtle pride elevates the mortal conscious identity above the need of submitting to the externally determined, eternal definitions of love, goodness or righteous that compose ultimate reality, the true Creator God. To be fair, no one grasps the fullness of the true God or ultimate reality. Any vision or attempt will fall short - even my own; however, the intrinsic nature of the submission to ultimate reality's definitions process differs significantly, which I will discuss in chapter 9.

Thus, undisciplined human nature is a naturally human source of evil. We superimpose our own standards and needs above, over, mixed with and in place of the transcendently true metaphysical definitions of ultimate goodness in order to sustain a fleeting mortal identity existence that relies on biological self preservation. Fleshly survival drives and the primacy of one's mortal identity motivate thoughts and actions that ignore eternal considerations. Humans naturally perceive artificial realities of the material realm as more tangible than the spiritual substance of ultimate reality. Ego definition, preservation and extension impose prideful acts to control our destiny of ascendancy above others. At the other extreme, we may fearfully conform to the institutions of evil in an exercise of false humility. We may embrace self implosion to a desired nirvana of nothingness in search of existence suffering relief. Some who do so fall under the dominance of destructive spirits that feed off of the human life force. These imploding egos may actively take others with them also. Either extreme, and all points in between, deny God's purpose for human life. It is a rejection of surrendering control to his divine will expressed in his Word as mediated by his Spirit.

3. **Intentional Evil** perpetrated by a person's decision to think and/or do evil.

A minority of people just do what they want for what they can seize for themselves now in this life. Throughout history, many such individuals became cultural heroes or the icons of their nation. They exert a personal force so strong that they create their own standards of goodness, which may be adopted and imitated by others. This is a soft kind of intentional evil, as opposed to those hard cases who consciously choose to create, plan and do what this small number and everyone else knows is darkly evil instead of good.

These persons are not deceived or confused about what is good or evil: they simply do not care about the consequences of this choice because they love evil despite knowing about goodness. They identify with evil as who he or she is and reject goodness for it becoming evil. The opened eyed choices and actions of evil in this life eternally condemn those who choose evil as their identity in this life. Remember, intentionally evil people know true goodness but neither continue to attempt nor desire to do it. The biblical Antichrist or "Beast" fits this category, which is why they are directly thrown into the Lake of Fire and skip the Last Judgment, which seems to take the historical issues of institutional evil and deception into consideration. (Revelation 19:20 compared with 20:11-15)

Some may consciously choose to serve or harmoniously identify with Satan or some other fallen angel with open eyes as to whom they serve, but most who serve fallen spirits are deceived. Their choices are made not for the love of evil but for some form of good, even if it is merely the promise of some material or social benefit. They believe that they obey, wor-

ship and engage in the natural or ancestral spiritual powers of their heritage, which are perceived as insights into the ultimate truths revealed to humanity by their "true" God or gods. They participate in what seems to be the only spiritual power available to them, or at least it seems to be right as determined by human logic and perception.

What they find and practice are forms of natural spirituality, which by definition and structure remains a melded gradient of good and evil. A deceived choice of evil is not an intentional, conscious and free choice of evil: it is confused. The promised material and/or spiritual, and often delivered in whole or in part. Some accomplish significant harmonization with their persona spiritual guides and/or god(s) so that they evidence exceptional levels of spiritual power significantly subject to their own desires, choices and will. Such spiritual powers come from an assisting demonic being or spiritual guide that provides access to greater concentrations of the life force through knowledge and/or mediating efficacy often accompanied by ritual.

Evil exists temporarily – for now, because God established a system that can produce morally incorrupt beings who will not take advantage of the grace and power of His love for selfish gain and exaltation when they enter into eternity. Only God knows how to live happily for eternity, and He requires that all beings there agree with His definitions of love, peace, joy and justice that compose the reality of the 12th dimension or Third Heaven.

But there is a problem. How does a holy, just and loving, God elevate deceived human beings bound in the temporal material realm of the life force into his presence of eternal light? The problem demands a mediating solution, an efficacious and immutably permanent system of identity purification and transfer, and Jesus is the person born for that job. He is unique in the universe for multiple, essential roles in a manner guaranteed to succeed. One of those roles involves the elimination of Institutional Evil through a dual process of material revelation and destructive elimination.

The End of Institutional Evil

The Kingdom of Darkness is the ultimate metaphysical institution of evil. During the great temptation by the devil in Matthew 4, Jesus did not deny that Satan could make him the ruler of all the world's nations. (v. 8-9) Satan could make this offer because he is the god of this age/world. To one degree or another, Satan's kingdom is responsible for every sin and evil committed, thus it must be eliminated for justice to be served and to fulfill God's plan of preparing a heavenly kingdom of eternal beings on earth.

Jesus returns soon to humanity's dimension of space and time to materially reveal and remove institutional evil from the earth. His birth, life, death and resurrection nearly 2,000 years ago guaranteed the ultimate success of achieving those objectives as well as setting them into motion. Jesus' life on earth as a Jew living under Roman domination spiritually revealed what is good, which automatically exposed evil and the evil

one – just as light exposes darkness – to those who are graced with spiritual discernment. (John 3:19-21) Jesus' death and resurrection began the multidimensional process of mediating human identity transformation by satisfying justice through his atoning shed blood so that the truly repentant might receive through faith the graceful gift of God's Spirit of truth and understanding.

Satan's dominion currently remains hidden from direct mortal perception, but that will not always be the case. How can people fight an enemy they cannot see? The Bible reveals Satan the devil's many disguises and roles in the evils of this age, but most people remain blinded to the ultimate spiritual cause of humanity's Institutional Evils.

At the beginning of time Lucifer the Light Bringer rebelled becoming the Adversary, Satan. His rebellion created the Kingdom of Darkness, which seems to have organized one third of all the angels into a rebellious hierarchy ordered according to the cosmos. The leading angel of light became the Dark Mediator. Not only did his rebellion insert the deviant dark light of evil into the life force so that it became an indivisible mixture of good and evil instead of pure goodness, his kingdom remains actively engaged in deceiving and inspiring further rebellion against God among the human nations. Here is a list of the Enemy's role titles:

- Father of Lies (John 8:44)
- Adversary (1Peter 5:8)
- God of this World/ Age (2Corinthians 4:4)
- Prince of the Power of the Air (Ephesians 2:2)
- Angel of Light (2Corinthians 11:13-15)
- Beelzebub, Prince of Demons (Matthew 12:22-29)

War in heaven already rages because the appointed time draws near when Satan's evil empire will be exposed and deposed by the Creator Lord of Hosts. The Bible tells of an Apocalypse or Great Tribulation coming upon all nations of the world, as armies of righteous angels led by Michael, the great archangel of Israel, force the demons of hell out of the metaphysical realm, down through one dimension of lowered energy bandwidth to another until their terrible armies materialize on earth as described in the book of Revelation. They will be exposed so that all flesh alive may finally comprehend the source of all evil and how humanity has been deceived. Humans will materially perceive the nature of the metaphysical battle that has taken place throughout history even as the Son of God becomes unmistakably manifest as well. As the returning King of Israel and King of Kings, Yeshua/Jesus must first remove the existing god of this age and the Kingdom of Darkness so that the Kingdom of Light may be established.

Defining death as the absence of energy rationally necessitates that the total absence of all energy is preceded by its reduction. The reduction of energy levels in the metaphysical realm forces the fallen spiritual beings to descend or fall through the eleventh to sixth dimensions existing at intensities beyond the speed of light until they are forced across the fifth dimension boundary of time and the life force (temporal spiritual

power) to eventually materialize in the physical realm just prior to their destruction at the presence of the conquering Messiah Yeshua/Jesus. Except for Satan, who is reserved in an abyss cut off from the life force for a thousand years, the defeated demons are presumably cast into the lake of fire along with the Beast and False Prophet. (Matthew 25:41; 2Peter 2:17; Jude 12-13 and Revelation 19:20-20:3, 10) Further commentary on the judgment of angels and humans comes in the following chapters.

Only after the Kingdom of Darkness is removed may peace come to people of good will on earth. Now comes the promised age of the Messianic Kingdom, the establishment of Institutional Good in the place of the Institutional Evil humanity has known since Adam and eve's expulsion from Eden. The kingdoms of this world become those of the Messiah Son of God. Instead of social institutions of governments, education and religion powered by the life force through humans dominated by Satan, God will impose his divine government over all peoples. Unlike his previously invisible reign over the children of Israel begun under Moses, God will be visible in his Son and the resurrected saints who rule under him over nations of mortal people for one thousand years.

The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.
Now it will come about that
In the last days
The mountain of the house of the LORD
Will be established as the chief of the mountains,
And will be raised above the hills;
And all the nations will stream to it.
And many peoples will come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
That He may teach us concerning His ways
And that we may walk in His paths."
For the law will go forth from Zion
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
And He will judge between the nations,
And will render decisions for many peoples;
And they will hammer their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks
Nation will not lift up sword against nation,
And never again will they learn war. (Isaiah 2:1-4)

The people who walk in darkness
Will see a great light;
Those who live in a dark land,
The light will shine on them.
You shall multiply the nation,
You shall increase their gladness;
They will be glad in Your presence
As with the gladness of harvest,
As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.
For You shall break the yoke of their burden and the
staff on their shoulders,

The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian.
For every boot of the booted warrior in the battle tumult,
And cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel
for the fire.

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

There will be no end to the increase of His government
or of peace,
On the throne of David and over his kingdom,
To establish it and to uphold it with justice and
righteousness from then on and forevermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.
(Isaiah 9:2-7)

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse,
And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.
The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and strength,
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the
LORD.
And He will delight in the fear of the LORD,
And He will not judge by what His eyes see,
Nor make a decision by what His ears hear;
But with righteousness He will judge the poor,
And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth;
And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.
Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins,
And faithfulness the belt about His waist.
And the wolf will dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard will lie down with the young goat,
And the calf and the young lion and the fawn together;
And a little boy will lead them.
Also the cow and the bear will graze,
Their young will lie down together,
And the lion will eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra,
And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den.
They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain,
For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
As the waters cover the sea.
Then in that day
The nations will resort to the root of Jesse,
Who will stand as a signal for the peoples;
And His resting place will be glorious.

(Isaiah 11:1-10)

Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first
resurrection; over these the second death has no power,
but they will be priests of God and of Christ and
will reign with Him for a thousand years.

(Revelation 20:6)

During the millennial age, social institutional pressures to do wrong will be removed. The economy will be structured to function fairly, and true judgment according to just law will resolve any disputes. All institutional organizations of war will cease with the end of warfare. Human administrations or local and regional governments will operate under the supervision of incorruptible members of God's spiritual kingdom. Human beings everywhere will have no social or educational excuses for sins and deeds less than good. While the natural life force continues to power mortal lives, access to God's Holy Spirit becomes unimpeded because of the end to religious confusion.

Fleshly weaknesses will still require discipline. During the millennium, people will be able to sin, do bad things or even to choose evil, but those decisions and actions will be more freely made than today. In fact, they will be made in open opposition to social institutions designed by God to encourage lifeways that are essentially good. In other words, external conformity to good behavior will be socially encouraged and supported. Religious confusion, social pressures to conform to immoral or greedy policies and governmental oppression will cease with the termination of its perpetrators - the present Kingdom of Darkness with its human agents and enablers.

Problems in Choosing Good

The good balance and structural problems of human goodness due to the nature of the life force.

incomplete.

Harmonic Principles of Spiritual Mediation

I have never lost the initial wonder I had as a child when I first saw, heard and felt harmonics demonstrated with two tuning forks. The teacher held identical tuning forks, one in each hand. When she hit one of them against the desk, both vibrated and gave off sound. If she stopped, the tuning fork she had initially struck, the second one continued to hum until all of its power had dissipated. Much can be learned about spiritual mediation and the transfer of spiritual energy from the study of musical harmonics. I can only begin to develop the harmonic principles important to the search for spirituality as revealed by this mathematically based science, which is also used in optics as well as sound.

Harmonic principles dramatically demonstrate the vital importance of each role played in the exercise of spirituality, including the identity of the mediator, the nature of the medium employed as well as the nature and conscious modifications made by the player-participant. Again, I find a review of definitions helpful in understanding the concepts being described:

har·mon·ic (här-mŏn'ik)⁷

1. Use as an adjective

⁷ harmonics. (n.d.). The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition. Retrieved July 02, 2007, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/harmonics>.

- a. Of or relating to harmony.
 - b. Pleasing to the ear: harmonic orchestral effects
 - c. Characterized by harmony: a harmonic liturgical chant.
2. Of or relating to harmonics.
 3. Integrated in nature.

1. Use as a noun

- a. Any of a series of musical tones whose frequencies are integral multiples of the frequency of a fundamental tone.
 - b. A tone produced on a stringed instrument by lightly touching an open or stopped vibrating string at a given fraction of its length so that both segments vibrate. Also called overtone, partial, partial tone.
2. Harmonics (used with a sing. verb): The theory or study of the physical properties and characteristics of musical sound.
 3. Physics: A wave whose frequency is a whole-number multiple of that of another.

resonance (rĕz'ō-nens)⁸

Oscillation induced in a physical system when it is affected by another system that is itself oscillating at the right frequency. For example, a swing will swing to greater heights if each consecutive push on it is timed to be in rhythm with the initial swing. Radios are tuned to pick up one radio frequency rather than another using a resonant circuit that resonates strongly with the incoming signal at only a narrow band of frequencies. The soundboards of musical instruments, contrastingly, are designed to resonate with a large range of frequencies produced by the instrument.

Specialized scientists devote whole careers to subdisciplines of harmonics. It is a vast area of study that applies not only to sound but to the whole electromagnetic spectrum. The Internet Age would be impossible without it because harmonics gives us the rules to use in optical transmission of data and all forms of telecommunication from voice to multimedia. Its recorded study goes back to ancient Greece, and I do not think that Pythagoras was the first one to make discoveries about it, but Pythagorean Tuning refers to low whole integer (number) ratios. The phenomena of multiphonics and overtones provide specific insights into the complex influences of spiritual forces.

Resonance is the particular quality demonstrated by those tuning forks that so fascinated me as a child. It refers to the situation where a system's natural frequency attunes it to absorb energy oscillating at that system's frequency or a multiple of it. Nature resonates in that all life

⁸ resonance. (n.d.). The American Heritage® Science Dictionary. Retrieved July 02, 2007, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/resonance>.

reacts to instinctive or learned patterns of sensual stimuli. Animals differentiate between calls of their own species and others, which influences their behavior.

The Fournier Series is a mathematically based set of formulaic tools used to analyze the periodic functions of acoustics and optics used in compressing, sending and processing data, such as in telecommunications. I submit that systems of electromagnetic signal or data transmission and reception find strong parallels in the operation of the life force as well as the divine spirit of light. The universe is full of omnipresent and competing electromagnetic energies vibrating in a seemingly infinite range of frequencies. Receivers discriminate against most of it by focusing on a particular channel as defined by a narrow frequency range.

Spectroscopy breaks down the digital frequency components of light energy to identify the chemical substances of stars and other samples. Interestingly, Fournier originally developed these insights working with heat conductivity. Refer back to the section, **Death Defined Systemically** for the obvious implications when biological life energy is equated with heat. Also of note here, the Bible and other spiritual literature often refer to angels as stars, which by analogy I understand that they are re-transmitters of spiritual power at particular sets of frequencies.

To begin the application of these concepts to our lives, think of a human being as being a stringed instrument (or other musical instrument, which would change the specifics of this analogy). The bouts (the shaped hollow soundboard and back), neck and pegbox (of a violin, viola, cello, etc.) are like our bodies. They come in different sizes and qualities of wood, varnish and other components. They may be externally modified to some extent, repaired and refurbished, but they essentially perform the function of catching the vibrations produced by bowing or plucking the strings and sounding them into the atmosphere mixed by its built-in qualities of resonance derived from the quality of its components and craftsmanship.

The strings may be plucked and/or bowed being set by the fingers at variable intervals of length. How the musician plays the strings is analogous to how we psychospiritually or mentally (consciously or unconsciously, the latter through habit and simple reaction to external factors) engage life, which is to modulate the life force by our decisions and execute them through our bodies. The two put together create the music of our lives, which is broadcast as our distinct pattern, or set of frequencies, in that medium. Just as cables carry many digitized channels on one stream of electromagnetic energy, so the lives of all humanity are concurrently carried at the light speed of time elapsed to the ends of the universe.

I make the association with angels and harmonics due to a couple of Bible verses in particular. The second one of these insightful verses was quoted above about Lucifer. The first one refers to the "morning stars" and "sons of God" singing. Both references are to angels. Sons of God may be made, as in the case of angels and Adam, or born as in the case of Jesus. Context determines meaning. All languages depend on context to one degree or another. In the spectrum of languages, Hebrew

is more contextual than many, including almost all western languages. The “singing” obviously refers to music.

When the morning stars sang together
And all the sons of God shouted for joy? (Job 38:7)

You were in Eden, the garden of God;
Every precious stone was your covering:
The ruby, the topaz and the diamond;
The beryl, the onyx and the jasper;
The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald;
And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and
sockets,
Was in you. (Ezekiel 28:13)

Alternate translations render the last part of this second verse as:

- “the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes” (KJV);
- “your settings and your sockets and engravings” (Amplified);
- “your settings and mountings” (NIV);

So we have Lucifer covered with various precious gems and equipped with light-golden musical resonance chambers of variable setting. Obviously, music was played through the “settings and sockets,” and I deduce that spiritual light energy was played through the crystals and gems. These various crystals permitted him to select frequencies out of the main inflow of life force energy and mix them to deliver messages and other input data. As related above, since Lucifer was an angel mediator transfer device and not a source of energy, all the music and light coming from him was rebroadcast. He claimed to be the source, but he was not.

The life force itself is a digital, metaphysical analog to electromagnetic energy or light. Laws of optics give insights to how it works. Based on a number of biblical passages, light is also used as a symbol of the Spirit of the Creator God of Israel, so at least some of these principles may be extended in attempting to understand the Holy Spirit. People are spiritually attuned to a variety of transmissions stations. There are no exceptions. You cannot play no station as the receiver is always one as long as a person, or an animal, is alive. One’s tuning selection, volume and timing of listening affect our spiritual journey. These foundational scientific principles will be expounded in chapter 9 to aid the searcher in spiritual identity transformation.

Biblical Trail of Mediators

The Bible was written by at least 40 different authors over thousands of years, yet it communicates a consistent spiritual story of God’s plan for humanity within the context of the history of the universe. Both “Old” and “New” Testaments are fully compatible on all major points. Such consistency over the space of ages, dozens of authors and two different dispensations (for lack of a better term) testifies of one author in common, one spiritual source of information. The source claims to be the

Creator of heaven and earth, the angels and all humanity. He claims to have a plan for eternity, and he has revealed and developed it over at least 4,500 years.

I think it useful to consider the story of its development as a trail of mediators. These persons wrote a record of what God revealed to them and their experiences with Him. From our perspective late in the program, it is much easier to see what was going on at each stage along the way and why. Here I want to give just the briefest overview to provide broad context. A little later, I will focus on the mediators that most affect our present day search for spirituality and the objectives of their mediation.

1. Adam
2. Noah
3. Abraham
4. Moses
5. David
6. Yeshua/Jesus
7. The Apocalypse

Israel as Mediator to the Nations

Identifies only true God/Creator (John 4:22) because only nation with the Creator's covenant. (Ephesians 2:10-12) Deuteronomy 14:2;

Temple

One Covenant: Two Dimensions

Sons of Jacob/Sons of Israel, physical and metaphysical, life force and Holy Spirit.

Different order and timing of fulfillment.

One Mediator Between Time and Eternity

For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach...(Colossians 1:9-22)

Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. (Hebrews 2:14-16)

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. (1Timothy 2:5)

To humans and not angels. Death and the model. Liberation from mortality comes only from substitution of spirits. The nature of right spiritual conformity. Restoration of Eden's choice, Second Adam.

Israel's Mediator to the Nations

Yeshua fulfills job assigned in Ex 19 and prepares a people for millennium.

King of kings. Ultimate test of self-deception when Devil is not around.

Mediator of the Holy Spirit

Faith means identify with the Voluntary Death Releases an eternal life giving spirit. Two gods: two men (old 7 new). Choose God and conform image to Him by submitting body.

Mediation of Marriage

Parents as Mediators of Life

We don't formally think of our parents as spiritual mediators, but they are the most important ones in our lives. Life begins in the mother's womb, and that beginning is a spiritual event by its intrinsic nature of being life. There a body is created genetically and prepared to receive the breath of life at birth. In the interim, the fetus shares the mother's life force and psychobiological health. Over the last decades, the medical profession has caught up a bit with this fact and begun to emphasize a mother's health and habits during pregnancy impact the lifelong development of the new person formed within her. The Digital Spirituality model projects that further research on these earliest stages of life will reveal even more interconnections and links between what goes on in the life of a pregnant mother and the lifelong characteristics of the offspring born. All life is sacred and everything pertaining to it because without it we have the nothingness of death.

At birth's first breath, the life force directly animates the baby directly rather than being mediated through the mother's body. The parents' roles change. From birth, parents mediate the issues of the life force through the engagement and interpretation of reality for the child. The responsibility is broad in application ranging from recognizing and telling truth to walking in the woods to gather edible berries. Parents intentionally and unintentionally transfer their own concepts of reality to their children as well as mediating the influence of their culture/society on them. The parents' biases, both shared and conflicted, are infused into the child's or children's psyche. The parents' individual and shared artificial realities are absorbed by the youngest children without resistance or question of their validity. As a child matures, he or she increasingly forms his or her own artificial reality, which may be closer or more distant from the truth of ultimate reality.

Parents' biggest spiritual challenges as mediators comes in two areas:

1. Recognizing what their own version of reality looks like with most of its values, habits and assumptions is perhaps the most difficult. None of us can be sufficiently objective about ourselves alone, which is a primary reason why the creation's design provides two parents. Life includes the mundane as well as the profound. Furthermore, no person is an island. We live within subcultural islands of cultural continents constantly shifting position and form within the artificial reality of civilization, which has rapidly become globalized at depths of social and spiritual impact not fully recognized or understood.
2. Managing the outsourcing of our mediation responsibilities is the second challenge. From antiquity, governments and religious organizations have recognized the importance of spending time with our children to conform their attitudes, habits

and biases to the purposes of the social institution involved. The rapid growth and infiltration of electronic media into everyday life has made it even easier for parents to outsource their children's minds and hearts to others in an indirect manner. Many of today's social problems derived from parental neglect of their mediating responsibilities in this area: parental attitudes and habits have not kept up with the changes in technology's impact on our psyches. Neither have they kept up with their governments' or churches' agendas in education of youth. In their pursuit of materialistic goals, parents have neglected their spiritual responsibilities as mediators of reality by too easily outsourcing their children to youth professionals or to the narrow-dimensional cult of peers.

Obviously, if we do not invest ourselves in our own search or spirituality, we will fail in our mediating roles as parents to our children, no matter how much we love them. Our own artificial realities greatly impact those of our children, and both children and parents are mostly overwhelmed by the fast-paced, deeply pervasive changes taking place in society. The chaos of global materialism has sucked us into the maw of its whirling pool of economic, political, social and spiritual currents. The almost universally passive and semi-conscious acceptance of Globalism's impersonally all-inclusive regimen evidences populations that are spiritually asleep.

Children do not start out that way. They are taught by us to become as us. Most adults fall psychospiritually asleep one small step at a time. We surrender responsibility for one small area of life at a time as taught by psychological, social and physical experience. Spiritual sleep comes about from being traumatized by survival driven fears or from becoming addicted to the dreams of materialism's artificial phantasms of life's essence and purpose. There is a substitution of perceived immediate necessity or sensual gratification for transcendent purpose and well-being. Because we do not understand the history of humanity or the structure of life in the universe, we do not have the proper bearings to escape the maelstrom of temporal materialism, nor do we satisfactorily execute our responsibility to mediate reality and spirituality to our children. Indeed, each person must accept and exercise personal responsibility for one's life regardless of a parent's absence, perverted presence or loving job well done. As mediators, parents possess limits to their responsibilities for their children, which naturally should change over time as each child grows within the context of biological health.

Besides being too ready to accept the conveniences of outsourcing the mediation of their children's reality, parents also need to consciously address the facts that what a society, government or church envisions for their children may not be what is best for them within the context of ultimate reality or God's purpose for human life. Part of this process is the recognition that all organizations effect a disconnect between stated objectives and methods of childcare or education. In other words, a parent can screen for a match between their own values and objectives and those of an organization or youth professional and still neglect the outcome reality of their programs.

A church may have a youth program ostensibly purposed to teach spiritual and social values and behavior and fail at those objectives. Public education has failed to deliver improved learning despite repeatedly increased funding and the implementation of ever-improved teaching methods and tools. Charismatic youth pastors or teachers may not mediate your children's engagement of reality and life to positive spiritual, or even material, outcome. Parents can never surrender their mediating responsibilities to another just as they should share them. No one can be everything to another person. A parent or set of parents cannot be so for any child or children, but neither can they largely surrender the necessary bothersome burden of parenting to another. We can only do so in reserved part, within a consciously considered context of increasing the chances for a child's growth in positive directions.

Every program must be judged by its fruits. This cannot be a mere exercise in objective measurements of results because the human dimension is not purely objective. Furthermore, one needs to consider the individual needs and abilities of each child. When it comes to children, everything is an experiment, and risk will never be completely eliminated. Children must take responsibility for what they learn and for their moral decisions. Parents need to sort through the fog of real reasons, convenient excuses, fears of inadequacy and myths of social or spiritual value to better mediate their children's engagement of the real world, minimization of artificial realities, experience of life and a general orientation to their own searches for spirituality and unique identity creation as vitally conscious and happily engaged persons of spiritual balance.

Honest human relationships are essential catalysts in the search for spiritual balance. The global culture favors a materialist perspective. It obsesses on death with irrational fascination and on partial death with addicted frenzy. "Not so!" you might say. "Society has never been more alive, and global urbanism is where the action is most excitingly dynamic." Comments and thoughts along these lines are passionately held, for strong is the delusion of life out of balance. Decisions towards death usually do not bring immediate death, rather desperate people are driven to biochemical and mental addiction to life lived to the excess. A candle burned at both ends burns out in less than half the time it lasts when burned at one end only. Excessively compressing life into the present moment supercharges a pursued "high" with concentrated good feelings and an exciting experience of raw psychospiritual and/or biophysical power. Life in the fast lane reaches its end too soon and permits fewer conscious choices during the explosive rush into the box canyon wall or over the towering cliff.

Youth is more susceptible to the bright lights of darkness's decoy. If parents have invested their time, thought and energy in building deep relationships with their children, then they are better able to mediate the balance of life. From the practical angle of it all, this means reducing the amount of parental outsourcing and being very picky when doing so. It does not mean overprotection or over control. It does mean exposure of children to both sides of an issue or multiple perspectives of psychospiritual reality from a known parental context that is stable and understood by the children. It does not mean that parents must

have all of the answers. It also means, for example, that parents should only participate in spiritual contexts that include and engage the whole family. Of course, this generalization does not apply to every activity, exercise, discussion group or worship service. Some engagement may certainly be peer focused, but that cannot how most of the time is spent or familial relationships are sacrificed. The sacrifice of deep and honest parent-child relationships ruins the chances for successful spiritual mediation at almost any level because the child only senses hypocrisy.

Remember, natural spirituality reveals the yin-yang, dark-light, female-male balance of the life force. Movement to yin-yin or yang-yang represents a series of decisions towards death, even though the excitement of those decisions delivers a psycho-sensual delusion of life. A choice of excess creates automatic imbalance. Choosing the present rush creates a future void, and both extremes are dangerous. They present addiction or depression challenges that most cannot control or manage – even with help.

Matching extremes of life produce no lasting fruit, and opposing extremes a consuming void. Parents unwilling to move towards the balance point (from where their lives are currently positioned in the web of the dark-light charged force field of life) neutralize their mediating capacity and endanger their children and anyone else bound to them socially. Over thousands of years, human cultures have moderated the parent's roles as mediators of life through the socially defined institution of marriage, which purpose was to protect and nourish the relationship between the parents, the husband(s) and the wife/wives. Marriage is the original social contract upon which all others were built.

Spiritual Professionals

Spiritual professions range in public stature and area of spiritual specialty from the Catholic Pope in Rome to the part-time Tarot card reader at a community fair. Each mediates spiritual power, care and/or teaching in some form. Some unabashedly make a business of it, while for others it is a "calling." Some give their services away but graciously accept tokens of appreciation, while others post a fee schedule. Some use inanimate objects as tools or aids in the delivery of treatment or services, others do not. Some represent long-established cultural traditions or religious movements, while others innovate new applications of old principles of spiritual mediation.

Almost all of them touch aspects of natural spirituality to some degree. Some engage, contact or appeal to metaphysical spirit beings for assistance. The borders between all of these professional approaches to spirituality are very blurred. The authenticity of spiritual contact is rightly debated and tested because many hucksters are in the promotion and delivery of spiritual services for the money and/or status alone. Many thousands, if not millions, are capable of purposed contact with spirit beings, and most of the resulting metaphysical entanglements possess latent potential for real harm.

Their job is to bring those who come to them into harmony with the spiritual powers they work with. In accordance with the brief discussion on spiritual harmonics above, spiritual professionals profess knowledge

of and skill in particular techniques or approaches to life that are supposed to help the seeker become more spiritually attuned to the forces, information or other forms of help available. Typically, people search out spiritual professionals when they are facing critical problems that they are forced to deal with but feel incapable of doing so on their own. Family, friends or other social options may not be seen as appropriate or were tried and failed. It could be a health problem, a family issue or dealing with internal doubts and fears. Regardless, the petitioner seeking professional spiritual help is usually vulnerable and/or desperate to one degree or another.

When the broad scope of natural spirituality is considered, professionals you might not at first consider spiritual mediators emerge as being so indeed. Natural spirituality transcends all of life and how it is lived from the individual's inward thoughts to Globalism's uncontrolled takeover of the planet, which means that the world is filled with millions of professional people mediating the delivery of spiritual benefits in the form of essential, life giving products and services. Wherever a business or charitable organization touches life, its health, repair and sustenance, then it at least touches the spectrum of natural spirituality. This is too broad an application of mediation for the scope of this book, but I wished to acknowledge it here because in the end we all have the opportunity to mediate spirituality to others if we choose to do so. The fact that so many are already engaged in this important undertaking without consciously thinking about it as such just makes this book's usefulness the more relevant.

A couple of obvious observations are warranted here. First, the very plenitude of spiritual professions complexes the search for spirituality. The world of professional spiritual mediators is chaos. With some validity, I could be accused of adding another option to the chaos! The fact that perhaps the majority are not legitimate, and the fact that perhaps most of the legitimate mediators work within the medium of the life force, mean that the mathematical chances of transcending the present material realm are fairly slim. Thankfully, the truth that God cares increases one's chance of success. The revelation that the most powerful mediators of the life force work for the Dark Lord increases our awareness of the potential risks.

My second observation is that world has not become a better place for its abundance in spiritual mediators. That should tell us something important: it confirms that the bulk of the spiritual power being mediated is the null life force. No other conclusion can explain why the world is so full of both spiritual mediators and poverty, pain and oppression. Satan is the god of this world, and his plan is to destroy it and everything in it. Those who live their lives to that end are his agents regardless of what label they put on themselves, and I include Christian, Jewish and Moslem.

The search for transcendent mediation requires a god who intervenes in the affairs of men historically and prophetically and a holy book that records the same. To escape the bounds of temporality, we must find a mediator that can connect us with eternity. Such a mediator would know the past and the future, for that is the nature of eternity. Given the structure of time dependant on light speed and a universe that can con-

digital spirituality

tain millions of years of light speed, eternity is the only perspective that can give you the overview of history and prophecy – the full timeline.

This capability contrasts with the potential for short-term prophecies postulated for the life force or the historical testimony of demons who were witnesses of the past, retaining explicit details of historic persons and events. Finally, the Inhabitor of Eternity must also be omnipotent because only omnipotence could transcend all 11 dimensions. An omnipotent God could also make sure that His prophecies are fulfilled. These factors among others led me to the God of Israel and the Bible.

Chapter 8 - Spiritual Mediators: Moving from Darkness to Light

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