

# Eternal Life in the Spirit World



Dietrich F. Seidel, and Jennifer P. Tanabe

# **Eternal Life in the Spirit World**

---

**Dietrich F. Seidel**  
**and**  
**Jennifer P. Tanabe**

Copyright © 2017 Dietrich F. Seidel and Jennifer P. Tanabe

All rights reserved.

Cover photo: Diesa Seidel

Artwork by Yuichi Tanabe

ISBN 978-1-387-40912-9

*Dedicated to all the Rhinebeck Continuing  
Education students who took the class “Life  
After Life,” and shared their deepest encounters  
with their loved ones in the other world.*



## Reflection on Death

Monseigneur Bougaud, Bishop of Angers, France  
(translated from the original French)

The great and sad mistake for some of us is to imagine that those that death has taken leave us. They do not leave us, they stay.

Where are they? In the shadow? Oh no, it is us who are in the shadow. They are next to us under the veil, more present than ever.

We do not see them, because the dark cloud envelops us, but they see us. They hold their beautiful eyes full of light fixed on our eyes full of tears.

Oh ineffable consolation, the dead are invisible beings, they are not absent.

I have often thought of what could best console those who weep. Here it is: It is faith in this real and uninterrupted presence of our dearest dead; it is the clear, penetrating intuition that, by death, they did not vanish, nor are they distant, nor even absent, but alive next to us, happy, transfigured, and having lost, in this glorious change, neither a delicacy of their soul, nor a tenderness of their heart, nor a preference for their love, but on the contrary, in these deep and sweet sentiments, having grown a hundred cubits.

Death for the “good” is the dazzling ascension in light, in power and in love.



## Table of Contents

|                                                               |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Introduction .....</b>                                     | <b>5</b> |
| <b>Part I: The Spiritual Dimension of Life .....</b>          | <b>9</b> |
| 1. The Nature of Our World.....                               | 11       |
| Essence and purpose .....                                     | 12       |
| Two realms .....                                              | 13       |
| Position of human beings .....                                | 16       |
| Spiritual realm .....                                         | 20       |
| 2. Evidence for the Existence of Spirit .....                 | 24       |
| Scriptures .....                                              | 24       |
| Near-Death Experiences .....                                  | 25       |
| 3. Angels .....                                               | 44       |
| 4. The Immortality of the Spirit .....                        | 48       |
| Insights from Greek philosophy .....                          | 49       |
| Uniqueness.....                                               | 51       |
| Non-material .....                                            | 52       |
| Love .....                                                    | 54       |
| 5. Relationship between the Spiritual and Physical Realms ... | 56       |
| More from Greek philosophy .....                              | 56       |
| Spirit and body interaction.....                              | 58       |
| External truth and internal truth.....                        | 61       |
| Spirit self and physical self.....                            | 62       |



|                                                                    |            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 6. The Purpose of Creation .....                                   | 65         |
| Resemblance .....                                                  | 66         |
| Image of God .....                                                 | 68         |
| Free will .....                                                    | 71         |
| Object partner for God's love .....                                | 73         |
| Dual purposes .....                                                | 74         |
| <b>Part 2: Preparation for Eternal Life in the Spiritual Realm</b> | <b>77</b>  |
| 7. Spiritual Laws .....                                            | 80         |
| Law of cosmic justice .....                                        | 82         |
| Law of giving and receiving .....                                  | 83         |
| Law of restitution .....                                           | 83         |
| Law of persecution .....                                           | 85         |
| 8. Spiritual Growth .....                                          | 88         |
| 9. Is there Spiritual Growth in the Spirit World? .....            | 93         |
| 10. What about Hell? .....                                         | 98         |
| Suicides .....                                                     | 99         |
| Judgment .....                                                     | 101        |
| <b>Part 3: Life in the Realm of Spirit.....</b>                    | <b>105</b> |
| 11. Living in the Spirit World .....                               | 109        |
| Spirit bodies .....                                                | 109        |
| World of beauty .....                                              | 113        |
| Daily activities .....                                             | 115        |
| Time and space .....                                               | 118        |

|                                                  |            |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 12. More about Angels.....                       | 121        |
| Purpose and appearance.....                      | 121        |
| Types of angels .....                            | 123        |
| 13. Returning Resurrection .....                 | 126        |
| 14. Eternal Marriage .....                       | 130        |
| 15. Communicating with the Spiritual Realm ..... | 133        |
| Signs, dreams and visions.....                   | 133        |
| Communication through a medium .....             | 137        |
| Writing letters to the ascended .....            | 145        |
| <b>Concluding Thoughts .....</b>                 | <b>151</b> |
| <b>Recommended Readings .....</b>                | <b>155</b> |
| <b>About the Authors .....</b>                   | <b>159</b> |



## Introduction

---

Like many people, I have come to enjoy reading books on life after death. I don't know if it is just curiosity, a desire to learn about our future, even if it is only fictionalized, that comes to us as we grow older and face the finitude of our physical lives and of those we love, or if this is due to development in our world view as humankind advances. Perhaps it is both.

There are some basic questions on this topic, many of which are answered, some consistently and others in different ways, in the various accounts of life after death that are available to us. These begin with the most basic, "Is there life after death?" and continue on through such issues as what form does it take, do we have a body, can we see, hear, smell etc., are there animals and plants, are there such places as heaven and hell, how is it determined where we go, can we "fly" through space and even time, where do we live, are couples together, where is God (if there is God) and how can we see/experience God. There is also the question of how we should prepare for our eternal life after our time on the earth has ended.

There is one serious problem with this topic that is insurmountable to most of us, namely, that we have not experienced life after death! This has not deterred philosophers and theologians from theorizing about the afterlife, and we can learn much from their work. However, there are many other authors who describe in detail the nature of the spiritual realm, as if they have been there. Such authors claim to be in communication with those who have had such experiences. In other words, they are in contact with the spirit(s) of some dead person(s), or they have interviewed people who have such communication. Alternatively, they or their interviewee had a near-death experience in which

their body was clinically dead and then was revived, with the person reporting a continuation of consciousness during that time period.

While I was writing an article on life after death,<sup>1</sup> it turned out that my colleague, Dietrich Seidel, was about to teach a class on this same subject. The first two parts of this book, “The Spiritual Dimension of Life” and “Preparation for Eternal Life in the Spiritual Realm,” are based on the lectures Dietrich gave in his class, entitled “Life After Life.” The voice of the text in these chapters is his; the “I” in these sections is Dietrich.

In these chapters Dietrich discusses the philosophical and theological background to our understanding of the spiritual realm. He points to numerous testimonies from near-death experiences that affirm the reality of our eternal spirit and the afterlife. He also mentions his own experiences with the spiritual realm. Additionally, the existence of spiritual beings, our ancestors as well as those called angels who did not experience a physical lifetime in this physical world, is also discussed.

Dietrich passed on into the spiritual realm in 2016. To learn more about his life, the reader is encouraged to study his Autobiography, which can be found in a recent publication of his work.<sup>2</sup>

The third part of this volume, “Life in the Realm of Spirit,” which I wrote, expands the theoretical understanding of the spiritual realm based on Unification Thought. It includes quotes from Sun Myung Moon and others on the relationship between life on earth and in the spirit world. Also included are several powerful testimonies of life in the realm of spirit; some are messages from Dietrich to his beloved wife

---

<sup>1</sup> The article “Life After Death” is included in the book *Contemplating Unification Thought* by Jennifer P. Tanabe, Lulu, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Jennifer P. Tanabe (ed.), *Unification Insights into Marriage and Family: The Writings of Dietrich F. Seidel*. Lulu, 2017.

Elisabeth and their children, Christopher and Diesa, as well as messages Elisabeth wrote to him. To learn more about their deep and eternal relationship the reader is encouraged to explore *Beloveds, Forever Together: Letters of Eternal Love* by Dietrich and Elisabeth Seidel (Lulu, 2017).

A final thought for this brief introduction is that the world of spirit is not “over there” in some other place that we will experience only after we die. It is not just some afterlife; it exists now. Our eternal nature is spiritual, and the world of spirit is always with us; it is permanent. We are already living in the world of spirit.

Jennifer P. Tanabe, Ph.D.

Red Hook, New York

November, 2017



## **Part I: The Spiritual Dimension of Life**

---

By Dietrich F. Seidel

“Life after life” is a very profound topic because it concerns us all as human beings. We enter this topic with a certain awe, because whatever we say about it is always on the foundation of personal experience; it is testimony. It is something which stirs in us a certain awareness. It triggers our own universal values and what we can call our own original mind, the original feeling of who we are as human beings.

I would like to recount a story. It is very short, but it serves to introduce the spiritual dimension of our lives. The story is called “The Voice of an Angel” and it was written by James Pruitt:

Among the US Marines who fought against the Japanese in World War II was a 21-year-old corporal, William Devers, who considered himself an agnostic. No amount of arguing, Bible quoting or coercion by his fellow Marines or the chaplain could sway him. During the company’s first major encounter with the Japanese a number of the unit were killed and the chaplain was wounded. In great pain, the chaplain called to Devers: “My left pocket, take it please. Last night I had a dream. In the dream, an angel appeared and told me that I had to make you take the Bible. Take it son, please.” Davies shoved the Bible into his shirt pocket to satisfy the wounded man. Twenty minutes later Corporal Devers’ squad stumbled right into a Japanese patrol, and before he knew what had happened he was on the ground, his mind fading into darkness, certain he was dying. When he came



to, he felt a ripple of pain shoot through his chest. But there was no blood. The bullet had torn into the Bible he carried in his pocket, ending its journey at the Book of Psalms, which reads: “A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at the right hand. But it shall not come nigh thee.”

## 1. The Nature of Our World

We are very familiar with this physical world. We have all kinds of things around us, like desks and chairs and other human beings. We are just so used to it. On the other hand, we are less familiar with what we call the spiritual world. We should realize that our spirit, or soul,<sup>3</sup> is much more important than our physical body. The body is an instrument for the soul. We are here in this physical world so that we can grow and mature through our body. That body supplies all the sense knowledge around us. Through our body we have access to this world and have experiences that help us to grow.

---

**People tend to identify their life with their physical body; we need to be more aware of the spiritual dimension of life**

---

The problem we have today is that most people identify their life with the physical dimension. We are so busy to feed our body, to clothe it, to keep it sheltered; so much time is spent on our physical well-being. Somewhere in the back of our mind we realize we should also care about our spiritual well-being—we should feed our spirit with the right elements. We have our religious traditions. We go to church, we have our Bible readings, or Qur'an, or Upanishads, whatever our tradition may be. We hope to get insight, and we hope to understand more about that spiritual dimension in life. But overall, at least from my own experience, if I look at how much energy I spend for my physical well-being

---

<sup>3</sup> Note: There is much overlap in the concepts “soul” and “spirit,” although many authors distinguished between the two. In this text both terms are used, per their original authors. Here, the idea is that both soul and spirit refer to a noncorporeal entity, and are thus contrasted with physical matter, which includes the physical body. A distinction could be that only human beings have a soul; other beings may also exist in spirit but do not have the soul that is unique to humans.

and how much energy for my spiritual well-being, the scale always tips to the physical side.

As much as we affirm the physical dimension of life, at the same time we need to have a deeper understanding of the spiritual dimension. The more we understand the spiritual dimension, the better self-understanding we will have of who we are as human beings. This is not something that we have become aware of just in our own time, but it goes back to the most ancient times and the earliest philosophers. For example, the ancient Greeks, especially Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, the founders of our Western civilization, expressed views on what we call the spiritual world.

### **Essence and purpose**

In our daily life, if we take a chair, or a table, or whatever is in front of us, we see its external form. But behind this external form, there is what we could call an internal character. Every being, everything around us, has this basic duality or polarity. Of course, you could ask, so I see external form in a chair but what is the internal character? What makes a chair a chair? That's what Plato asked. And he said, it's an ideal form. He realized that behind the appearances, this physical world of appearances, there is a world of true essences and forms. And for Plato that is the real world.

---

**Everything has purpose, and the origin  
of that purpose is spiritual in nature**

---

On the other hand, there is the phenomenal world, this physical world that we are used to. Even the simplest thing, like a stone, it has a certain essence. It manifests a certain ideal, some form. Plato would say that form belongs to the real world, which is spiritual in nature.

More than that, we could say that the purpose of the things around us is also spiritual in nature. Everything which comes into existence is there for a certain purpose. We can say there is an original purpose involved, or there is a blueprint, or a certain essence. And the origin of that essence is spiritual in nature.

How do we fit into this simple scheme? We can say we have an original purpose. We ourselves have an external form, which would be for human beings, our body; and we have our mind, our spirit; and we have an original purpose. The more we understand and live by that original purpose, then the more good results we can bring about; the more we can feel fulfillment and happiness. That was already a concern of the ancient Greeks. How to achieve the good life, that was their big question. That was Socrates' constant question, how to live the good life. He said that the good life is accomplished if you live a virtuous life, if you live according to the virtues. This was the Greeks' simple formula for ethical conduct.

Virtues are one way to define an original purpose. We live by virtues. We can accomplish our original purpose by discovering in more depth how can we actually fulfill these virtues, these guidelines for good living. Without that, our striving for happiness is in vain; we would always miss the mark. The more clearly we can identify these guidelines for virtuous living, then the more we can actually accomplish our original purpose.

## **Two realms**

Going back to Plato, there is a real world and there is this phenomenal world. There is an external form and there is always an internal character to everything we encounter in the world. We as human beings are right in the middle: We have our physical body but we also have our spirit, and we need to find out how these two are related to each

other. What is the interaction between the two? There is constant interaction in our own being. We have our spirit and we have our physical body, but they are interacting.

Plato suggests that these two realms are in different dimensions: We have the physical dimension and we have the spiritual dimension; but still they are interacting. The spiritual realm represents the realm of purpose, the goal, our original purpose. We need to identify that. From that understanding we would receive guidance on how to live in this physical dimension, to live the good life, or to reach the happiness we are all looking for.

---

**There is the physical dimension and the  
spiritual dimension, and they interact**

---

In Plato's philosophy there is a separation between these two realms. He would say that the real world, the world of ideals, is superior. This is where everything should lead to, and this physical world is in a secondary position. He had the tendency to look down on the physical world.

Plato said the body is opposed to the soul. We feel the struggle, we want to live good, virtuous lives, but the body is a hindrance. Whatever ideal we have, the body is so demanding: It wants to be fed, it wants to be pampered and this and that, and then we are running all day long to fulfill the needs of the body. Then we are empty, we feel unfulfilled. That was Plato's original assessment, and he says in his dialogues, especially in the "Phaedo," that the soul is somewhat imprisoned in the body. Through reflection, through self-examination, we can find liberation of the soul. We can actually go beyond those bodily needs, and we can find some kind of dominion over the body.

This leads to a tendency to look down on the body and to see that in our corporeal existence, as we strive to grow and mature in this physical life, we can only approximate our original purpose. We can only reach the ideal forms as an approximation. We can never actually reach them. There is always a separation between that real world of the ideal forms and the phenomenal world in the physical dimension. There is still an essential separation here. Whatever happens in this phenomenal world, we can only manifest to a certain extent the original purpose which is given to us.

That depreciation of the bodily realm is one of the things which we inherited from the Greek thinkers. There is some correction needed, because obviously this body is a tremendous gift; it is wonderful, it obeys our commands, and it has its place, it fulfils a certain purpose. We have to re-examine the original Platonic position.

Aristotle, the student of Plato one generation later, made a correction. He said, whatever is the ideal form, whatever we find in this world, it can exist only because of the physical dimension. In other words, if I want to live a happy life, a fulfilled life, it can come about only through the unity of my spirit and my body. Only that harmony can bring true maturation and well-being.

---

**A happy life comes about through the  
unity of my spirit and my body**

---

For Aristotle, the value of the physical body was highlighted. He made that correction. He didn't speak about an imprisonment of the soul in the body, but he said the soul shows the potential, what we can be. And to actualize that potential we need to live out our values in this physical dimension, and as we do that we grow and mature. The function of the body then is to provide the elements for growth, and we mature by making unity with our body.

Philosophy is traditionally seen as the “handmaiden” for theology. It should provide the right questions; it should set up the needed categories to answer the important questions of life. We can see that these people who lived so long ago, 2,500 years ago, thought about life and reality, who are we as human beings, how can we understand this body-soul relationship. Their thought influences even today our thinking about the issue of how the spiritual realm relates to the physical realm.

What is important for us today is that we understand that we are essentially spiritual beings, we have a spirit. Actually, we **are** a spirit and we have a body. We are called to develop that spirit by using our body in the right way.

---

**We are essentially spiritual beings; we  
are a spirit and we have a body**

---

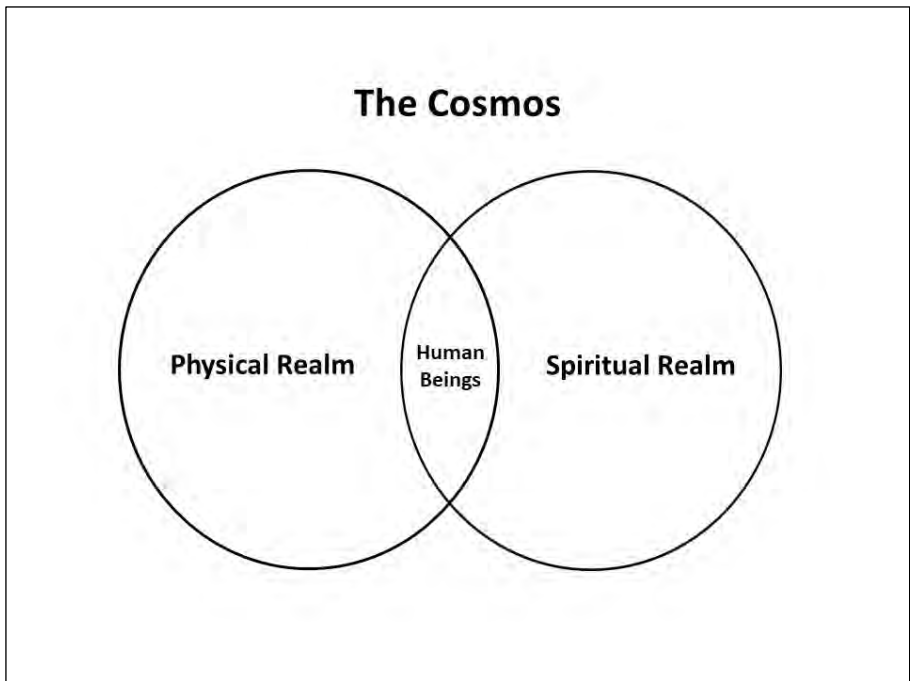
We should take care of our body because that’s the vehicle for our growth. If we neglect our body then we get sick and we get frustrated, and we get depressed; so, we need to have a healthy body. Plato wrote about the healthy soul in a healthy body. That is the initial step in admitting that there is a spiritual dimension.

### **Position of human beings**

Now, let’s take another look at creation. This whole magnificent universe is here in front of us, unfolding, and here we are as human beings evaluating that universe, trying to make sense out of it. There is this physical realm, and then we have the spiritual realm; that makes up the cosmos. Now, we are used to our physical senses and we speak a lot about sense knowledge. Our senses are always in contact with the world around us, and we form our ideas from these sense impressions. We start thinking and analyzing, we do science, we want to discover

more laws. We are quite familiar with this physical realm. There's no problem here.

But then alongside this physical realm there is the spiritual realm. There is that invisible realm which we are part of. Here in this area where there is an overlap, this is the area for us human beings (see Figure 1). You could say the human being is holding those two worlds together. We have a spirit, we are always living in the spiritual world, and we have a body and we are always connected with this physical world. In that sense, we represent a small edition of the whole cosmos, every one of us.



**Figure 1**

As human beings, we want to have the right self-understanding of what we are as human beings. We are at the center of the cosmos. Human beings are a microcosm. That means that all the laws and all the principles of the spiritual world are manifested in our own spirit. All



spiritual laws, all the actions and reactions, how spiritual growth should happen, how we can mature, all these conditions put together in an orderly fashion make up the spiritual laws, or the laws of the spiritual world. We, in our spirit, encapsulate those laws. They are all with us. Therefore, whatever emotion we feel, whatever desire we feel, it has to follow these spiritual laws.

On the other hand, our body is an encapsulation of all the physical laws. Laws of gravity, of cause and effect, the laws of quantum physics, biochemistry, everything is embodied in our own physical body. Thus, the human being is a microcosm of the spirit and of the body, and through their interaction the whole human being becomes the center of the cosmos, through which the exchange of the two worlds can be accomplished harmoniously. We are created as the mediator between the two realms, the center of harmony of the cosmos. Therefore, it is very important to have the right self-understanding of who we are as human beings.

---

**Human beings are created to be the mediator and center of harmony of the cosmos**

---

What kind of order is there around us? How should we look at this world around us? Can we connect with that existing order and these laws established in both realms? Once that becomes clear, then our confidence about our true potential increases. Our self-respect, and respect towards each other increases. We see each other as expressions of a wonderful plan to bring about total harmony and fulfilment to every existing being. Through our maturation as human beings we become instrumental in bringing harmony to all of creation. It is only through human beings that this harmony can be established.

The ancient Greeks had a similar concept. They spoke about human beings as a reflection of the cosmos. Plato said that the reality and the makeup of our soul reflects the whole spiritual order. He argued that it is not just an individualistic understanding of my personal spirit, but that we all parallel or reflect those spiritual laws. The spiritual order in the universe is reflected in our own spirituality.

Analogous to that, our body reflects the laws of the universe, the physical laws of the universe. We encapsulate the order in the physical world in our body, and the order of the spiritual world in our spirit, and we hold these two orders together. We are a total encapsulation of all the spiritual laws and all the physical laws in our own being. Then the macrocosm, the whole universe around us, is manifested in the microcosm which we call a human being. Wow, I never thought I could be such a great being!

---

**Human beings are a microcosm of the  
spiritual and physical realms**

---

The givenness of our existence is exactly that content that would hold both worlds together, that we manifest the order and laws of those two worlds, and we harmonize and integrate them. We are the center of the cosmos. Human beings are a microcosm; an encapsulation of spiritual and physical order. That's really the identity of human beings. At least that is our potential. We can say, that's how I am created, I am supposed to harmonize this world. I have these existing laws around me, I manifest that in my own being, and that is also the answer to why the world around us is intelligible. For scientists, that is always the big question. We investigate this cosmos more and more, and it becomes more and more clear to us what matter is, what those particles are, what astrophysics is revealing now about the origin of the universe. We keep on discovering more and more about this whole universe, its meaning

and how we fit in. We call this the intelligibility of the universe. We are the subjects, we are the ones who discover, and the reason that we can discover is because all these laws and this order which is around us is manifested in us. We create the common ground for understanding. We as human beings represent the unity of the spiritual and physical dimensions in a most distinct and unique way.

If we are this kind of special creation, and we at least in our potential can fulfill this central position, then it is most natural that we should discover more about the spiritual realm. In many ways we tend to neglect it, or we feel it's so difficult, or we may feel not comfortable doing it. We are kind of hesitant, and we are ignorant about that spiritual realm. We need to find deeper insight into our spiritual reality, what it means to be a spiritual being. It's not just to analyze and to gain information and understanding, but what is involved in the understanding of our spiritual reality is also the question of meaning. Why in the world are we here? What shall we do, being the center of the cosmos? How shall we establish that harmony? What is expected from us? There is this question of how to fulfill that God-given endowment. There is a certain calling given to us and it is somewhat left to our responsibility to go after that calling, to understand it out of our own motivation. It is not so much someone telling us, but we feel inspired and enthusiastic to do the search ourselves.

## **Spiritual realm**

The spiritual realm is eternal; it is a different dimension. It is not dependent on physical laws, but it has its own spiritual laws. Plato is right to defend what we call a metaphysical dualism. He says we cannot reduce the spiritual dimension to the material dimension. In other words, materialism doesn't work. Even the most modern brain researchers would say we can measure neurons, how they fire in the brain whenever an emotion happens, but we can only say this is the physical

dimension, whatever is concerned with the brain. The consciousness itself, the spirit itself, is of a different kind. We can never equate them; we can never say the brain is the spirit. The spiritual realm has its own laws and exists in a separate realm from the physical realm. But separate doesn't mean isolated. Any intelligent order or law which we find in the physical world has its origin in the spiritual world. These realms are able to interact, which we experience every day. That is important.

The world of the spirit is an invisible world. The physical world is visible. By invisible and visible I do not mean just by sight, that our eyes can perceive something, I include all the senses. Our senses usually connect to the physical world to gather what we call sense knowledge. We are constantly stimulated through our senses. We see the sunlight, we hear noises, the thunder, and then lightning, all kinds of phenomena; and these stimulations come to our mind and we want to make sense of them. Here we try to understand that world. Our senses perceive the physical world, and with those sense impressions we form ideas in our mind which then allow us to think, and to understand. There is this interaction of our senses with our categories of thought.

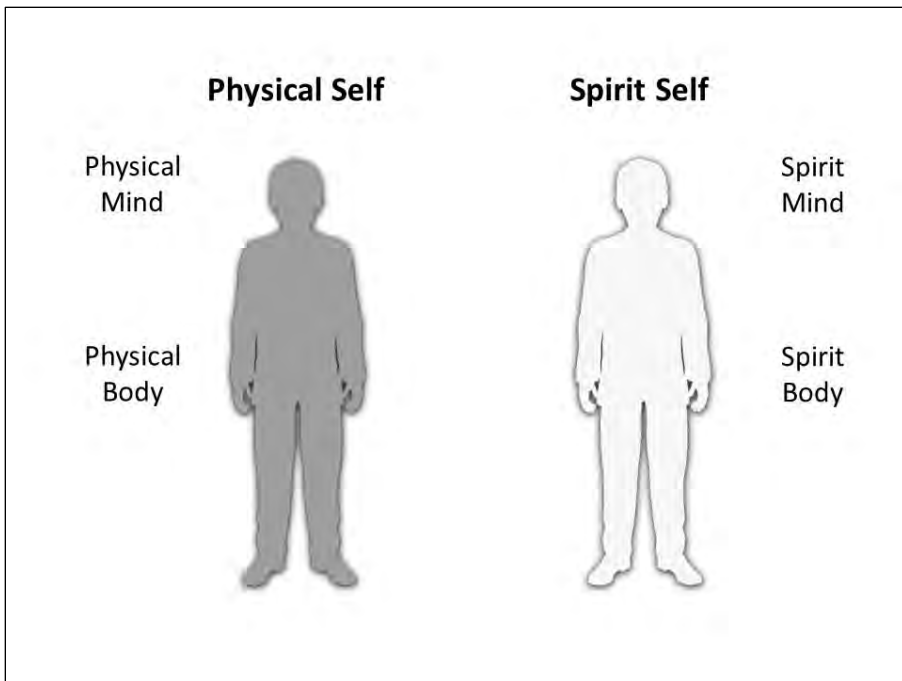
---

**We have spiritual senses that  
correspond to our physical senses**

---

We should acknowledge the presence of the spiritual world as a natural world. It's not something we make up. We just don't pay enough attention to it. We have our physical senses, five physical senses, sight and hearing and touch and smell and taste, we are used to that. We are always in touch with this physical world. But then there should also be senses for understanding and taking in the reality of the spiritual world. We should have spiritual senses that correspond to our physical senses (see Figure 2).

It is very easy to relate to our physical senses; we have seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, tasting. We are in contact with this physical world. But when it comes to the spiritual world, we are not so sure. Do we have spiritual senses? Originally, we should have spiritual senses. They exist, but they are neglected; they are not developed. That is the problem. Otherwise we could see spiritually, or we could hear spiritually, we could communicate more freely. Corresponding to the physical senses we should have spiritual senses as well.



**Figure 2**

We should be able to see spiritually, and to perceive spiritual presence, to hear messages from the spiritual realm. Even if these abilities are not so well developed, there is a spiritual sensitivity that can be developed. Many people say, I just got this intuition, I knew it was the right thing to do. You get an inspiration and you act on it and some good result comes. We do have some spiritual sensitivity to a greater

or lesser degree, but at this point, as an average at least, it's not well developed.

If it were the case that we were totally aware of the presence of spirit world through our spiritual senses, then our life would be free of all the fear and the feeling that the world of the spirit is supernatural and otherworldly. We would have a much more natural attitude towards the spiritual world. Death would not have to be feared as such an unknown.

## **2. Evidence for the Existence of Spirit**

As we approach the end of this physical life, the big question is, what happens upon our physical death? The ancient Greeks and most religious traditions affirm the immortality of the soul and the spirit, agreeing that there is life after death. But as to what form this afterlife takes, there are many opinions.

### **Scriptures**

Religions all over the world attest the reality of the spirit world and our own spiritual reality, that we are a spirit and that we have a body. For example, there is a well-known passage from the Christian Bible which deals with the reality of our spirit, II Corinthians 4:16:

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal wait of glory beyond all comparison, because we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

There are many other scriptural texts with a similar message. In Hinduism, the Bhagavad Gita 2:23-25 describes the eternal nature of the soul:

Weapons cannot shred the soul, nor can fire burn it. Water cannot wet it, nor can the wind dry it. The soul is unbreakable and incombustible; it can neither be dampened nor dried. It is everlasting, in all places, unalterable, immutable, and primordial. The soul is spoken of as invisible, inconceivable, and unchangeable. Knowing this, you should not grieve for the body.

## Near-Death Experiences

It is not only in scripture that we find affirmation of life after the death of the physical body. There are many testimonies from people who had a near-death experience (NDE). These people actually left their bodies, their spirit separated from their body, and they were considered clinically dead. But they had a number of experiences in that state which are very similar. It is rather breath-taking, the certain reality which is attested to by these people.

It also gives us a more natural attitude towards the phenomenon of death, not as a fearful event, but as a passage into the other realm, as a gateway to a fulfilling and higher life.

### Raymond Moody's bestseller

One of the early modern writers who described the experience of life after death is Raymond Moody. His 1975 bestseller, "Life After Life," contains stories from 100 people who had NDEs.<sup>4</sup> Their testimonies revolutionized how people thought about death and the afterlife. Here are excerpts from three of the people he interviewed.

First Interviewee:

I thought I was dead ... but I just couldn't figure out where I was supposed to go. My thought and my consciousness were just like they are in life, but I couldn't figure all this out. I kept thinking, 'Where am I going to go? What am I going to do?' And 'My God, I'm dead! I can't believe it!'<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Raymond Moody, *Life After Life*. HarperOne, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Moody, p. 34.



Second Interviewee:

I found myself in a tunnel, a tunnel of concentric circles. Shortly after that I saw a TV program called “The Time Tunnel,” where people go back in time through this spiraling tunnel. That’s the closest to it I can think of.<sup>6</sup>

Third Interviewee:

A good friend of mine, Bob, had been killed. Now the moment I got out of my body I had the feeling Bob was standing there, right next to me. I didn’t see him as his physical body. I could see things but not in the physical form, yet just as clearly, his looks, everything. Does that make sense? He was there but he didn’t have a physical body.<sup>7</sup>

### **Michael Sabom’s study**

When Raymond Moody’s book became a bestseller, there were many scientists who rejected his claims. One such person is Dr. Michael Sabom, a cardiologist committed to the scientific method. After attending a talk by Moody, he reacted negatively:

My indoctrinated scientific mind just couldn’t relate seriously to these ‘far-out’ descriptions of afterlife spirits and such. Being the only physician present that morning, I was asked for my opinion at the end of the class. The

---

<sup>6</sup> Moody, p. 24.

<sup>7</sup> Moody, p. 48.

kindest thing I could find to say at the moment was ‘I don’t believe it.’<sup>8</sup>

However, he was later persuaded to conduct a scientific study interviewing patients who had sustained NDEs during medical emergencies. Suffice it to say that this skeptic was convinced. Following are some examples of the experiences Sabom’s subjects reported. First, a Vietnam War victim of a booby trap bomb:

What makes this so real was that the thirteen guys that had been killed the day before, that I had put in plastic bags, were right there with me. And more than that, during the course of that month of May, my particular company lost forty-two dead. All forty-two of those guys were there. They were not in the form we perceive the human body, I can’t tell you what form they were in because I don’t know, but I know they were there. I felt their presence. We communicated without talking with our voices.<sup>9</sup>

A retired laborer resuscitated from cardiac arrest saw his family:

I remember seeing them down the hall as plain as could be – my wife, my oldest son and my oldest daughter and the doctor ... There was no way, being out, that I could have seen anybody ... I knew damn well they were there

---

<sup>8</sup> Michael B. Sabom, *Recollections of Death: A Medical Investigation*. Harper-Collins, 1981, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Sabom, p. 47.

... I didn't know what was going on. I didn't know why they were crying.<sup>10</sup>

A construction worker receiving heart surgery saw the doctors and nurses operating on him:

I could see they were busy. In fact, one time a nurse I could see looked me right in the face just this far away. I tried to say something but she didn't say nothing ... She was like looking at a movie screen that can't talk back and that doesn't recognize you're there. I was the real one and she was unreal. That's the way I felt.<sup>11</sup>

A night-watchman who suffered cardiac arrest found himself able to see things taking place far from his body:

I could see anywhere I wanted to. I could see out in the parking lot, but I was still in the corridor ... It was just like I said, "OK, what's going on out in the parking lot?" and part of my brain would go over and take a look at what's going on over there and come back and report to me.<sup>12</sup>

After undergoing open-heart surgery, the patient described seeing his heart:

Shaped something like the continent of Africa, with it being larger up here and tapered down ... One general

---

<sup>10</sup> Sabom, pp. 111-112.

<sup>11</sup> Sabom, p. 32.

<sup>12</sup> Sabom, p. 34.

area to the right or left was darker than the rest instead of being the same color.<sup>13</sup>

This patient also saw the doctors and nurses in the operating room and was fascinated by their footwear:

All but one doctor had scuffs tied around his shoes and this joker had on white shoes which had blood all over them. I was wondering why this one doctor was in a pair of patent-leather white shoes in the operating room when the nurses and everybody had green covers that they put their shoes into. ... I'm morbidly curious about that. It seemed so odd ... I thought it was unsanitary.<sup>14</sup>

This testimony of a woman knocked down by a speeding car reveals many details of her experience:

A man yelled at me ... apparently he was trying to warn me, and I was struck from behind. ... That's the last thing I remember until I was above the whole scene viewing the accident. I was very detached. This was the amazing thing about it to me ... I don't remember hearing anything. I was just viewing things ... It was just like I floated up there ... the roof-top or maybe a little higher ... seeing my shoe, which was crushed under the car ... I remember seeing the earring which was smashed. I remember wearing a new dress and I was wearing it for the second time – at that time I made all my clothes – and I thought: Oh, no. My new dress is ruined. And I wasn't even thinking about my body being possibly ruined too. This is

---

<sup>13</sup> Sabom, pp. 65-66.

<sup>14</sup> Sabom, pp. 66-67.

an odd thing in that I don't think really that the seriousness of the situation dawned on me. I don't think I really had the realization at the time that: Oh my God. I'm outside my body. What's happening to me? ... My attention was called to my body when the attendants put it on the stretcher ... I saw myself in profile. I was actually towards the front and side of the car, viewing all of this ... I was viewing my body as they picked it up and put it onto the stretcher. It was from a distance away, actually ... I remember them looking at my eyes. I guess they were checking my pupils. I don't know.<sup>15</sup>

A patient who previously was semi-conscious during surgery compares that experience with a later experience of cardiac arrest:

Several years back, I was in an auto accident ... I was laying there and I could hear two nurses there and they were trying to get my blood-pressure. One says to the other, 'You know, I can't get a reading on this,' or something like that, and she said, 'Well, try the other one.' And I heard all this and I knew they were there but I couldn't communicate with them ... But I didn't see nothing I just heard. This other time with the cardiac arrest, I was looking down from the ceiling and there were no ifs, ands or buts about it.<sup>16</sup>

Out of the body experiences seem to be quite common, but people don't share them so much because it sounds weird, or people are not so ready to accept them.

---

<sup>15</sup> Sabom, p. 116.

<sup>16</sup> Sabom, pp. 155-156.

A laborer that Sabom interviewed was convinced his experience was real, despite encountering disbelief:

I know it was real. I know that I was up there. ... And I know that I seen me down there. I could swear on a Bible that I was there. I seen things just like I seen them now. I can't prove it to none of those people there because they didn't see me. There's no way you can prove it, but I was there.<sup>17</sup>

Testimonies like these of leaving your body, and defining your own spiritual being, that you are actually a spirit, and seeing that as a most natural thing, these may not be well received in the secular culture, because we are so oriented towards the physical.

---

**Out of the body experiences may be common, but people are unwilling to share them for fear they will not be well received**

---

Such experiences confirm that our real self is the spirit self. This spirit self survives beyond the physical dimension. Our identity is not bound up with the physical, but our identity is spirit. We have this physical body, but that's not us. The real me is that invisible personality, that spirit which is my real self.

### **Kenneth Ring's research**

Another researcher into near-death experiences is Kenneth Ring, a psychologist and co-founder of The International Association for Near-Death Studies. His book, "Life at Death: A Scientific Investigation of

---

<sup>17</sup> Sabom, p. 16.

the Near-Death Experience” documents the common features in a number of reports by those who had NDEs.<sup>18</sup>



**Figure 3: Spirit going through the tunnel to the light**

Ring found that a number of people experienced a tunnel with a light at the end, similar to the accounts Moody published, one of which was quoted earlier, where the subject likened the experience to the TV show “The Time Tunnel.” Figure 3 shows an artist’s impression of a spirit going through the tunnel towards the light.

---

<sup>18</sup> Kenneth Ring. *Life at Death: A Scientific Investigation of the Near-Death Experience*. William Morrow, 1982, p. 54.

A patient of Ring's who suffered an asthma attack reports such an experience:

I do remember thinking to myself that I was dying. I felt I was floating through a tunnel ... When I say tunnel the only think I can think of is – you know, those sewer pipes, those big pipes they put in? It was round like that, but it was enormous. I couldn't really see the edges of it; I got the feeling that it was round. ... Very peaceful, almost as if I were a raft in the ocean, you know?<sup>19</sup>

Patients reported seeing people and situations close to where their body lay. One patient saw her sister who worked in the hospital being told about her situation:

I could follow her movements ... She walked in shortly after the alert was sounded and got to the emergency room where she worked and someone told her what was going on and she came ripping upstairs. I could see her doing it. I could see her coming up the elevator, telling people that they couldn't – and she told me this afterward and I shared that with her – get off the floor, that she used the emergency elevator and she went straight up to the floor.<sup>20</sup>

Many patients reported seeing people who had died previously:

Then suddenly I saw mother, who had died about nine years ago. And she was sitting – she always used to sit in her rocker, you know – she was smiling and she just sat

---

<sup>19</sup> Ring, p. 54.

<sup>20</sup> Ring, p. 51.



there looking at me and she said to me in Hungarian,  
‘Well, we’ve been waiting for you. We’ve been expecting  
you. Your father’s here and we are going to help you.’<sup>21</sup>

A severe asthma attack patient reported that she had heard the voice of a Mrs. Friedrich, who died nine years before and who had been responsible for the part of the hospital where she was brought:

Then I heard, I heard Mrs. Friedrich. She had been dead for nine years at that time. I heard, in her very distinctive voice – she spoke slowly and every word was brought out strong – and she had a low voice, and she said, ‘Miss Harper, Miss Harper ... I want you to live.’ And she appeared not distinctly, but ... it’s hard to explain ... I don’t think I saw her face; it was there but it was more of a ... she was dressed in black. I don’t think I could see her feet, but I could see the middle part of her and it was almost as if you would look at the side of a tree, a straight tree ... but she was there, and she said, ‘Miss Harper, Miss Harper! I want you to live!’ ... and finally I answered in my mind, ‘I’ll try, Mrs. Friedrich, I’ll try.’<sup>22</sup>

A woman reported that her dying father saw:

[A] vision of two of his brothers, one of whom had been dead for years, while the other had died only two days previously – a fact unknown to her dying father. The father, however, decided to ‘return’ when he heard his

---

<sup>21</sup> Ring, p. 63.

<sup>22</sup> Ring, p. 81.

living wife call to him, and only afterward learned of his brother's demise.<sup>23</sup>



**Figure 4: Spirit looking down at her lifeless body**

Figure 4 shows an artist's impression of a young woman whose spirit has risen out of her body, looking down on her lifeless body that is lying on the ground. The experience of rising up and seeing their own body lying on the hospital bed, while friends and relatives gathered around, was quite common:

I viewed myself from the corner of the hospital room,  
looking down at my body which was very dark and gray.

---

<sup>23</sup> Ring, pp. 207-208.

All the life looked like it was out of it ... and my Italian girl-friend at the time was crying at the foot of the bed.<sup>24</sup>

These testimonies of out of the body experiences affirm the reality of our spiritual body. I had a similar experience myself long ago, nearly 30 years ago now, but it's so vivid in my mind. I was very tired, and just resting, and this buzzing noise came and all of a sudden I felt I was out of my body, and looking down on myself. There was an initial feeling, not really of fear, but I never had this feeling in my life. Can I come back? I was a little bit scared. I don't want to go too far away, I wanted to be sure to come back, I was still young! I was not dying, but it was just a confirmation that the spirit is an entity in itself.

### **Universal experiences**

In these near-death experiences, leaving the body and hearing the surgeon pronounce them dead, certain patterns of experience happen to all the patients, independent of their religious convictions. These experiences have a profound impact. The person may have been agnostic, or not very much aware of God's existence. After that experience they are totally convinced that the soul will live on and eternal life is the reality of our existence, and with that affirm God's existence. They strive to live a more loving life, realizing that what really counts in life is to serve others, to make others happy, to live for the sake of others, to be a loving person. Here are some examples.

One of Ring's patients who suffered cardiac arrest during surgery radically changed his beliefs about the afterlife:

I would say – and not being religious at all – that there must be something after death which I never believed in before. I always believed that when you were dead, they

---

<sup>24</sup> Ring, p. 95.

put you in the ground and you stayed there. But I'm not too sure about that anymore.<sup>25</sup>

Several people said that they realized the importance of love for others.

A salesman interviewed by Sabom said:

I feel that we are measured a great deal by what we do for others. That we're all put here to help one another ... The greatest law that we have is love.<sup>26</sup>

You see a certain universality in all these experiences. These testimonies about life after life, and the near-death experience, have a lot of overlap. The major message is that there is nothing to fear, it is totally natural. We are created with a unique spirit which can live a life independent from our body. We have a spiritual body and spiritual mind which continues its existence beyond the death of the physical body and thus we can experience consciousness as unbroken. There is no need to be afraid of death.

For example, Lorna Byrne's near-death experience convinced her that death is not to be feared:

I had major surgery lasting a few hours. The surgery went fine. I was put into a postoperative recovery room some distance away from the nurses rather than in one that had constant supervision ... The surgeon told me afterward that they heard the alarms going off only because the door was inexplicably ajar. I had stopped breathing and the medical team were sure they had lost me. I was on a very

---

<sup>25</sup> Ring, p. 169.

<sup>26</sup> Sabom, p. 132.

wide bright stairway that curved upward. ... I was very happy and could feel nothing of my human body. I was full of joy; I knew where I was going—to Heaven—and I was so happy to be going there ... It was as if there was beautiful sand under my bare feet, and I could feel the smooth, silky, warm sand between my toes. The sand was in small hills, and I could see a beautiful tree in the distance on top of one of the hills. The tree was big, covered in leaves, and looked perfect in every way. I hadn't a care in the world. It was like being a little child again. I went and sat down under the tree for a little while and then started playing at rolling down the hill. After a short while, I heard a voice and knew immediately it was God's. "Lorna, you must go back," the voice boomed ... I know that one of the reasons I have been given these experiences is so that I can share them with all of you. So that I can help you to understand that there is nothing to fear in death.<sup>27</sup>

Others also reported that their NDEs left them no longer afraid of death.

---

**Death is not to be feared; it is a natural passage into the spiritual realm**

---

Moody reports one patient's words:

Now I'm not afraid to die. It's not that I have a death-wish, or want to die right now. I don't want to be living

---

<sup>27</sup> Lorna Byrne, *A Message of Hope from the Angels*. Atria Books, 2013, pp. 104-107.

over there on the other side now because I'm supposed to be living here. The reason I'm not afraid to die, though, is that I know where I'm going when I leave here, because I've been there before.<sup>28</sup>

One of Ring's patients said:

I used to be afraid of death. Now, it seems like that, you know, it was a little scary at first, the wandering aspect, but talking to God and the warmth I felt when I was with Him, you know – it was really – Oh! I just get the chills thinking about it, it was so *good*, you know? And I feel that when my time for death comes, that I won't be afraid to go.<sup>29</sup>

Another of Ring's patients mentioned feeling at peace:

It was all around me ... it was not bright ... You know what it was? Like someone had put a shade over the sun. It made me feel very, very peaceful. I was no longer afraid. Everything was going to be alright.<sup>30</sup>

Several people mentioned experiencing a light, and how that light gave them a feeling of peace. In the darkness we are disoriented, we are conscious of our own self but we have no place to go, no-one to relate to, and that creates fear. It is against our nature to be isolated, to live in darkness, to be neglected, or to be considered a nobody. We feel happy and fulfilled if light is around us. Light is a symbol for truth and love. Nothing is hidden in the light, we cannot hide. We are just the

---

<sup>28</sup> Moody, pp. 95-96.

<sup>29</sup> Ring, p. 178.

<sup>30</sup> Ring, p. 59.

person we are and we don't have to worry, we are accepted. This kind of testimony is very comforting.

According to various testimonies, if someone leaves their physical body suddenly, they hover around their physical body because they always identified themselves with this body. All of a sudden their consciousness is outside and they see their body, lying there. It's a shock, especially if some tragic accident occurs where this separation of spirit and body happens all of a sudden. The body is destroyed but the spirit is intact. There is the desire of the spirit to come back to the body and continue living, but it's not possible because the body is dead. They hover around, they want to stay there, they are bound, they are earth-bound, they are bound to their physical body. That is a painful situation and it happens mainly if some tragic accident happens, or death in wars or terrorist attacks or natural disasters.

If there is a car accident, and somebody is killed, then people don't know at first that they have died. They see their body and it may take them a while to realize what happened. Then they are resentful that they had to give up their life, whatever their age was, they didn't live a full life. Their longing to regain their life makes them earth-bound. They cannot move on, they are stuck in their development. So they hover around that place where the accident happened. In these cases, it takes a while for the spirits to find out what's going on. There is a certain time of healing necessary, and after that time they move on to their new spiritual life.

---

**There are spirit guides who help people  
move on into the spiritual realm**

---

Many NDE testimonies describe how they met people who guided them. These are spiritual beings. They could be relatives, someone who went before us. It may be quite confusing going to the world of the

spirit after this physical life. Initially there may be no-one around and they see their own body and they float on the ceiling, or they go outside the hospital. But then there is the spirit guide, a guide who is there to help. There is no reason for fear.

A number of people reported an experience of reviewing their life on earth before returning to life in this world. First, one of Ring's patients who nearly died in a car accident:

It was like I got to view my whole life as a movie, and see it and get to view different things that happened, different things that took place ... somehow it's very hard on words describing ... basically it was like watching a movie ... although it is speeded up, probably to show you it all.<sup>31</sup>

---

**When people ascend into the spirit world they review their life on earth, like watching a movie played at great speed**

---

Betty Eadie's testimony of her near-death experience includes a review of her life. This review occurred not in this time-space context that we are used to, but in this other dimension so it happened in a relatively short time. It was like a panoramic vision of every detail of her life, including not only her emotions but also the emotions her actions caused others:

My life appeared before me in the form of what we might consider extremely well-defined holograms, but at tremendous speed. I was astonished that I could understand so much information at such a speed. My

---

<sup>31</sup> Ring, p. 71.



comprehension included much more than what I remember happening during each event of my life. I not only re-experienced my own emotions at each moment, but also what others around me had felt. I experienced their thoughts and feelings about me ... I understood all the suffering I had caused, and I felt it. I began to tremble. I saw how much grief my bad temper had caused, and I suffered this grief. I saw my selfishness, and my heart cried for relief. How had I been so uncaring? ... I saw myself perform an act of kindness, just a simple act of unselfishness, and I saw the ripples go out again ... My pain was replaced with joy.<sup>32</sup>

Also from Betty Eadie:

We have no right to look down at others or condemn them in our hearts. The only thing we can take with us from this life is the good that we have done to others. I saw that all of our good deeds and kind words will come back to bless us a hundred-fold after this life. Our strength will be found in our charity.<sup>33</sup>

---

**Our good deeds and kindness to others  
in this life are what we take with us into  
the spiritual realm**

---

One conclusion we can draw from that is we are created as beings oriented to the other, away from ourselves. In other words, individualism as we find it in our culture is just the opposite of what our true inner

---

<sup>32</sup> Betty Eadie, *Embraced by the Light*. Bantam, 1994, p. 112.

<sup>33</sup> Eadie, p. 101.

self, our spirit wants to do. We want to be connected, to be loving towards others, to create a family, to create a happy community and society, to be always engaged in that process, to always have each other, and in that state of being feel joy and fulfilment. We are social beings.

Let's summarize what we learned from these testimonies. First, they agree that the description of this experience is so difficult because we are used to speak in certain symbols and metaphors which are related to this physical world, and then all of a sudden it's another world. They try to describe it in words, and yet they feel always it's not enough. That's what they all express, that there is something beyond description.

Then, they shared the experience of being separated from their body, having this out of body experience. Their feeling was not startled or nervous or fearful about it, but very peaceful. It's a natural thing, most natural. There is no need to fear death.

There was talk about a tunnel, that you go to a light through a tunnel. There seems to be a transition, that you move from this dimension to another dimension. That is another thing that came through in common.

Also, we meet others who went before us. Especially we meet our relatives, our ancestors, again in a very natural way.

All these experiences have to do with having a self-perception freed from the physical, while still being in total possession of our faculties. That's the important thing. It is looking forward to the real life we were meant to live. We are sometimes bogged down here; we have to worry about so many things. But the real life is the life in the spirit.

### 3. Angels

In the NDE testimonies we learned that departed spirits populate the spirit world, and often come to greet those who are newly arrived there. But there are also other spirits which we call angels. These are spiritual beings who were not incarnated, who never lived a physical life, and were created to live in the spiritual realm.

In scripture there are many references to angels. There seem to be a very large number of these beings. For example, Jesus mentioned that he could be helped by legions of angels, where a “legion” is a term in the Roman army referring to a large body of several thousand soldiers:

Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and He will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?  
(Matthew 26:53).

Angels are mentioned in other scriptures too, as we read in *World Scripture*:<sup>34</sup>

When a man walks on the highway, a company of angels goes before him, proclaiming, “Make way for the image of the Holy One!” (Judaism. Midrash Psalms 17:8)

Behold, your Lord said to the angels, “I will create a vicegerent on earth.” They said, “Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood? — while we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy name?” (Islam. Qur’an 2:30)

---

<sup>34</sup> Andrew Wilson (ed.), *World Scripture*. Paragon House, 1991, pp. 218-219.

When Moses ascended on high, the ministering angels spoke before the Holy One, blessed be He, “Sovereign of the Universe! What business has one born of woman among us?” “He has come to receive the Torah,” He answered them. (Judaism. Talmud, Shabbat 88b)

---

### **Angels are spiritual beings, created as servants**

---

To understand the purpose of these beings, we can read passages in the Bible speaking about angels as servants of God, ministering spirits, who often function as messengers or guides, or beings sent by God to help us on earth:

The LORD has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all. Praise the LORD, you His angels, you mighty ones who do His bidding, who obey His word. Praise the LORD, all His heavenly hosts, you His servants who do His will. (Psalm 103:19-22)

Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:14)

See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared. (Exodus 23:20)

My God sent his angel and shut the lions’ mouths, and they have not hurt me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong. (Daniel 6:22)

And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zechari’ah

was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechari’ah, for your prayer is heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. (Luke 1:11-13)

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. (Luke 1:26-31)

But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:20)

And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. (Luke 2:8-12)

We should try to have a certain openness to this kind of understanding about who actually lives in the spiritual world. We could make a simple analogy. We could say, in the physical world we have physical beings, which are animals of different kinds. Then we have human beings, which are unique, they have a spirit and a physical body. Then in the spirit world there are those which are just a spirit, they don't have a physical body. There is a certain continuum in understanding created beings.

## 4. The Immortality of the Spirit

In the “Nectarean Shower of Holy Doctrines,” the “Holy Sutra” of the Japanese Seicho-no-ie religion, is a passage that is very pertinent to the question of the nature of human beings and the immortality of the soul:

Man’s real nature is primarily spiritual life which weaves its threads of mind to build a cocoon of flesh. Encloses its own soul in the cocoon and, for the first time, the spirit becomes flesh. Understand this clearly. The cocoon is not the silkworm. In the same way the physical body is not man, but merely man’s cocoon. Just as the silkworm will break out of its cocoon and fly free so too will man break out of his body cocoon and ascend to the spiritual world when his time is come. Never think that the death of the physical body is the death of man. Since man is life he will never know death.<sup>35</sup>

I found this quite instructive and uplifting. It points to the immortal nature of the soul, and what happens upon the death of our physical body.

---

**We fear death because we are unsure  
of what comes after it**

---

Why do we have fear of death? It is because we are not sure what happens after it. We are not so convinced about this immortal soul which continues after our physical body is gone. As we just read from

---

<sup>35</sup> Quoted in *World Scripture*, pp. 231-232.

this Japanese sacred scripture, death means to leave this body and to move on to a new life. We have heard this many times before, and as beautiful as it sounds, it takes time to understand it, to believe it, and to live accordingly. It is really a matter of directing our lives towards these insights. It is not just some intellectual knowledge, but it should be in the core of our own being, who we are. In this life we need to enhance that knowledge, and be really clear on our goal in life, and how to live, and how to prepare for that next life.

I would like to offer a few thoughts on the immortality of the soul. This is based more on understanding and reflection rather than testimonies or speculation or revelation. As human beings we have this reflective quality. We hear something and we think about it, and we want to make it our own. It should make sense from our own life experience. So, what can be said on the topic of the immortality of the soul?

### **Insights from Greek philosophy**

One of the early writings on the immortality of the soul was Plato's "Phaedo" dialogue. There he goes into arguments of what is the soul, and how we can perceive something like immortality since we are confronted with mortality every day around us. Birth and death, the cycle is always there; but our soul is different.

For the Greek philosophers in general, their understanding was that generation and destruction, the coming and going of beings in this world, is no more than a modification of an eternal underlying substance. In other words, we are given life, we are born into this world, and then we move on with our spirit. That whole event which we call life, and the formation of our spirit, is within a larger context. We could say all of creation is participating in this coming and going. But it is not just a circular movement without content, there is always a clear purpose behind it. We are born, we arrive on this earth, then we say what shall we do with this life? How to live it in the right way? What



is our identity as human beings, and how to discover our precious spiritual nature?

That is the first understanding, that there is generation and destruction. We observe that. Destruction is maybe too harsh a word. At the time of physical death, the death of our body, the body decays because it is not needed anymore. It fulfilled its function. The body is a vehicle for growth. That's all it is. We have this body so that our soul can have vitality, creativity, can grow and mature. When our maturation is accomplished, then we move on to the spiritual realm and find fulfilment and joy, and in that sense, accomplish our purpose.

Someone I know died of cancer. She was at home for the last few months; they couldn't do anything for her in the hospital. During that time, she kept up a good spirit and that was the comforting thing in the whole situation. If we have a strong positive spirit and we have hope and we look forward to a new life, and we realize our body fulfilled its purpose and it is now passing on, that is comforting. We understand that my real self, my spirit, is truly immortal and my personality exists. There is an unchanging essence of my personality which moves on.

How do we overcome that fear of death? First of all, we should overcome a preoccupation with the body. If I am a person who is concerned to live for others, I want to make other people happy, I am enthusiastic to help in any way possible, my mind is so occupied with giving towards others that I hardly think of this body. Of course, I feed the body, I put some clothes on, give it some rest, but that's about it. But many times, we lose that life of giving, we are self-occupied. Then we may wish our life were different, we wish we could have done something different, and we start victimizing ourselves. We are holding our spirit back. With that comes the preoccupation with the body: how can I feel more comfortable; how can I escape pain and find more pleasure. Then the attention given to the body starts increasing. The moment I have that kind of view on life, of course I will be scared to death if I

look at death! Because the center of my attention, the body, is taken away from me and I feel I go into nothingness. There is this fear of death if there is preoccupation with the physical body.

## **Uniqueness**

What is the soul? The soul or spirit is that eternal dimension, our true self, the inner self. We say “I am a spirit.” Whatever my personality is, it’s totally anchored and substantiated in my spirit. My personality is not in my hands, or my joints, or my chest, or any physical place. My true self is that inner, invisible self, which nevertheless has a distinct character. I am a certain way. I am unique. That’s another important thing to understand. We are unique spirits, every one of us. There is no second person like us as individuals, throughout the whole creation. And that should make us think about the preciousness of every single person.

---

**Each person is a unique spirit, and that spirit passes over into the eternal spiritual world**

---

From the Judeo-Christian tradition what is affirmed is that we all are a unique spirit. The reason for that is we have this whole lifetime on this physical plane to develop our unique personality. There is no second person exactly the same as you, in the whole universe. Isn’t that an amazing thought! You are so unique! And you work for 80, 90, 100 years to do that. Then you pass over to the spiritual world. What passes over is that matured, unique spirit. That spirit has the shape and form and has the experiences you had throughout your physical lifetime.

The soul brings together our various faculties. We have our intellect, we have emotion, we have will-power. We act towards the world around us and we act towards each other, and in that we experience life

and we experience growth. Our intellectual, emotional and volitional self is reflected in what we call the soul.

There is no miraculous change that you hop into heaven, or whatever. If you have some heavenly experience because you are such a loving person, then that will be with you, that goes with you, and you will enter the spirit world on that heavenly level. But it does not annihilate our individuality or personality.

What I want to look at is that experience to be a soul or a spirit, that we are different from this physical dimension. Science has advanced greatly in our time. We have all these gadgets to investigate the smallest part in creation, the atomic composition of matter, quantum physics, and astrophysics in space; we investigate all the physical universe. The deeper we go into investigating the physical world the more we realize the spiritual aspect is always following all these physical manifestations.

## **Non-material**

The soul is non-material; it is the spiritual aspect that is connected to our physical body. One way to look at the explanation for the soul would be to make an analogy. Since we know our body so well, we can observe it, and we have sense perception of our body, we can say there is a similarity argument. That means I compare my body with the soul concerning certain characteristics. Then I can make conclusions about the internal properties of those two.

First, the body is changing. Look at the baby and the old person. We go through growth and we reach old age and we die. There is constant change. This space-time continuum has the element of change and development; growth is involved. Also, the body is composite. It means it is put together of various parts. It starts with atoms, various particles, then molecules, cells, and organs, enormously organized. That's our

body; it's composite, made of parts. Because it is composite these parts can scatter. They have the ability to disintegrate; it's perishable.

That's an interesting thought, that if something is made out of parts it can decay into those parts. It can fall apart, as we say. So therefore, the physical realm, including our physical body, has these qualities. Therefore, the body is mortal. It is also temporal. It only exists for a certain time period. It has its functions for a limited time period. All the parts in our body can disintegrate and scatter, and therefore we speak about the phenomenon of death; the body can die, it is mortal.

---

**The physical body is composite and perishable; the spirit is unchanging in substance and imperishable**

---

The soul, on the other hand, is unchanging concerning its own soul substance, its own existence. We are given that soul and that in itself has an unchanging quality. It is simple, not composite. The Greeks already understood this. It is not made up of parts, it is one. The spirit which we possess has this simple oneness. There is a unity of our soul. Because it is simple and it is made of one substance, it coheres, it always is together, it has that quality of being unchanging, and therefore it is imperishable. It does not disintegrate into parts because it is given to us in a form of oneness, a unity. We cannot sort out different organs or parts in our spiritual awareness, our self-consciousness. There is a unity of consciousness. Therefore, the soul coheres, it is imperishable; so the soul is immortal.

Next, we know that the body is sense perceptible, you could say it is visible, that is the clearest characteristic of this physical realm. Our senses are totally attuned to the physical reality. We are connected to the physical world around us through these sense experiences.

The soul does not respond to sense perception, it is not sense perceptible in the physical world. Because the soul has these qualities we say it is invisible. It is also beyond the dimensions of time and space. There is the space-time continuum here in the physical realm, and beyond time and space is the spirit. Subsequently, it is eternal, it is not temporal. It is designed to live for eternity.

## **Love**

Another argument for immortality is based on the understanding of love. The nature of love affirms the immortality of the spirit. We are speaking about partnership with God, who is eternal. Our being created means that we should develop a loving partnership with God, our Creator. We are created in God's image, and then re-reflect God's image in our own unique way according to our personality. That loving relationship we develop with God is something very specific and unique, and that should be preserved.

---

### **Loving partnerships should last forever**

---

If God created all of us as His object partners for His love, and we grow here and feel the love of God throughout our lives, and respond to Him and engage in this loving relationship, it would be a devastating, painful experience for God if at our death we were annihilated. There wouldn't be any loving object partner any more. It would be totally counterproductive to the experience of love which we have in this world.

The partnership of love requires a uniqueness of the partners, so if God is our ultimate partner in this loving relationship then how do we create that unique response. We live here for about 100 years and develop into this loving personality, having a deep love for our Creator. If we just dissolve into nothingness when our body dies, that love

would no longer exist, and there would be some lack, some painful ending. To maintain that love means also to maintain that unique individuality and that partnership with God. The very nature of love is a testimony for the immortality of the soul, or the immortality of our unique personality as a spirit.

## **5. Relationship between the Spiritual and Physical Realms**

Now I want to discuss how the spiritual and the physical realms connect. This will help us to understand death and dying, and to see this as a natural phenomenon. Once we are clear about the reality of our own spirit, death is not such a fearful experience. Unfortunately, right now it is fearful, because we identify our being with our physical body. As we move away from that self-perception to acknowledge our spiritual being, then to the same degree we will perceive the phenomenon of death as a natural occurrence.

### **More from Greek philosophy**

Socrates said if we engage in the habit of reflecting on our lives, self-examination, finding the deeper truths in life, that is liberating. We progress in our spiritual life and the body fulfills its function and is seen in a very natural way. We have to overcome preoccupation with physical things. Still, that doesn't mean to short-change the importance of the physical dimension. The physical realm is very precious, our body is very precious. We have to keep it healthy. We have to do all the right things, pay enough attention to it, because it is the vehicle for our growth. Unfortunately, there are many past thinkers who look down on the body, including Socrates and Plato. They would say the body is always interfering in our spiritual journey, kind of like a little child always crying out, wanting more, complaining, and so we have a hard time to keep that body under control. Most of our struggles are involved in helping our mind and spirit to develop, and not allowing this interference from physical needs and desires.

According to Plato, all of reality can be seen as the spiritual reality, the reality where the ideal forms are. This means that whatever ideal concept is in our mind is already something spiritual. Plato argued that the ideal form represents the most accurate reality and physical objects

are only reflections of that ideal form, like its shadow. The ideal forms are not perceived directly.

Aristotle inherited the understanding of these ideal forms from Plato, his teacher. However, Aristotle saw the world of the spirit as being manifested in physical objects. For example, if you take the form of a circle. Think of a circle in your mind. You can actually think of that ideal form of a circle, it is present in your mind. In your mind you see the circle, it's that locus equidistant to a point, and it is totally, exactly defined. Then we have manifestations of that ideal form of a circle in this physical world, such as coins, the wheel, and so on. We have different instantiations of that ideal form of the circle. While Plato argued that these manifestations are like shadows of the ideal form, for Aristotle the circle itself in its ideal conception is actually present in the wheel or in the coin, or whatever round shape.

---

**Growth happens through experience  
on the earth in our physical body**

---

The reason that becomes a new insight is the value it gives to the physical world. In other words, any ideal we are pursuing in this life is connected with this physical world. Only through the physical world we can reach that maturation, or that perfection. Plato had a certain separation of the spiritual and physical realms. Aristotle, on the other hand, says these ideal forms are manifested in particular events and situations in this physical world. This teaches us that any growth can only happen through experience on the earth in our physical body. The realm of the spirit is the realm of possibility, and it should become actual through the physical world. It is that movement from possibility to actuality that is the maturation of our spirit self, which would then go back to the spiritual realm as a perfected being.



This interaction from a potential to an actual event is not done haphazardly; there is always a clear purpose behind it. There is a guiding force; the Greeks would call this “telos.” Teleology has to do with looking at what purpose should be accomplished, why do we have the spiritual realm and the physical realm, why is there interaction, why is there growth and maturation. These are the questions of philosophy. And these are life questions. Implied in understanding the spiritual realm is always the question of meaning, and purpose, which is the guiding force for all maturation. If we have a clear purpose in life then we find fulfilment; we actually accomplish what we are supposed to do. That is another step in relating the world of the spirit to this physical world.

### **Spirit and body interaction**

As much as we try to explain the phenomenon of us as human beings, we realize how difficult it is to explain mind-body interaction. The mind or the spirit or the soul is of a different kind, a different dimension than this physical reality. They can interact. But we cannot reduce one to the other. We cannot say that the spirit is just a very complicated material event. And we cannot say that the brain itself is already the spirit. There are two irreducible realms, which interact; but they cannot be reduced to one another. In other words, we cannot explain the realm of the spirit through these physical processes causing some kind of epi-phenomenon we can call the spirit.

We understand from our own experience, and the numerous testimonies of others, that we do have these two realms. What is the relationship between those two worlds? We could say it is a relationship between an initiative, creative, outgoing effort, called the subject partner, and a responding realm, called the object partner. An initiative quality is given to that realm of the spirit, while the physical realm has a responding quality. There is an interaction of the initiative realm, or

the world of cause, wanting to accomplish a certain purpose, and the response of the physical realm, or the world of effect, where we are constantly growing.

We have these two realms, the world of the spirit and then the physical world where our bodies are; and then the interaction of these two worlds is an ongoing process. It always happens. But, how do they connect? Again, in a very purposeful and organized manner. There is only one way in which the spiritual world and the physical world connect, and that is through human beings. Because we have a spirit, we are part of the spiritual world, and we have a physical body, so we are part of the physical world. We are here in that central position, so we connect the two.

---

### **The spiritual world and physical world connect through human beings**

---

The dimension of the spirit is different from the dimension of the physical reality. The realm of spirit is eternal and the physical realm is temporal. Here we have the four dimensions of the space-time continuum, three dimensions of space and one of time. We are living physically in that continuum. Therefore, our senses operate in this space-time continuum. Whatever you receive through your senses is analyzed in terms of space and time, location and sequence. This is how we think. But in the realm of the spirit, a thought or a loving feeling is beyond time and space; it is not bound by these dimensions. Location doesn't really apply to the spirit, location as we know it in the physical world. Our spirit is beyond that dimension, in another dimension. It is not confined by the space-time continuum. Therefore, how can this being we call our spirit or our soul, how can that relate to something that is of a different dimension?

It does happen. There is a mutual influence. Our spirit can influence our body, and that influence has to be trained, or has to be developed. It makes a difference how I feel in my spiritual life. If I feel happy and loving and outgoing and active, then my body connects with that, responds to that positive influx of my spirit. In other words, the spirit gives good elements to my body if I make effort to be a positive, loving person. On the other hand, if I let myself go and I feel disappointed, or resentful, or hateful, and I harbor all these resentments and I carry them around with me, then what do I have? I get ulcers, I get sick, I feel miserable, I wear down my health. We have that correspondence between the healthy, harmonious loving spirit which will bring about a healthy, loving, and strong physical healthy body. We have spiritual and bodily realms which constantly interact. The more harmoniously they interact, the more we have fulfilment, we have growth, we have purpose, and we feel healthy.

Everything in this physical universe mirrors this harmony. It is not that everything in the physical world is only physical, rather it has a quality to it which is derived from the realm of the spirit. That quality can be called an internal character. That quality is present in everything. For example, any proton or electron, any elementary particle, has an internal character, a natural law which defines how it behaves, how to interact. This is present with the physical manifestation, may it be a proton, a photon, an electron, or a neutron. Even in the smallest realm we find an internal character, an internal directing force telling that particle what to do. We see this also in cations and anions and molecules.

Then, in higher creations we have an internal character which is progressively more complex, connected with more complex physical forms. These are again related to each other, and they work together. Plants have an internal directing force which tells them to turn to the light, or to have that metabolism which allows growth to happen through the root system, and through photosynthesis, and so on. When

we reach the level of animals, we find they have the internal directing force of instinct to guide them, as well as the ability to learn from experience. There are delicate laws involved which allow the phenomenon of life to happen. It is not just physical substance, they all have this internal directing force, they all have a spiritual aspect, a guiding force. Because of that, life can come about, and a directive force towards accomplishing our purpose is present in this creation. That is the fascinating thing about the realm of the spirit, the question of purpose and direction.

### **External truth and internal truth**

We want to understand who we are as human beings. What is our identity, our true identity, as human beings? That is what we are seeking in the realm of internal truth. In the physical realm, we can say we are looking for external truth. We are pursuing various disciplines of science, we research, we conduct experiments, we try to understand the natural laws, we try to understand how our bodies function, how to live a healthy life, to exercise. We spend a lot of time, we are preoccupied with all that! Science gives us the road for external truth. But internal truth, the realm of the spirit, which is more important because it gives us meaning and purpose and direction, that also needs to be pursued. More needs to be done in the realm of internal truth. That is the realm of religion, and also philosophy to some extent, which makes us think, makes us question, makes us pose the right questions.

---

**Science seeks external truth while  
religion and philosophy pursue internal  
truth**

---

We are constantly looking for understanding, to hold together the various aspects of truth, and that brings us to the insight that the world around us is in fact intelligible. What does that mean? It means it is able

to be understood, this world around us. The intelligibility of the physical world is the biggest surprise for scientists. As science makes these huge steps forward, moving on exponentially in finding out how things work in the physical world, the one thing that always baffles scientists is that we are able to understand these physical laws. It has to do with the simple understanding that all the physical laws are present in us. We are a mirror image of these physical laws. Whenever we encounter a new physical law, a new insight, there is something that resonates within us. We can actually have an understanding about quantum physics, or chemistry, or any scientific field. We keep on pressing the frontiers of science as human beings because we have that quality of understanding, which is a quality of our spirit.

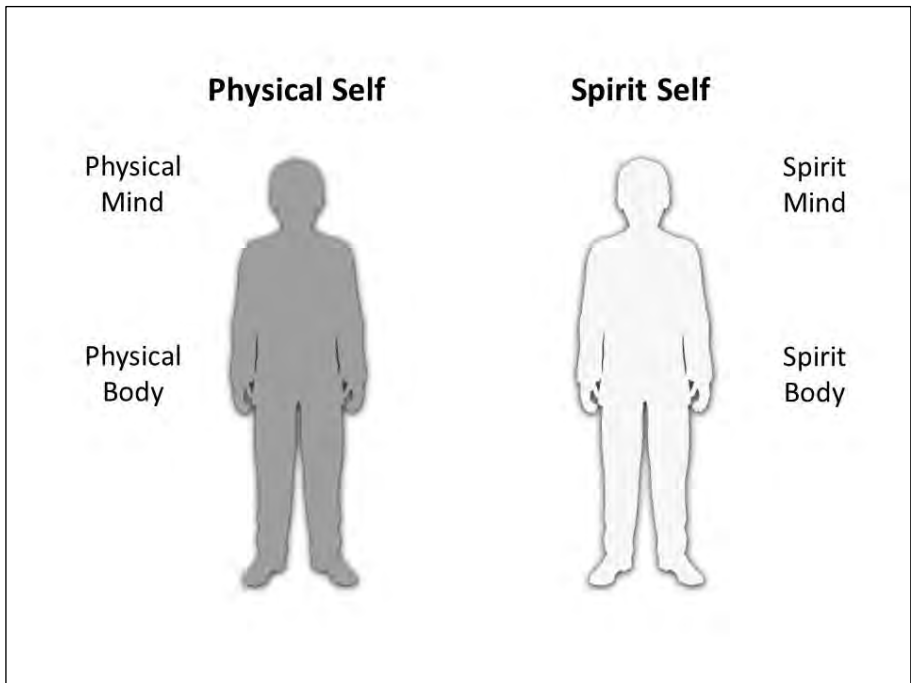
I mention all these things because that's what we are made out of, and to have that deeper self-understanding is a first step to acknowledge our identity as human beings, as spiritual and physical beings. Also, to emphasize the development of our spirit as the actual purpose we have on this earth. From a cosmic point of view, taking into account all the billions of galaxies, where we live on this little planet is just a minute speck in the universe. However, the Earth is the place where the growth of the human spirit happens. That is the deep realization of what it means to be a human being, to be on this planet for the purpose of growing and maturing, and fulfilling a distinct purpose.

### **Spirit self and physical self**

What I want to focus on now is how to understand the interaction of our spirit and body, because that has to do with the growth process. We have our spirit and our body, and in order to grow, and have harmonious interaction, what is needed? What elements are needed and how do we create harmony between the two?

Our physical body is not just a collection of atoms and molecules interacting, and chemical and electrical processes. The body has a type

of mind of its own. There is an internal directing force, an internal spiritual aspect, that belongs to the functioning of the body. The regulatory system is beyond the influence of our own spirit, but it allows the body to function as a whole. It ensures that all the metabolisms are right, the interactions of the organs. We say the body has a mind of its own. But that mind is not a conscious mind, rather it is a mind which regulates the physical functions. We can call this a “physical mind.” It controls the functions of the body which happen automatically: The heart beats, the temperature is regulated, our sense of balance is there, so many things are fulfilled all the time that we don’t even think about. We should be aware that we do have this physical mind which is connected to the physical body.



**Figure 5**

On the spirit side, we can also say there is an inner part and an external part. The testimonies are in agreement that there is something

like a spiritual body, there is a form for the spirit, not just something nebulous. There is a certain structure there which corresponds to our appearance as human beings. Thus, the spirit self would have a “spirit body,” an external form, like we have a physical body. There is also a mind for the spirit, a “spirit mind,” an inner part, which would be our consciousness, our conscious mind where we have all the experiences (see Figure 5).

What we see is a very simple principle expressed here that every entity has an internal aspect and an external form. In that polarity, existence takes its course and development is possible. We can say the spirit mind is internal and the spirit body is external. Corresponding to that, the physical mind is internal and the physical body is external.

---

**Every entity has an internal aspect and  
an external form**

---

This is the simple structure for our own self-understanding of who we are as human beings. This may not be strictly scientific, but it is experiential. It agrees with many testimonies. It is one way of describing that wholeness of who we are as human beings, microcosms of the physical and spiritual realms.

## 6. The Purpose of Creation

How should we answer the question of our original purpose? What could that be? We are here not just to survive and take care of our bodies, but we have a distinct purpose on this earthly plane. The problem is that we are not in tune with God's purpose for us. We feel some alienation from God's original purpose and we want to find our true purpose. We are not living in total harmony with the universe, with the result that our perception of spiritual reality is hindered. If we live more closely in line with the fulfilment of our original purpose, our sensitivity for the reality of our soul and also the immortality of the soul will be much elevated.

How to fulfill our purpose is a question about the "good life" that many philosophers discussed. The good life has to do with living a virtuous life, having virtues. Then what is the highest of these virtues?

The basic message from the NDE testimonies is that the more you can be loving in this life, the more you have a beautiful place in the world of the spirit. The highest value is to be loving and to be loved. If that love is accomplished, we are happy, we are fulfilled and joyful. Very simple. But on the other hand, a loving relationship is something very unique. We have to ask what conditions are needed to enter into a fulfilling loving relationship.

---

**The highest value is to be loving and to be loved**

---

Love is to be understood as a partnership, as a self-giving. God gave Himself totally to us. How do we accomplish total self-giving in our own life?

The answer has to do with our Creator, that we love God, and we love our neighbor. The two great commandments. We have various



ways to look at that commandment to be loving to our neighbor. How do we bring our love for God into our horizontal relationships in life? As we see from the testimonies, there is one basic message: use our life on this earth to become loving souls in every way possible. If we use our life here to the fullest to become this kind of loving person, caring for others, living for the sake of others, the best we can, then our eternal life will be joyful and fulfilled as well. Then we can take with us that experience of being loving. That is the goal.

Let us examine what is involved. Obviously, I cannot be loving just by myself! I have some self-love, I take care of myself, and I like myself. But that is very limited. What is involved in a basic relationship of love? It is a partnership. I need to have an object of love, an object partner. We could say God creates human beings in a partnership. We should be able to love God. Very simple.

I remember one time the minister gave his sermon saying: God loves you all, and it's like a big wire where electricity flows through where the love of God comes to you. We should be always aware of God's love and be grateful for it. Then, one of the parishioners raised his hand and said, Pastor, there is just one minor detail I want to mention, because in order for electricity to flow there has to be a second wire, something has to come back. Otherwise nothing happens. The minister was kind of disturbed at first, but then he understood and said, of course, if God is giving us His love there has to be a response. Love invites a response. That is the most basic understanding. So, if God is giving us love we need to respond. It is the giving and receiving; God is giving us love, and we are receiving the love and returning love back to God. This basic polarity and basic exchange is necessary.

## **Resemblance**

Resemblance means that we accomplish God's purpose. We fulfill that loving partnership with God. In what way can we respond to God's

love? What would you think is necessary to become qualified loving objects for God? How shall I be a qualified object for God's love? The answer is, I should resemble God. I should be an image of my Creator. This is what we read in the world religions. We are created in the image of God, to be a reflection of God. That means there is resemblance.

The nature of love implies resemblance. The interesting thing is, if you have any object in front of you, the more it resembles you the more you feel you can embrace that object and have feelings toward that object. For example, if I look at this chalk, I can say, what a beautiful object, it's useful, I can write with it, and it rubs off my hand, it's soft, it's nice, it's white. I can be very happy with this chalk. It's a nice object! But then I realize that other objects move me much more. If a little puppy dog walks in I forget about the chalk and I look at the dog. Why is it more attractive? Because we have so much in common. There is life, the body is similar to mine, it is happy to see me, it is expecting to play, throw a ball or something. In other words, the more qualified the object of love is, the more intense and fulfilling the experience of love.

---

### **The nature of love implies resemblance**

---

I could say that another human being is more qualified than any animal, because another human being has all the same qualities I have. The level of resemblance is complete with another human being. Therefore, we can conclude that we are created for the purpose of loving each other, to show love and affection. There are various levels of love, and we realize that as an individual we resemble God only as man or woman. But then we can easily figure out that God must have both aspects in His own being. He created us this way, so God definitely has a feminine characteristic as well as a masculine one. There should be harmony between the two. We see that the most fulfilling love would

be between man and woman, as it is lived and fulfilled in a God-centered marriage. It is a simple ideal, a simple way we should go to accomplish that image of God.

### Image of God

In other words, God is creating us in a very distinct way such that first we would accomplish individual maturity, that we become a loving object for God as an individual. That’s the first step. My mind and my body become harmoniously connected with each other, and in this way I accomplish the purpose of being a loving object partner for God as an individual (see Figure 6).

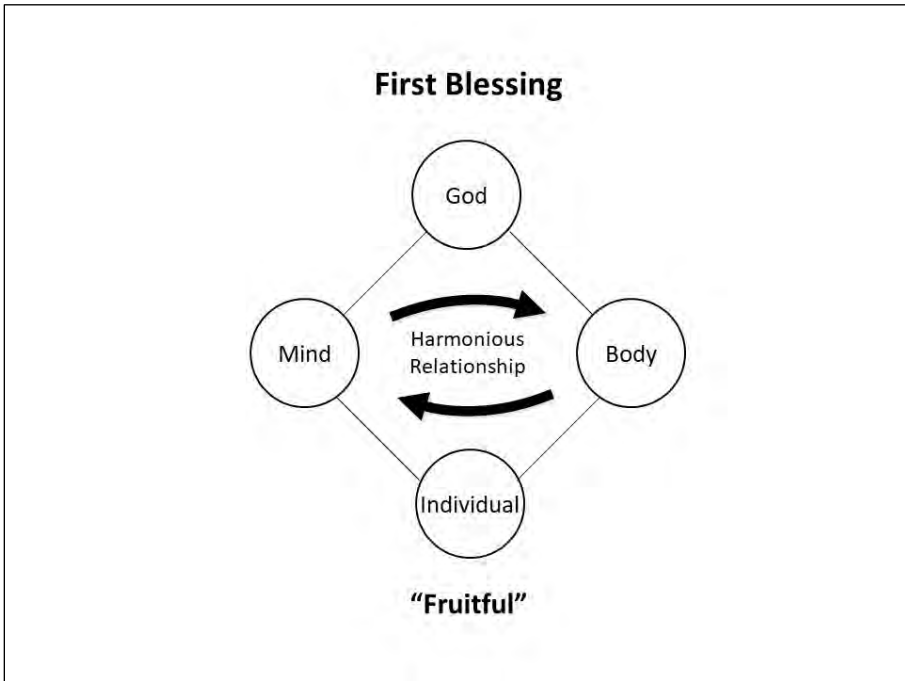


Figure 6

I become a perfected individual. That is a simple explanation of what we can call the First Blessing, as given in Genesis in the Judeo-Christian tradition: “Be fruitful.” We have to grow, not just physically

but spiritually as well. As individuals we grow to maturity. We love God as an individual, as a man or a woman. We are an object partner for God's love.

Then we see God's love also should unfold horizontally. God's vertical love comes to us as individual human beings. The second step would be that God gives His love to man and woman, and that would be the marital relationship. We have these two, man and woman, as they mature and as they grow to that individual perfection. Then in their oneness, in their mutual compatibility, they present one loving object partner for God: man and woman united in love.

This may sound idealistic because this world is riddled with problems, especially in marriage and family. The point is to understand the potential, that original intention we are carrying with us in our own original mind and in our spirit. God's image is seen here as the total manifestation of masculinity and femininity in a harmonious relationship of love, so that those two can become the loving object partner for God. God can be the center of their love. That would be the ideal family (see Figure 7).

We have the offspring, the children, as the continuation, the unfolding of God's love in creation through the multiplication of human beings, which is the Second Blessing. After being fruitful it says "multiply" in Genesis 1:28. It is very simple, but also a very deep understanding of what it means to be God's image, to fulfill that resemblance.

We have a very precious purpose that is geared towards understanding the true love of God, and being a receptacle, to be a container and a multiplier of God's love in our life. All that has to do with maturation. We become more and more attuned to God's presence in our life and we accomplish our true potential. Originally God wanted to unfold the various aspects of His love in this ideal family. We say the family

and the physical realm in this world is a school of love. That's why we are here.

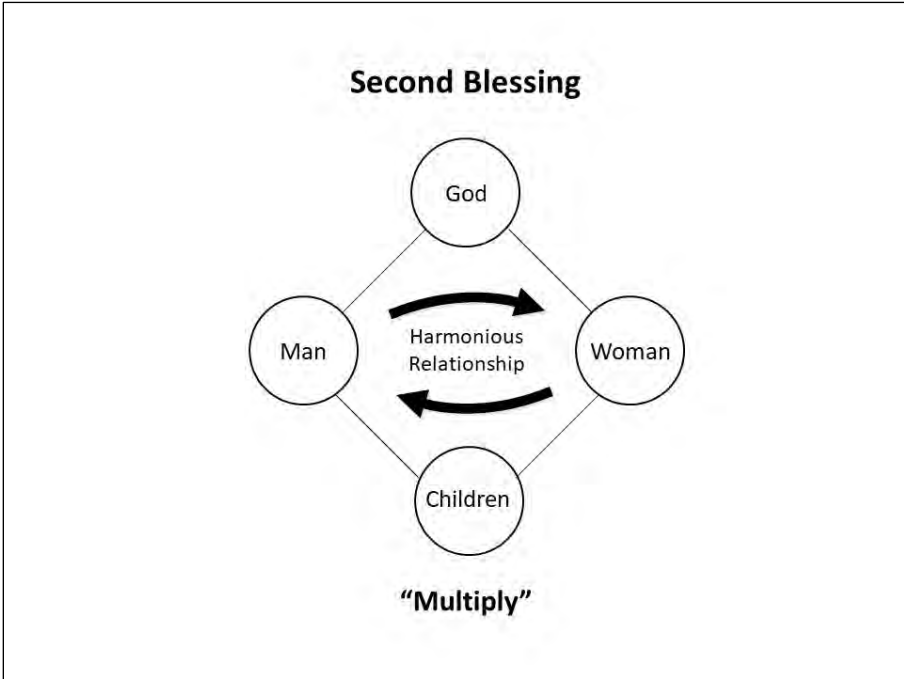


Figure 7

Once we accomplish that, once we grow to that perfection, then the quality of true love of God would permeate our whole being, and with that we can take care of the creation. We have loving dominion over creation, which is then the Third Blessing: "Have dominion over the fish in the sea" and so on, in the Genesis story (see Figure 8).

Today we have a problem because we are exploiting the environment, taking everything out and giving just junk back and poisoning things. We are not caretakers, we are not stewards over creation. Dominion is misunderstood by present man. It should be dominion of love, which is centered on these perfections, on these stages. Ultimately, the Third Blessing is that we would have God in our midst and each mature person would treat all things of creation with respect and with love.

That would mean loving dominion. That is the final step in this process, to fulfill loving dominion over creation, bringing about the ideal world.

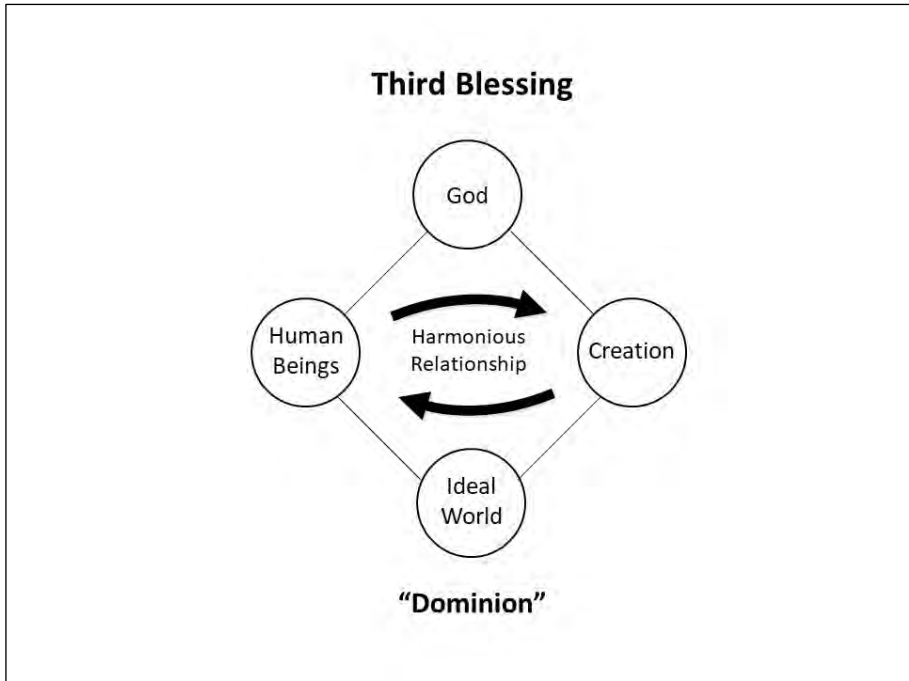


Figure 8

## Free will

If I think of God giving His whole nature to us, kind of emptying Himself out to us, God would not hold back anything to create human beings. He wants to see us as human beings be so unique, so lovable, that we even exceed God’s own nature, in some sense. Of course, that is a kind of extreme thought, but what I mean by it is that the finest quality of love can only be accomplished if this dimension of uniqueness is fulfilled. I mentioned before that every one of us is a totally unique spirit. There is no second one exactly like us. So that in itself raises our understanding and explains our relationship with God in more depth.

One point which explains this uniqueness is that God's ultimate self-giving to us as human beings has to do with receiving the gift of free will. We have free will, and with that free will we are responsible to shape our character. We should invest that ability to make free decisions in our personal growth. Everyone develops a certain personality with his or her own effort. There is an effort behind it, and there is free will behind that. God gives us this tremendous gift of free will because a loving relationship requires the free response of the partner. If God would control us somewhere in the background with some special law, so we would do exactly what He wants, then we would be just robots. The ideal of love could not be realized. But if there is a genuine free response from the object partner of love, which we should be, then that uniqueness can come about; then we can develop that unique personality, because we have free will.

---

**Human beings have the gift of free will,  
not license**

---

Free will doesn't mean license to do whatever I want. Free will is always focused on a clear purpose. I am going to accomplish a very clear purpose, and I apply my free will in that direction. For example, suppose I want to drive to Montana. That's my free decision. But the moment I have that goal, I employ my free will to create all the conditions to accomplish that goal. So free will has always direction to it. I get a car, I check the tires, I put gas in, and then I realize in order to accomplish the goal to go to Montana I need to do what? Observe the traffic laws! I cannot say, I do what I want with my free will! I am totally obedient to the traffic laws. That ensures my accomplishment of my original free decision to go there.

This is just a metaphor for spiritual development. In other words, there are spiritual laws to follow, ethical laws, moral laws, which we

need to learn. If I follow them, then I can accomplish my ultimate goal of loving God with all my heart and becoming a unique son or daughter of God. That is the goal for our spiritual life.

## **Object partner for God's love**

The general understanding to be loving now takes on a concrete shape. That original purpose is that we can become object partners for God's love; that we have that potential to totally express and communicate God's love to the people around us, to creation, and especially within our families. In the family there are all these relationships, between husband and wife, and parents and children, where the various aspects of God's love are actually lived out and experienced. The family, in its ideal conception, becomes the school of love.

---

### **The family is the school of love**

---

In all the testimonies we hear about people who had a NDE and came back, their first major statement is to become loving persons in this physical life, to overcome resentments and always be a peacemaker, and to allow God's love to flow through us and to fill this whole creation. That's very comforting, and it's very powerful. It means that, no matter how grim it looks with all the terrorism and suffering going on and all the fear we have, ultimately the purpose is to unfold the power of God's love in this creation through the perfection of human beings, and through the formation of ideal families where God's love can dwell. That is how our purpose can find its true expression.

Here we have the answer to our most basic question, which was asked from the time of the Ancient Greeks until now: what is the good life? What do we have to do to attain happiness? Everybody wants to be happy. But true happiness is not that fleeting moment of feeling some pleasure, rather it has to do with our whole life, how can our



whole life be a meaningful, fulfilled life. And the answer is we live according to our original purpose, to become instruments for God's love. That means to become loving spirits. That's what we are here for.

We should experience God's love in its various aspects, as individuals we relate to God as our parent, then as husband and wife in marriage and having a family. Through the family we experience conjugal love, and parent-child love, and growing up in our childhood we have sibling love, brother and sister love. These are all aspects of God's love within the family. That is the school of love. We feel this is fulfilling; if I have a life like that then I would say that brings me joy and fulfillment, and that's the goal in my life.

## **Dual purposes**

One final point I would like to comment on regarding our purpose of creation is that we actually have dual purposes. We have on the one hand a law of individual purpose, and then we have also another law of the purpose of the whole. Whatever we do in life we are always confronted with these two purposes.

---

### **We have both an individual purpose and a purpose for the whole**

---

In our daily life we look after ourselves. We have our individual purpose, but that individual purpose is only justified when we incorporate at the same time the purpose for the whole. We live for the sake of liberating God, because God intended us to be totally loving and pure and manifesting that ideal of true love. But love has to do with a free response. We as individual beings should respond to that invitation and love of God. If we turn our back on God, which unfortunately happened if you look at human history, then there is unrequited love. There is a

certain grief, or a certain pain or suffering on the part of God towards us as human beings.

The individual purpose is that we care for our own survival and our own well-being, but at the same time the purpose for the whole means we are always aware that we are part of a historical process. We, as historical beings living now, we can make a difference in how humankind will develop. We can contribute to the overall purpose of bringing humankind to full salvation, to bringing us to that realm of goodness and true love and overcoming any kind of abuse and evil.

If we think about it, any loving relationship which is not responded to creates a certain pain in the one who initiated that love. What I want to point out is that the purpose of the whole means to liberate this universe and to liberate God Himself from lack of love, from abusive love, from all the evils which we experienced in the past. In that sense we all can be historical figures to contribute to that process.

The interesting thing is that the testimonies tell us that what really is important in life is the kind actions we do towards each other. Even small kind actions which come from a pure heart are so precious. Kind things we do to help other people, just small things like helping an elderly person across the street, they seem to reach deeper into our heart. Any little gesture of kindness, it not just lifts us up, it uplifts the other person. We should be aware of how love multiplies, how goodness can bring more fruit in other people.

It all comes down to putting our lives into the service of that higher purpose. To always say, can I help others? Not just caring for my well-being but always reaching out to others, counseling others, helping them, trying to rescue families which are on the rocks, whatever may help. In that sense we are all called to continue on that path of growth and maturation and see our lives within those two parameters: The purpose of the individual requires that we educate ourselves, that we grow

as individual beings; but then we are responsible towards the whole, to our community, to our society, our nation, and ultimately to the spiritual realm. This means to contribute to the liberation of all the evil forces in the world, and, through that, hell would come eventually to an end. The only power to do that is the power of true love, genuine love that comes from God.

## **Part 2: Preparation for Eternal Life in the Spiritual Realm**

---

By Dietrich F. Seidel

In the physical world we have the phenomenon of growth and development. All the things around us appear based on laws, laws of growth, laws of development. Values and virtues are expressions of spiritual laws. It is very natural to strive to live according to the virtues, such as the virtue of justice, or courage, or temperance. We strive to have total command of our spirit over our body, because that brings harmony between our spirit and body. In the long run it pays great dividends, because if we have a better self-understanding we can live in a more heavenly way, more attuned to those spiritual laws and our overall purpose.

We are all in the same boat, we are all human beings, we all wonder what is the spirit and how to have the right understanding about it, how to invest in knowing more about it. Our Creator gave us a spirit and a body, and obviously there was a purpose to be fulfilled. The accomplishment of that purpose, accomplishment of the perfection of our spirit, goes through the physical world. Any growth, any maturation, needs to be accomplished through the physical dimension, through interaction with our body. The more harmoniously our mind and body can interact, the more we are in control of our emotions, the more we have that mind-body unity, then to the degree that we accomplish our purpose, we advance in that process of maturation.

We are born as babies, and we have a tiny undeveloped spirit. Through experience, with information received through our senses, we gain understanding and we develop. We see the phenomenon of growth

involves very unique characteristics in each person's human life. This means spiritual growth doesn't happen just as a natural law, but it happens through personal participation. I have to invest something in my spiritual growth. It does not happen automatically like my physical body, which just grows. I give it food, I take care of it, and it grows to maturity. But my spiritual growth, my ability to love, which is actually the goal of spiritual growth, that comes only if I make some investment. I invest my own freedom and responsibility. That growth and development happens in this physical world, through our physical body. Therefore, we must recognize the preciousness of our physical body. It is only in harmony with the physical body that the spirit matures and the mature personality can be present in the spiritual world.

This physical life is a growing experience, and once we fulfill our purpose here we feel free to go. If we lived a full life, we are 80, 90, or 100 years old, and our children are grown, and we were loving people, then we happily ascend to the eternal world with our spirit matured. Death comes to all of us. Is it not better to be prepared?

I want to quote from Betty Eadie's "Embraced by the Light." She had a NDE and then had the chance to explore the world of the spirit. She was guided to different situations by spirit guides:

I was puzzled. The guides then helped me to understand. We all have needs, not just the poor. And all of us have made commitments in the spirit world to help each other. But we are slow to keep our covenants made so long ago. So the Lord sends angels to prompt us, to help us be true to these obligations. He won't force us, but he can prompt us. We don't know who these beings are. They appear like anybody else. But they are with us more often than we know.

I didn't feel rebuked but I knew I had clearly misunderstood and underestimated the Lord's help for us here. He will give us all the help he can without interfering in our personal agency and free will. We must be willing to help each other. We must be willing to see that the poor are as worthy of our esteem as the rich. We must be willing to accept all others, even those different from us. All are worthy of our love and kindness. We have no right to be intolerant or angry or fed up. We have no right to look down at others, or condemn them in our hearts. The only thing we can take with us from this life is the good we have done to others. I saw that all of our good deeds and kind words will come back to bless us a hundredfold after this life. Our strength will be found in our charity.<sup>36</sup>

I found this to be a nice summary of preparing for the spiritual world. What comes up is that it's not the big things. It's that habit of kindness, the habit of wanting to help, living for the sake of others, perceiving life here as a school of love, discovering every day what love really means, and separating out abusive love and all the distortions we encounter every day. This is a simple reminder as to what it means to live a life which prepares us well for the spiritual world.

---

<sup>36</sup> Eadie, *Embraced by the Light*, p. 101.

## 7. Spiritual Laws

How shall we perceive the world of the spirit? Besides the testimonies from the near-death experiences, what can we understand about the reality of the spirit world? Even more important, how do we prepare for that in this life? Obviously, it makes a big difference to how we live here. If we live well here, we will have a good place in the spiritual world.

One step we could take is to look at a few spiritual principles. We said the world of the spirit is orderly. There is law there, spiritual law, similar to the natural law in this world. The plants and animals and the weather and everything has a certain underlying law. There is the law which encompasses the conditions for life, and there are other physical laws, we have the celestial laws, and so on. We are familiar with an order in the physical world. But the interesting thing is that there is also an order in the spiritual world. These are laws which we want to understand more so we can live better lives.

One is to see our physical lives as a school of love and that the atmosphere in the spiritual world is an atmosphere of love. The metaphor to describe the world of spirit is that we are entering a loving atmosphere. The more we are ready to give love and receive love the more comfortable we feel. If we lived very selfish lives here, then we feel separated from that loving atmosphere, or we feel judged by this vibration of perfect or true love.

That brings up the whole question of judgment. It is said that after death there is a judgment. You go to heaven or you go to hell. Therefore, the fear of death comes up because nobody is sure where they will go. We don't know how much we lived up to a certain standard that we are not too certain about. We should reach spiritual maturity, where there is no fear of death. That's the ideal, that's the goal. We should see

death as a natural passage, the fulfillment of this life. Our spirit is matured, we learned how to love, and we continue to love in the world of the spirit. We continue to fulfill the existing spiritual laws. They are not so separated from this life, because we live here already in the world of the spirit with our spirit self. We are connected with this body so we have the chance to have experiences. Our physical senses, our actions, all of that helps our spirit to grow. And the body gives us the vitality and the strength to go through this growing experience.

We can say, there are certain spiritual laws and they help us to orient our lives in the right way. We move towards that maturation, and we can accomplish our goal in this life. These spiritual laws are quite evident in our life here, and it's a question of being more conscious of them, to reflect on them, and see how they apply in our life. If there are certain situations where I think I have the right to be upset, or to be angry at someone because I was mistreated, then I can remember these spiritual laws and think maybe the right response is not to be upset but to give back goodness, to give back a healing energy to that person or to that situation, rather than insisting on my right to even out the situation by being angry at this other person.

---

**Spiritual laws guide us in our spiritual growth so that we may accomplish our original purpose**

---

Socrates discussed the phenomenon of death. He was found guilty by the Athenian court that he deceived the young people and had other gods, so he was accused and was condemned to death. He faced death, and before that he gave a speech about how the philosopher sees death. In this speech he said that he was always striving to live out the virtues so that there was no fear of death. Death is something most natural. We can pass on without regret. That was Socrates' understanding.



But he said that state has to be cultivated; it doesn't come by itself. We have to live a life of self-examination, applying the virtues, living a life of complete virtue. And for the Greeks that meant to have justice, to have wisdom, to have temperance and courage and holiness. Holiness was the final virtue for them. If all that can be accomplished in our physical lives, then there is no fear of death.

The point is always to live up to certain values and standards in our spiritual life which can allow genuine growth, that we would constantly develop, constantly mature, and not be distracted by emotions which are destructive, which are against the law of love. We have pointers from all the faith traditions to the same spiritual laws, and they help us in this world to stimulate the maturation of our spirit.

---

**If we live in harmony with the spiritual  
laws we have no reason to fear death**

---

Now I want to outline a few of these spiritual laws, because they are a constant guide for this earthly life to be successful on that path of growth and maturation. They can help us in our daily effort to live loving lives and to overcome and eliminate the fear of death. If we live in harmony with these spiritual laws then there is no reason to be fearful of death.

### **Law of cosmic justice**

One guiding principle is the law of cause and effect, or the law of cosmic justice. This spiritual law says whenever there is cause, there is effect. Whatever I sow I will reap. This basic law of cosmic justice is expressed in various scriptures.

For example, in Galatians 6:7 it says,

Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows, he will also reap.

And in the Adi Granth, the sacred scripture of Sikhism, it says,

As a man sows, so is his rewards. Nothing by empty talk is determined. Anyone swallowing poison must die. Brother, behold the Creator's justice. As are a man's action so is his recompense.

### **Law of giving and receiving**

The second spiritual law would be the law of giving and receiving. This connects with the first law of cosmic justice: If I do something good I can expect goodness to come back; if I do something evil or harmful, I am harmed in the same way. That is the law of karma. The law of giving and receiving means training on this earth to always try to find a situation to develop my willingness to give, to be unconditionally giving. If I am always training myself to give and to forget, to be always serving, to sacrifice for others, to live for the sake of others according to the Golden Rule, if that is my habit, my spiritual habit, then I don't have to worry about what is coming back.

This spiritual law tells me I will receive in like kind, I will receive that love or that service, which in turn encourages me more to be more giving. That leads to a continuing, a perpetual application of this simple law.

### **Law of restitution**

The law of restitution means that if something goes wrong, if I did something against the cosmic law, then I have to make amends for it. I have to indemnify my mistake. In that sense there is total justice

throughout the universe. There is justice in the realm of the spirit and justice here in the physical realm.

The law of restitution has to do with repayment of any debt which we incur in this physical life; not just monetary debt, but a debt of having hurt someone, having caused grief or pain to others. That spiritual debt is much more delicate to handle and it needs a special condition. It needs forgiveness, it needs an apology, it needs that ability to say I'm sorry and really humbling ourselves, and overcoming the pride that usually stands in the way of forgiveness. We are always called to make amends for whatever wrong happened. If we can be successful in that area then we will not go to the spiritual world with debt.

Those who commit crimes on this earth, they feel earth-bound because their spirit is not free to move in the spirit world. They want to stay right where they committed their crime, because they realize they need to pay back something; they need to make a condition to be liberated from the effects of their bad deed. Earth-bound spirits are not free to go on to better places in the spirit world, but they have to stay back and have to work out their situation within an earth-bound state. They stay in an atmosphere that is like them. We attract the atmosphere where we are with our own spirit. The criminals stay with the criminals, and those that want to be loving and giving are attracted to similar people. It is a very simple law, a law of attraction.

---

**Spirits may be earth-bound when they need to pay back some debt they incurred through misdeeds in their physical life**

---

If you remember the movie "Ghost" there was a similar situation, where the spirit is earth-bound. From the movie we learn that if an accident happens, the person may not be bad but there is a shock at

suddenly being out of their body, and they don't even recognize that they died. It takes them a while to realize where they are, and that they started a new life as a spirit and their physical body is dead. They need a certain time to develop their adjustment to their new life. We saw in this movie that the person who was killed stayed around for a while until everything was cleared up, and then he could move on.

## **Law of persecution**

Besides those three laws, there is also the law of persecution. Blessing will flow from the persecutor to the persecuted, if a proper attitude is maintained by the latter. That is another spiritual law. Here are some quotes which illustrate this point.

From the Indian spiritual master, Sai Baba:

Whoever harms a harmless person, one pure and guiltless,  
upon that very fool the evil recoils like fine dust thrown  
against the wind.

From Jesus' words:

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness  
sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you  
when others revile you and persecute you and utter all  
kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice  
and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so  
they persecuted the prophets who were before you  
(Matthew 5:10-12)

Also from Jesus:

But I say unto you, love your enemies. Bless them that  
curse you. Do good to them that hate. And pray for them  
which despitefully use you and persecute you (Matthew  
5:44).

If we are persecuted, if we go through pain and struggle and even if we reach a point where we cannot take it anymore, this law of persecution says that we should not pay back in kind. We should have the strength to love our enemies. That we should even reach the point of loving those that persecute us. If we do not react in kind but develop that dedication and that total enthusiasm and strength to go beyond these experiences of persecution, then in doing that we build up merit. We built up goodness naturally, and we build up healing power for all these resentments, for all these difficulties which led to situations where people persecute each other or are unkind to each other. That would be the highest spiritual law. If we could develop that kind of life we would transcend the most destructive powers and we would bring healing to these destructive powers.

---

**These universal laws show a certain  
order in the world of the spirit**

---

These laws show a certain order in the world of the spirit. They are very easy to understand. It may be difficult to live according to them, but they at least provide some guidance. For example, I could learn from the law of giving and receiving that I should cultivate the ethic of giving. I will strive to be generous, share my blessings with others around me. It has to be a habit of the spirit. It doesn't come easily but I can train myself to do that. If I give, I give joyfully. That's the attitude behind it. That is part of our spiritual growth. If I give, I give unconditionally. It's not that I have some thoughts in the back of my mind, or I am calculating, but I have this generous attitude and give unconditionally. To round that out, we had the law of persecution. This is where we have the commandment to love our enemies, the highest law we understand in this context, which requires quite a maturity in our ability to love.

The spiritual world has these laws, and we are part of that, and the more we understand them, the more we can apply them, and the more we can be successful in our spiritual growth. The point is to develop a natural attitude towards life in the spirit world. It is the natural consequence of life in this world. Again, if we are more familiar with these principles involved and the laws, and live a good life here, then there is no need to be fearful of death. There is a lot we are not so aware of, but whatever happens there is an order. There are spiritual laws at work. Everything that happens in terms of development, paying indemnity, moving from a bad place to a better place, all that happens according to spiritual laws.

Spiritual growth involves living out these laws. These are simple insights which you may have picked up already throughout your life, but it's good to see them in the larger context of an orderly lawful constitution of the spiritual world. These laws are universal, they apply to all religious traditions. They are very simple laws and they are attested in many scriptures. We will not be asked what denomination or religion we are, but how much could you love, how much could you be truthful to your own teaching, whatever that is. It is the living out of ideals and values that determines our place in the spiritual world.

## 8. Spiritual Growth

The purpose of life is that we develop our mature personality in this lifetime, and then, as we pass on, that personality and its uniqueness will remain. The loving relationships we created remain, and especially our love for God will remain.

We see death as a rite of passage, similar to birth. In our life we have three phases. The first phase is in our mother's womb. We spend nine months there being formed. It is a realm of water, of liquid. Then we are born into this world. This is the physical world, the world of air, where we breathe air. Then, as we leave our physical body behind, we move on into the world of the spirit. The atmosphere in the spirit world is the presence of God's love, and how much God's love can be expressed in our own being. In this world we breathe love. That's the eternity, that's the goal we are moving towards.

---

**There are three phases to our life: in the womb, on the earth, and in the spirit world**

---

In terms of our spiritual journey, we understand that there is a purpose, a goal for our life. We are to become a mature spirit, a spirit who lives in this life experiencing God's love in various forms, especially in our interaction with other human beings. I would say the original purpose for our creation is exactly to build that loving partnership with God. And how is it done? That maturation is not an automatic process but involves personal investment, commitment on our part to develop towards that goal.

I associate physical existence with that unique possibility to grow, to shape my spirit, to become that loving person. Then I strive to fulfill my original purpose, which means to enter into a partnership of love

with God, and to give this love to the people around me, and especially to see the family itself, family relationships, as the school of love. This is how God's love is disseminated. In this life we should experience the various aspects of God's love, which is the love between husband and wife, between parents and children, between brother and sister. There are these various realms of heart or realms of love. If the fullness of that love can be experienced, then our spirit matures and we live in that constant loving partnership with God.

We also represent our own lineage. Without our ancestors, without our lineage going back hundreds or even thousands of generations, we would not exist. It is all there, their spiritual efforts, or their spiritual development, is our foundation. Here we are, as historical figures. What are we doing with our lives? Can we ennoble the effort of our ancestors? Can we contribute to the healing of past mistakes and difficulties, and problems? Or, are we part of the problem with our life? There is that challenge. Obviously, there is a continuum. We are connected to our lineage, to our ancestors, and we are responsible for what we pass on to our children. Can we give them the good values we are convinced about, can we raise them as God-loving children, and in that sense, multiply God's influence on this earth? And allow God's presence to be with us in a more stable and enduring fashion.

---

**The growth of our spirit takes place  
through the physical body**

---

How does the growth of our spirit happen? The body is necessary for maturation to happen. What is the body doing? When do we feel we are very creative, and we are hungry to learn something or to move on in our life? When do those moments come? These are moments of great physical health and strength. We are inspired, we feel good, we have a certain harmony between our mind and body.



If I am sick and exhausted, all I want is rest, have a meal and go to bed. In the morning, I wake up, I am revived, I am ready for another day. I go to school, I learn something, I go to work, I interact with people, I have experiences, I love people, I help them, my spirit starts growing. The body is doing what? Giving me that needed vitality. That is a most basic need, or characteristic, for spiritual growth. The body becomes the soil in which the plant of the spirit can grow. As the soil gives nutrients to the plant, so the body gives vitality to the spirit. With that vitality, with that healthy body, and harmonious interaction, we go out into this world and we are creative and find fulfilment in life. We are joyful. These elements needed for spiritual growth can be called “vitality elements,” elements of vitality which the body provides for our spirit.

There are other elements coming to our spirit. It is not just the vitality from our physical body. When do we feel uplifted spiritually? We have more elements, which can be called “life elements,” which means inspiration from God. From the viewpoint of God, our Creator who gave us life, He wants us to be successful on this path of life. There is inspiration coming, there is God’s love coming, His guidance, His revelation; these lift up our spirit. These are life elements for spiritual growth. These life elements are love and truth, and the source of them is God.

In return, when the spirit is growing and healthy, it returns what can be called “spirit elements” to the body. If I live my life in an intimate relationship with God, if I have my prayer life, if I meditate, if I do good things, if I love others, if I live for the sake of others, all these conditions allow my spirit to grow and be healthy, and a healthy spirit gives energy to the body to be healthy and active. It is a cycle of harmonious giving and receiving of energy between the body and the spirit (see Figure 9).

The physical body also needs nutrients to grow and be healthy. We have food and water, and also air and light, these are necessary elements for physical life. We need sunlight, air, food and water, the ingredients for the development of our body.

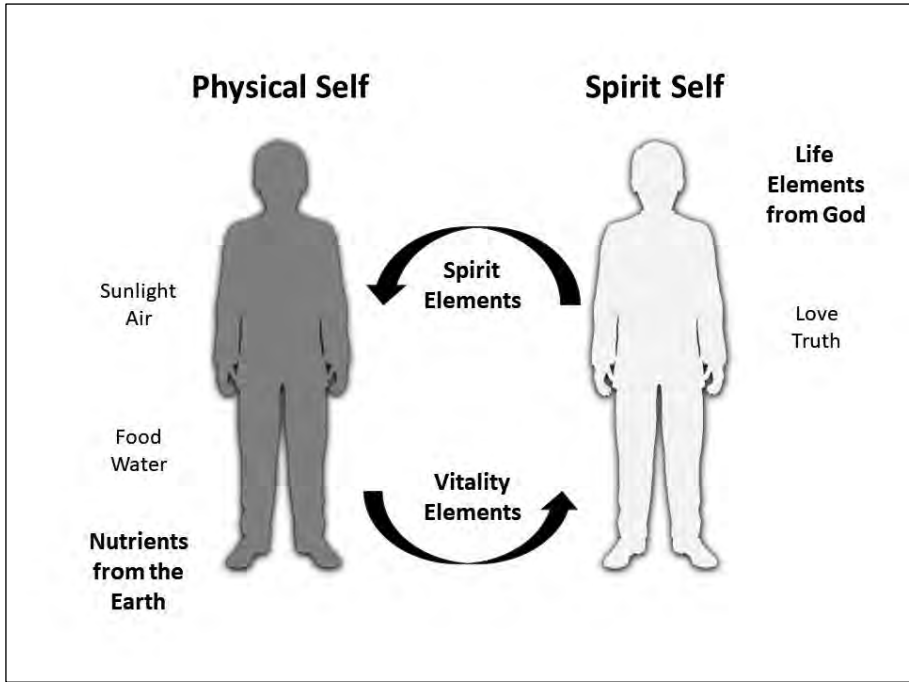


Figure 9

This, then is an overall summary of who we are as human beings, and how much that harmony between spirit and body is crucial for our spiritual growth. When we understand this, we know that we should care for our physical body. The body is so precious, let's keep it healthy. Let's stay away from all abuses, let's have a healthy diet and exercise, because that's what our spirit would appreciate. Then the vitality is genuine and strong and good. In the same sense, I don't want to pollute my spirit. I don't want to go to some low level dark places. I want to be in a bright shining atmosphere. I want to have good elements to feed my spirit.

We can monitor which influences we allow to come to our spirit. We don't want to be interrupted by all these unwanted phone calls. We have our answering machines; we listen carefully, which phone call do I answer, which ones are important? And the rest should leave messages. In the same way, the input for our spiritual life has to be carefully monitored. Anything which violates the spiritual order, the spiritual principles, is detrimental to our spirit. Don't think I can just watch bad movies, violent movies, or whatever, it doesn't hurt me. Everything influences our spirit. So, why not choose a good influence, and be happy about it and grow in the right direction. Choose what is needed for our spiritual well-being.

---

**We should choose the influences on  
our spirit very wisely**

---

Once we die and our physical body is gone and we live as spirit entities in the spiritual world then this means of growth is limited, because that vitality is not there. If there is no physical body, there is no vitality element. So then, the big question is, can there be growth in the spirit world?

## 9. Is there Spiritual Growth in the Spirit World?

After our physical death, after our body disintegrates, our spirit survives. The more loving we are in this life, the more we fill it with service and good deeds, and giving God's love to other people, the more our spirit grows in the right direction and we find fulfilment. Then there is a big question: Are we ready, in that moment when we face death, can we pass on without regret?

We go through a growing experience in order that we become loving people, and that is the goal. We have a mandate, a mandate to become loving spirits, loving personalities. I am born as a new creation, I have a body and a soul, a spirit, both together, and then I should grow and fulfill my purpose. If it goes well, I reach perfection, I live in the love of God, and then I live with God in eternity. That is the normal way of accomplishing it.

---

**We have free will and responsibility to mature our spirit during our life on the earth**

---

But it is not an automatic process. We have free will, we have responsibility. There has to be personal responsibility involved in that process. If I deviate from that original God-given purpose, I cause suffering. That is the whole problem of evil. People are deviating, they deny God, they deny this original loving purpose. They abuse that gift of love.

Originally, if we could have fulfilled God's will for the original purpose of our creation, then it could have been done in one lifetime. However, we don't all achieve the goal of spiritual perfection on earth, because we live in rebellion against God. There is a certain alienation. We have the story of the Fall in the Bible, and we understand something

is not as harmonious as it should have been. But still in the depths of our own being, that original purpose is engraved in our hearts. We always want to become more loving people. Even if I don't have a physical body, there is this longing to make up for the things I couldn't fulfill on this earth; there is a longing to mature also in the life of the spirit. Once I am created, then there is a certain unchanging dimension to my personality and of course I want to develop in the realm of the spirit.

Because of this deviation and all this evil, we see some growth needs to happen in the world of the spirit. Ideally, we grow and have a normal life and fulfill our purpose. But because of all these difficulties, and derailment, and rebellion we are living in, we are not fulfilling that. We are deformed, we are hurting, we are abusing love, and with that baggage we go to the spirit world. Then that kind of spiritual realm is exactly where we go. That means, to one degree or the other, it means separation from God. It means a lack of love, a lack of fulfillment.

Someone may have passed on to the spiritual world in an immature state, in a state which was not loving, had resentments, or committed a crime, or whatever. As they leave their body and enter the spirit world they become aware of what they are actually missing. The pain is that they cannot connect with that all-consuming love which God wants to offer us. In other words, they are not ready to be loving partners for God. They need more growth, more purification. Then the question is, how can this happen in the spiritual world. How do we come out of that? This goes to the question of what happens to people who are isolated from God or alienated from God. How can they be helped; how can they grow?

Obviously, it can happen more quickly here. I could go to the people and apologize for having hurt them. I can be loving. I can be serving. I can overcome resentments. I can use this life in a most effective way to promote spiritual growth. Spiritual growth, or the

experience of growing in the experience of love, happens through this physical body. This is the preciousness of this body that we connect the experience we have here with our spirit, and we can have that education and that schooling in how to be loving.

This world here, this earth, can be understood as the womb of the universe. Here is where spiritual growth happens. Here is where we have our physical bodies and our spirit. They interact, they help each other to live a good life, and the harvest of that good life is the perfected, loving spirit. That's what we all want to be. If that is not accomplished in this life, because we made mistakes, or we were self-ish, whatever the reason, then some unfinished work needs to be accomplished to reach perfection.

---

**Growth in the spirit world is possible,  
through connection with those living  
on the earth**

---

I would say, definitely there has to be a possibility for spiritual growth in the realm of the spirit. This body is so precious because it gives us the vitality, the sense experiences, everything we need for growth and the experience of love in this life. If this body is no longer here, it is more difficult to do it in the realm of the spirit. Still, I totally affirm the possibility of spiritual growth in the life of the spirit, but there has to be some connection, the coming back of the spirit to connect to someone on earth. There has to be some kind of communication with people who live on earth, so that the spirit can actually grow.

We discussed before that in the case of a car accident the person who dies may become an earth-bound spirit. They may hover around the place of the accident, unable to move on, stuck in their development. I heard a testimony that such a spirit may cause a similar accident

to occur at that location. This is the attempt of the spirit to find liberation by influencing someone to do just the same thing that he went through. It is only if this other person has the presence of mind not to go into that accident, despite the spirit's influence, that he would be liberated.

These earth-bound spirits, if there is a crime or something that is not a natural death, usually the spirits hang around for a period of time depending on the seriousness of the situation. Then we have the phenomenon of ghosts, where spirits make their presence known. With suicides it is similar. Their spirits are attracted to people who contemplate suicide. If the spirit's presence influences the living person, but finally the person decides not to commit suicide, that feeling of not doing it and having that strength to go over that temptation helps the earth-bound spirit to come out of his own imprisonment in that feeling. That is part of the process. It happens with addiction too. Addiction is like imprisonment. Sometimes the drug addict will influence people to use drugs. Then somebody decides he wants to overcome the addiction and makes the effort. Eventually it's not just for the sake of the person who is doing it, but also for those spirits who participate in that process.

Ideally, we should do all the growing here, in this earthly time. We should have a full life. But if that is not accomplished, if there is something still unfulfilled, there is the understanding that the spirit has to reconnect with this world because growth happens here, and out of that reconnection eventual perfection of the spirit can happen, beyond this physical life.

The question is how to connect with this physical world. One theory is reincarnation, or transmigration of souls; the Greeks believed in transmigration. Another theory would be some cooperation of those spirits with those on earth to allow growth to happen, and different ways of approaching that. But in essence, the goal, as shown by the testimonies, is to affirm that loving presence and to see that the ultimate

goal in our spiritual life is to live in the loving presence of God and to live that kind of consciousness in this world. Through living a good life in this world, we will have a happy eternal life in the next world.



## 10. What about Hell?

We create our own hell. Separation from God, or darkness, that's what hell is. We know our true potential and our dignity as human beings. If we short change that, and if we violate that, we feel in turmoil. We feel we are not living up to our potential, and what God intended us to be. But then it's also our source of recovery, because we are always called back to that original position to be in a loving relationship with God. As much as we may be unforgiving towards ourselves, or rebellious against God, still we have this longing for true love, longing to receive the love from our Creator. Eventually we will turn around and set the conditions to overcome these obstacles of abuse and bad deeds, whatever happened in the past.

---

**Hell means separation from God, but it is not eternal**

---

Hell is not eternal. That's what I believe. How can a most loving God create an eternal hell? It doesn't fit. We create hell out of our own abusive behavior towards the gifts of God. We have a hard time to forgive ourselves, if we listen to our own hearts, whatever disappointment may have happened in our lives. But God is always ready to forgive. If we understand that, and turn around, to that degree we overcome any kind of hell. That's the first thing, to see the dignity and the original purpose of human beings, and the potential for accomplishing that restorative path by cooperating with God's purpose. Like the Prodigal Son story says, God is the first one to forgive us and welcome us back. Hell cannot be eternal; it is a temporary problematic situation in the world of the spirit. Eventually it will be resolved through the repeated serious efforts of individuals to overcome the effects of sinful behavior.

No matter how difficult or how dark the spirit world may be in certain realms, because of the Fall and because of evil, we have to always focus on the love of God as being the most powerful love which can then bring healing and rectification of these abusive and evil forces. We are all involved in that process. There are spirit guides and people who are selfless and sacrificial who work to liberate those in lower places. We are constantly guided or inspired to add to the good side, to strengthen the good forces, and to enable all the evil forces to be restored and to be healed.

## **Suicides**

There are a number of NDE reports that testify to the serious nature of taking one's own life through suicide. Raymond Moody reported two different people whose near-death experiences taught them that suicide was wrong, and that there would be severe penalties in the afterlife. The first one said:

I got the feeling that two things it was completely forbidden for me to do would be to kill myself or to kill another person. ... If I were to commit suicide, I would be throwing God's gift back in his face; killing somebody else would be interfering with God's purpose for that individual.<sup>37</sup>

Another of Moody's subjects had fallen into a deep depression after his wife died, and subsequently shot himself:

---

<sup>37</sup> Moody, p. 144.

I didn't go where my wife was. I went to an awful place. I immediately saw the mistake I had made. I thought, I wish I hadn't done it.<sup>38</sup>

It is the teaching of all major religions that suicides don't have a good place in spirit world. By taking their own life, they violate an existing order. They are just throwing away the gift of physical life: it's a gift; it's an endowment. By rejecting that gift and violating that universal order they experience guilt. The universal law is violated and then they are in a spot where they feel guilt, but cannot forgive themselves. They are trapped, feeling judged and alienated, and they don't know how to overcome that.

---

**Suicide is wrong because it violates the universal order by rejecting the gift of life**

---

In the movie "What Dreams May Come," the point I thought was interesting was the main character's decision to stay with his wife who had committed suicide, even if it was in hell. He was advised by the spirit guide that nobody came back from the suicide place where the people are in hell. He said "you haven't seen anything yet," he was so determined to find his wife and to do his utmost. Therefore, he said, "I gave up but not as you think," when he spoke to the guide. What he meant was that he gave up on thinking she would forgive herself and come with him. He gave up on that and decided that he would stay with her, in her lonely hell.

He was ready to give up whatever heaven there may be, because he realized he really loves her and he forgives her. That unconditional

---

<sup>38</sup> Moody, p. 143.

love was the means of saving her, bringing her back, and they both could go to heaven. That was his victory, that he could have that selfless love, that total sacrifice, which created that salvific force and liberation. It is that salvific power of love which, even in the pit of hell, in that lonely place for people who committed suicide, could allow that to happen. It is a testimony to the invincible power of heavenly love.

## **Judgment**

We have to consider that if we are created to be fully the image of God, that we actually enter a partnership and co-creatorship with God, that we have that potential. God sees us on that level. He wants to totally give his love to us, and ideally we can respond to that love and love becomes actual, becomes realized. That is the purpose of creation.

The point is judgment. If I do something wrong, if I act against God's laws, abuse my free will, abuse the gift of love, and feel then separated from God, there is that precious responsibility. I am accountable, I am responsible for that. In many ways, I judge myself. I have a hard time to forgive myself. I am the one who judges. I am the one who then says I don't want to hear about God, because I am into my own thing and I did something bad.

---

### **God always wants to forgive us**

---

From God's point of view, He always wants to forgive us. He's like the father who lost his son, in the parable of the Prodigal Son. The moment we turn around, and say, God I am sorry, I really want to live with you, I want to overcome my bad habit or my abusive behavior, I want to make up for it, God is the first one who welcomes us back. But He is not forcing us to do it. It has to come from our free decision. We receive that free will so we have to employ it in that process of restoring our original relationship with God. Judgment is not from God. It is us

who are judgmental and unforgiving towards ourselves. It is us who turned our backs on God and don't want to respond to His love. If we turn around, if we understand our true purpose, we can live in harmony and love with God, and forgiveness, and the world eventually will overcome evil in its various forms.

To be one with God, to be one with our true purpose, to be one with the cosmic law; that means we are in the right place and we are following the harmony which exists around us. Hell means that we are opposing that existing harmony. We have a distorted idea of what it means to be loving. Hell means to be in darkness, away from the light, or that we decided not to be with God. In that sense, these dark realms exist. But the point is that even the dark realms eventually need to be healed. There must be a process to heal and to indemnify whatever bad things happened.

Eventually, from God's point of view, He wants all of His children to come back to him. There is no discrimination. Even the worst criminal should have the chance to repent, and eventually to come back and to understand that our existence is essentially a loving existence, and has the purpose to become totally embraced by God's love.

God doesn't want us to feel like little worms and totally unworthy and discarded because we have our weaknesses, and are selfish. But in the meantime it brings us down, our self-esteem and our true identity and purpose is not affirmed, and so our relationship with God is not in harmony.

We make effort to show our original potential, to always recall that in our mind: I am a son of God, I am a daughter of God, I have these precious abilities of having free will, having responsibility. I can be loving. I have this wonderful spirit and body, so many gifts, this creation, everything given! Why can I not be grateful for all that? Out of that gratitude we can restore the loving relationship with our Creator.

That is the basic agenda. We have to always first affirm our identity as human beings before God, being endowed with that freedom and responsibility. If we do that in this physical life we will be very happy in the afterlife.



## Part 3: Life in the Realm of Spirit

---

By Jennifer P. Tanabe

Dietrich Seidel ascended into the spiritual realm in November, 2016. His body could no longer sustain itself due to prolonged illness. But his spirit remains strong.

After Dietrich's passing, his beloved wife Elisabeth received several messages from him through friends. Also, their children, Christopher and Diesa, experienced his presence in various ways. Christopher wrote the following to his mother, comforting her when she expressed her loneliness in the absence of her beloved husband:

You can sense Dad's presence when you call him into your space. If you call him, he will be there, if you want him to. We don't have to stay so attached to the physical. Everyone's true nature is beyond time and space. Even if we can't perceive a reality, it doesn't mean it's not there. It is such a thick barrier in our world that everyone is so caught up in the physical, and stays that way without questioning it (sometimes forever). It doesn't have to be such a big deal.

This reminded me of a passage I first read in a novel, where one of the characters expresses the desire to have these words read at her funeral:

Death is nothing at all. It does not count. I have only slipped away into the next room. Nothing has happened. Everything remains exactly as it was. I am I, and you are you, and the old life that we lived so fondly together is



untouched, unchanged. Whatever we were to each other, that we are still. Call me by the old familiar name. Speak of me in the easy way which you always used. Put no difference into your tone. Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow. Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes that we enjoyed together. Play, smile, think of me, pray for me. Let my name be ever the household word that it always was. Let it be spoken without an effort, without the ghost of a shadow upon it. Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as it ever was. There is absolute and unbroken continuity. What is this death but a negligible accident? Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight? I am but waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near, just round the corner. All is well. Nothing is hurt; nothing is lost. One brief moment and all will be as it was before. How we shall laugh at the trouble of parting when we meet again!<sup>39</sup>

The “next room” makes it sound so real, so natural, and surely somewhere we can visit if we have a mind to, as Christopher Seidel suggested. Still, for most of us, looking into this spiritual realm is still not quite so simple. It is one thing to accept the existence of the spiritual realm, but how do we connect to it from this physical realm?

Dr. Sang Hun Lee, the Director of the Unification Thought Institute, for many years remained hesitant to discuss life in the spiritual world. He was a serious scientist, and he was uncomfortable to discuss this topic for the reason that he had no way to obtain such knowledge.

---

<sup>39</sup> “Death is Nothing at All” is part of a sermon delivered by Henry Scott Holland at St. Paul’s Cathedral, London in 1910. The sermon entitled “Death the King of Terrors” was preached while the body of King Edward VII was lying in state at Westminster.

Thus, in the texts on Unification Thought there is no direct discussion of life after death, although many of the important questions can be answered quite easily from the material presented there.

Unification Thought explains clearly that human beings have both a physical person and a spirit person. When the physical person dies, the spirit person discards it like an article of clothing which is no longer needed. Having discarded the physical person, the spirit person goes on to the spirit world, where it lives forever.<sup>40</sup> Thus, there is no question that there is life after death for human beings.

While we understand that the spiritual world exists, and even that we ourselves are spirit, just “clothed” in our physical body, still the connection to that other realm is not always easy. What is the key to connecting to those in that realm? Unification Thought tells us it is true love:

The spiritual world is connected with the physical world.  
The common factor connecting all things is true love.<sup>41</sup>

Indeed, after Dr. Lee’s beloved wife passed on, he received communications from her through a medium on earth. At that time, he began to develop this area in more detail, believing that it was of utmost importance that clear knowledge of the spirit world be available in the physical world. After his own transition, that motivation led him to continue giving messages through the same spiritual medium.<sup>42</sup>

We rely on the testimonies of those who are in communication with those already in the spiritual realm world to describe this world

---

<sup>40</sup> Unification Thought Institute, *Essentials of Unification Thought*. Unification Thought Institute, 1992.

<sup>41</sup> Sun Myung Moon, December 18, 1985, quoted in *World Scripture*, p. 227.

<sup>42</sup> Sang Hun Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*. FFWPU, 1998, p. vii.

more fully. In the following chapters we learn more about life in the realm of the spirit from such sources.

## 11. Living in the Spirit World

We understand that we are spirit, and have a physical body temporarily while we are on the earth. If the physical body can be likened to our “clothing,” then what does our actual “person” look like?

According to Unification Thought, the spirit person cannot be seen by our physical senses. However, when perceived by spiritual senses, it has the same appearance as that of the physical person. Anthony Borgia confirms this:

The spirit body which we all possess is the normal body. The earthly body, which temporarily covers the spirit body during its earthly passage, is a modification of the spirit body, an accommodation to earthly laws and conditions and modes of life.<sup>43</sup>

In other words, we have the same type of body that we have in our physical lives, it’s just made of spirit elements instead of physical elements. And these spirit elements are no less real than physical elements, they are just a different, but corresponding, level of existence. So we don’t become amorphous bright lights that float around, or get subsumed into some kind of cosmic consciousness. We appear like the people we have been in our physical life.

### Spirit bodies

Can we see, hear, smell, etc., with these spirit “bodies”? Indeed, we can. Our spirit bodies correspond to our physical bodies, including the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste. Thus, spirit persons can see, hear, smell, touch, and taste spiritual sights, sounds, smells,

---

<sup>43</sup> Anthony Borgia, *Here and Hereafter*. M.A.P. Inc., 2000, p. 122.

etc. with these five senses, parallel to the way that we can in the physical realm. Why not? Can you imagine an eternity of darkness, silence, without the smell of flowers, the songs of birds, no music, no visual arts, no wondrous textures to run your hands over, no sweet or spicy aromas to enjoy? I can't; not for eternity, not without going crazy. Unless I become a being that is so radically different from my current existence, and then how would I be me?

Human beings absolutely need stimulation from their environment, received through their senses. Studies have shown that when deprived of any sensory stimulation, people soon begin to hallucinate. It's not our nature to live in isolation from the world, without any contact. And this is our eternal nature as spiritual beings, not just a requirement of our physical bodies.

What about people whose senses were impaired during their time on earth? Many people spend their physical lives without sight, or hearing, or with limitations to those senses. I am short-sighted and have worn glasses for as long as I can remember. For several years I wore contact lenses, and I realized that they gave me a full range of vision without the limitation of the spectacle frames. But, I had to deal with cleaning them and putting them in and out every day. It seems like there is no perfect solution for the physical body. Sometimes I wonder, will I be able to see with perfect vision in the spirit world? Wouldn't that be nice!

Dr. Lee reported what happened when he wondered about blind people in the spirit world:

Recently I thought, "When blind people come to heaven, will they be different from those who had sight on earth?" A grandfather and a short person suddenly stood in front of me. The short person had been blind, but the grandfather had possessed good eyesight, so I asked, "In

heaven are there blind people?” Their answer was, “We came because you asked a question. While on earth I was blind, but here in heaven there is not even the term blindness; there is no blindness. I can see everything.” I asked, “Grandfather, you can see, so why did you come?” He said, “You asked about the difference between a person who had earthly sight and one who had not. You can see both with your eyes and with your mind. With eyes you can visibly see an object, but the thing you can see with your mind you can see better than with your eyes.”<sup>44</sup>

So, there is no blindness in spirit world! I am not so clear regarding what the grandfather was explaining about the different between people who were blind on earth and those who could see. It seems that in the spirit world sight is not limited to the eyes, but goes deeper so that a person can really know everything about whatever they choose to study. Nothing is hidden!

Sight is only one sense, but I am confident this applies to all five, and to many other physical problems people have endured in this life. It is not the physical body that determines the nature of our eternal life in the spirit world, but rather our mind and actions. Since the spirit person develops based on the actions of the person during their physical life, the mind of the spirit person reflects the character and life of the person on the earth. Thus, a person who valued truth, goodness, beauty, and true love, and whose life on the earth brought great happiness to others, will experience much love and joy in their eternal spiritual life. They will appear happy, healthy and beautiful.

---

<sup>44</sup> Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*. p. 16.

Moreover, spirit bodies appear as their physical body was in the prime of life:

We do not age. On the contrary, we grow younger if we should happen to have passed our prime of life when we left the earth.<sup>45</sup>

On the other hand, a person who lived selfishly, seeking material pleasures, and exploiting and harming others while on the earth, cannot but experience a lonely, suffering existence in the eternal spiritual realm. Their body also reflects their lifestyle on earth, appearing distorted or damaged by the evil deeds they committed:

For example, when a murderer comes to the spirit world, a horrible (cruel) punishment will be with him. He who killed a man with a knife, his spirit self will be stabbed with a knife; he who shot a man to death, his spirit self will have a bullet stuck in his heart. ... He who killed a person with poison, his spirit self will be collapsed spitting blood, and he who killed a man with an axe or a sickle will have the instrument stuck in the chest of his spirit self.<sup>46</sup>

Here again we are reminded to prepare well for our eternal life during our time on earth. We are not going to magically transform into beautiful spiritual beings just because we die. We are already spiritual beings, just “clothed” in a physical body. Our life on earth is important; it is the time when our spirit grows.

---

<sup>45</sup> Borgia, *Here and Hereafter*, p. 55.

<sup>46</sup> Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*. pp. 36-37.

Those who have experience of the realm of spirit, especially the lower levels, warn us not to waste our time on earth. They exhort us to live well here so that our spirits develop in a healthy way:

It takes too much time to improve your position as a spirit person so you can receive effective grace. It takes a long time to move beyond ignorance. Because of that, adjust your focus now on the eternal world and live that way. Through adjusting your focus, humankind will live much more wisely. ... your life should be fruitful; you should bear fruit. To speak more plainly: committing sin leads only to hell. Live a life of goodness. That is the way of heaven.<sup>47</sup>

## **World of beauty**

If our spiritual senses are fully functional, what is there to see, hear, smell, etc. in the spiritual realm? Reverend Sun Myung Moon, who had many spiritual experiences, starting with meeting Jesus as a teenager,<sup>48</sup> informs us that there is no shortage of fascinating things to experience:

Spirit world is the world of beauty, where you never get bored by watching a tiny piece of anything for even a thousand years. The world's prized possessions cannot compare to even a piece of the spirit world. Therefore, I will not miss the earth. I myself would rather go back to that world, because this earth is not fulfilling its purpose.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*, p. 27.

<sup>48</sup> Sun Myung Moon, *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen*. The Washington Times Foundation, 2010, p. 50.

<sup>49</sup> Sun Myung Moon, *Earthly Life and Spirit World I*. FFWPU, 1998, p. 144.



Anthony Borgia also states that there is incredible beauty. His communicator from the spiritual realm, Robert Benson, describes buildings, gardens, rivers, and more:

Beautiful though the various styles of architecture may be, and they are beautiful, yet to my mind the materials of which the buildings are composed, with their exquisite colorings, are still more lovely. . . . they have a semi-translucence, an alabaster-life appearance with a superb variety of delicate colorings that seem to change their tones as the beholder changes his viewpoint. Some of them give the impression of being composed of mother-of-pearl in the most pleasing and restful shades of colors and tints.<sup>50</sup>

You will recall how the stones and so on in these realms are all glowing with beautiful shades of color. The flowers in the gardens, therefore, will all accord with the colors of the masonry of the nearest building, broadly speaking, so that the two shall form together a blend of perfect harmony. Color, you see, produces sound, and sound produces color, so that it is essential that consonance and not dissonance should be the resulting effect of all horticultural efforts in these realms. Discord of an unpleasant nature would not be permitted.<sup>51</sup>

You can have no conception how glorious it is to glide along such a river in some graceful boat, passing through the rolling banks of flowers upon either hand, or though

---

<sup>50</sup> Borgia, *Here and Hereafter*, p. 56.

<sup>51</sup> Borgia, *Here and Hereafter*, p. 84.

some peaceful meadow where the trees reflect their shapely forms in the tranquil waters; or again, to draw alongside some beautiful broad marble steps, to go ashore, mount to a great height and view the ribbon of scintillating color that the river reveals itself to be from this higher elevation ... Nothing can possibly convey to you the brilliance of the color, always the color, that seems to abound in such full measure in the neighborhood of the rivers.<sup>52</sup>

We ... have broad, spacious thoroughfares of the softest grass upon which to walk. ... Sometimes these broad walks are paved with some of the wonderful stone creations of these realms, but more often they are covered with grass.<sup>53</sup>

## **Daily activities**

It really does sound beautiful; certainly something to look forward to, hopefully at some time far in the future! Still, it is not entirely clear what the activities are in these spiritual realms. Do people still sleep, eat, have jobs? Reverend Moon enjoyed joking with his audience about life in the spirit world.

Is there a bread factory in the spirit world, or not? Is there a factory that produces Coca Cola and juice, or not? Why not? You don't know why not. Right? ... What would you do in the spirit world? Would you eat food, or not? Would you prefer to eat food, or not? Centering on what would you eat food there? You eat centered on love. A person

---

<sup>52</sup> Borgia, *Here and Hereafter*, p. 98.

<sup>53</sup> Borgia, *Here and Hereafter*, p. 103.

who could not have love on the earth won't be able to open his mouth no matter how much he wants to eat. That is the rule. Your mouth will not open if your heart loves only yourself and does not center on loving others. Even when you try to pick up food with chopsticks and bring the food to your mouth, the chopsticks would move away from your mouth. You may try once, twice, three times this way, saying, "Arrgh!" How disappointed would you be. Everything is possible only when you have the concept of true love in the spirit world. Without it nothing is possible.<sup>54</sup>

Actually, it seems that spirit people do not feel hunger or thirst as we do in our physical bodies. Rather, it is our choice and our pleasure to partake of the most delicious foods. Borgia reports that there are not only beautiful flowers growing in gardens, but also fruit trees exist which produce wonderful fruit:

We have the most delicious fruit in abundance. ... We have a much greater variety than do you, even taking into account the diversity to be found in the different parts of the world. All the fruits that you have we also have here, but with the quality there is no comparison. And the size, too, is remarkable That you must see to believe!<sup>55</sup>

However, life is very different in the spirit world than on earth. At least for those in the higher realms, there is no need to spend effort to buy food, or clothing, or even houses. Without the limitations of the

---

<sup>54</sup> Moon, *Earthly Life and Spirit World I*, pp. 157-158.

<sup>55</sup> Borgia, *Here and Hereafter*, p. 77.

physical world, the power of thought is sufficient to create whatever is needed, including travel to other places:

Thought is upon a different plane, a higher plane of existence from that organ of the earthly body, the brain, through which thought functions on earth. Thought is upon the same plane of existence as the mind, and the mind belongs truly to the spirit world. ... In the spirit world thought has direct and instantaneous action upon whatsoever it is directed, whether it be upon a human being or upon what on earth is called “an inanimate object.” (I cannot use the latter term appositely in connection with spirit world objects, because all objects, all things, have life, certain and unmistakably. There is no such state as that of being lifeless in the spirit world.) It is not until you come into the spirit world that you really know just what thought can do. And I do assure you, my good friend, that some of us are positively horrified when we find out for the first time!<sup>56</sup>

A good example of what might surprise us about the power of thought is given by Dr. Lee:

As an example, if I think, “Today what kind of meat will I eat, what do I want to eat?” with that kind of thought simultaneously a huge feast will appear before me. Also, if I think, “Today where do I want to go, who do I want to see?” I’m already there. Even if I think, “What if that

---

<sup>56</sup> Borgia, *Here and Hereafter*, p. 107.

person isn't dressed when I arrive there?" and he happens to be stark naked, then we will have a good laugh.<sup>57</sup>

## **Time and space**

From many reports it seems clear that time and space are expressed differently in the spiritual realm than on earth. In particular, if someone wants to see someone, they can instantly meet them just by thinking of them:

If you wish to meet with someone who is millions or billions of miles away, that person will still appear. When you prepare your heart and say that you would like to meet with someone you love, that person will appear. Isn't it great?<sup>58</sup>

This part is somewhat difficult for us to understand, bound as we are by time and space on this earth. However, think of how it is in a dream: you can be in a room at home and the next instant you are in a room filled with people from your childhood. I believe that "travel" in the spirit world is somewhat like that, just more under our conscious control! For example, Dr. Lee describes the possibilities that exist in driving a car:

Even though the spirit world appears to be the same as the visible phenomenal world, the scale of the spirit world cannot be compared with the scale of the physical world. For instance, in the phenomenal world, materiality and space limit a car, but in the spirit world, a car's form can be changed at will. Its direction of movement is also free.

---

<sup>57</sup> Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*, p.16.

<sup>58</sup> Moon, *Earthly Life and Spirit World I*, p. 162.

The car moves with a driver's thought and can even pass through a mountain in a moment. It can move as freely as in fantasy movies or science fiction travel, which children like very much. Even though the motion of the car may look chaotic, because they are keeping spiritual law, there are no accidents at all.<sup>59</sup>

Similarly, time has a different expression in the spirit world. Even in the physical world time has many forms. For example, waiting a few minutes for a late companion may seem like hours, while the hours spent in conversation with that person may fly by, feeling like only a few minutes. In the same way, a dream may cover many hours, days, or even months or years of "dream time" in terms of the activities the dreamer is involved in. Nonetheless in actual, physical time, i.e. the amount of time the dreamer was dreaming as measured by an outside observer, everything takes place within a few minutes. Thus, there are clearly different experiences of time, depending on the activity, the people involved, and many other factors.

---

### **The world of spirit is not limited by time and space**

---

In the spirit world, then, while I don't want to claim that time travel is possible, it is not a problem to imagine that visiting several different places within the same time period is quite reasonable. For example, my husband discussed with his father (in Japan) that on the anniversary of the day that his mother passed on into the spirit world he would be in Korea and I would be in America. While his father would offer prayers with other family members in their hometown in Japan, my husband

---

<sup>59</sup> Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*, p. 14.

and I would offer prayers in Korea and America, respectively. Although my father-in-law initially protested that she would not be able to visit us in Korea and America since she would be visiting her home in Japan on that day, my husband reassured him that such situations were not a problem in the spirit world.

## 12. More about Angels

Many contemporary testimonies recount experiences with angels which confirm and enlarge on the scriptural accounts mentioned in the earlier chapter of this book. Among testimonies of near-death experiences, there are accounts of people welcomed by angels who then acted as their guides into the spiritual realm. For example, Dr. Eben Alexander describes how, as his body lay in a coma, he encountered an angelic being who guided him on a journey deep into the spiritual dimension.<sup>60</sup>

### Purpose and appearance

Dr. Sang Hun Lee gave us much information about angels through a spiritual medium. He explains that angels were created to help us, and to share God's love with us:

The fundamental purpose for which God created angels is to help and love human beings. That is how God loves us infinitely.<sup>61</sup>

Their roles are to deliver God's messages to human beings and to help human beings in hard and difficult times. Simply put, angels have the position of God's servants existing as spiritual beings for the sake of human beings.<sup>62</sup>

He goes on to describe their roles and the organization of their work, and also their appearance:

---

<sup>60</sup> Eben Alexander, *Proof of Heaven*. Simon & Schuster, 2012.

<sup>61</sup> Sang Hun Lee, *Messages from the Spirit World*. FFWPU, 2001, p. 10.

<sup>62</sup> Lee, *Messages from the Spirit World*, p. 3.



When God created the angelic world, He did not give a mission to each angel. Rather, He gave missions to their organizations and groups. ... Although angels' missions and titles do not change, their attire can adjust according to the scope of their activity. It is the same as human beings wearing different clothes for different occasions.

However, angels' clothes are different from human clothes which have characteristics limited by time and space. Angels do not have to spend time to buy clothes. They can wear clothes transcending time and space. In an instant their clothes can change in a beautiful and colorful way ... When they move, beautiful light shines through. Nevertheless, most human beings living on earth never have a chance to see them.<sup>63</sup>

As Dr. Lee notes, most people don't see angels. However, when they do, if the angel is from God it appears incredibly beautiful. This has led people to believe angels are closer to God and therefore superior to human beings. Dr. Lee explains that in fact their beauty reflects God's love for us:

The beauty of the angels represents God's heart of love for His own children. The reason God made angels so beautiful and colorful is that when God sends a message to his children through His angels, He wants us to feel joy and love and receive the heart of happiness and peace as well.<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> Lee, *Messages from the Spirit World*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>64</sup> Lee, *Messages from the Spirit World*, p. 6.

It is not because angels are superior beings that they appear so beautiful; rather, it is because God created them that way for our sake, on account of His love for us, His children:

God is like a parent who always worries about His children and places numerous angels to protect them everywhere. ... In all those places, even if we cannot see them, there are angels. Angels move as we move, as if putting a carpet on the path a king or queen walks. Angels always prepare the way for human beings and protect us. They report to God every single movement of ours from head to toe. However, human beings cannot feel any of it.<sup>65</sup>

This is quite poignant; an expression of true parental love from God, our Heavenly Parent, towards us human beings. There is a sadness in the last statement, though, that “human beings cannot feel any of it,” and in Dr. Lee’s earlier comment that “most human beings on earth never have a chance to see them.” That sadness is both for God, whom we fail to acknowledge as such a loving creator, and for the angels who tirelessly carry out their responsibilities taking care of us in whatever way God instructs them. The world would surely be a better place if we all saw the angels.

## **Types of angels**

There are exceptions to our current inability to see angels. Lorna Byrne has written about how she sees angels every day, and talks with

---

<sup>65</sup> Lee, *Messages from the Spirit World*, p. 11.

them.<sup>66</sup> She describes different types of angels, with different responsibilities. There is the guardian angel who is assigned to each person, and who loves that person with a pure love:

I see a guardian angel with everyone, regardless of their religion or nationality. I have never seen anyone, anywhere in the world, without a guardian angel. Your guardian angel is with you from before you are conceived until after your death and never leaves you even for one moment. It loves you unconditionally and will do everything possible to guide you through life and keep you filled with hope.<sup>67</sup>

She also describes teacher angels who help people learn and understand, and other angels that can help us with any task, provided we ask for their assistance. She believes that there is such an abundance of angels that we should never hesitate to ask for help: “We are all deserving of help, and the angels love to help us.”<sup>68</sup>

Byrne stresses that angels can easily be distinguished from the souls of departed people:

I see angels every day, and they are very beautiful. But you have a soul, which is much more beautiful than any angel. ... Because we have souls that are in the image of

---

<sup>66</sup> Lorna Byrne, *Angels in my Hair*. Harmony, 2011.

<sup>67</sup> Byrne, *A Message of Hope from the Angels*, p. 5.

<sup>68</sup> Byrne, p. 22.

God, we are more than any angel. ... We are God's children.<sup>69</sup>

Here we are advised that human beings are not less than angels. In fact, human beings are the ultimate in God's creation; we are God's children. Angels were created to serve and care for us, bringing us God's love and truth. It is our mistake that we have not fulfilled the role given to us, the responsibility to fulfill the Three Blessings and be the center of harmony for the physical and spiritual realms. The angels are still waiting for us to do that.

---

<sup>69</sup> Byrne, pp. 127-130.

### 13. Returning Resurrection

Different levels exist in the spirit world, and our life on the earth determines which realm becomes our home. Changing our level once we have reached the spirit world is not easy, although not impossible. As explained in the earlier chapter on spiritual growth in the spirit world, growth requires a physical person to give vitality elements. Without those vitality elements the spirit can grow only very slowly, and requires the help of others in the spirit world who choose to act in that capacity.

In order to access vitality elements, spirits may influence those who are alive on earth. Dr. Lee explains that without completing our spiritual growth on earth, and especially if we commit sins, there is no way to avoid suffering:

In order for the spirit selves to be liberated from their positions, they cannot avoid pain and suffering without the help of the people on earth. Also, since they cannot rid themselves of the sins they committed, the spirit selves definitely go to the place they lived on earth. They go to their own blood and flesh, or someone related in some way, and keep sending signals. However, because those who live on earth are not aware of it, unusual disasters happen, such as a sick person at home, financial difficulties, or automobile accidents.<sup>70</sup>

How can the descendants avoid these problems? Well, they have to help the spirit person who is causing the problem. This seems a bit counterintuitive, and we can imagine that most often this does not happen. When people suffer what seems like a run of “bad luck” they

---

<sup>70</sup> Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*, pp. 37-38.

become upset, are more likely to complain, and even curse anyone they think is responsible, than to reach out in loving concern through prayer to comfort them. In fact, though, that act of selfless prayer, asking for the spirit to be forgiven for whatever crimes or sins they committed in the past, and forgiving them for causing pain, is what will raise the spirit to a higher level and ultimately release the person on earth from their influence.<sup>71</sup>

There are more complex situations, however, in which a person on earth is so influenced by the spirit that it appears that they are actually that spirit person returned from the dead. There are many cases where people have knowledge of events or places or languages that they have had no experience of in their earthly life. This has led people to accept the idea of reincarnation, whereby a spirit may experience more than one life on the earth in different physical bodies.

---

**The theory of reincarnation runs counter to the understanding that we are unique individuals, each with our own physical self and spirit self**

---

The theory of reincarnation runs counter to the understanding that we are unique individuals, each with a physical self and a spirit self that continues to exist after our physical life is over. Unification Thought proposes the alternative view that as unique beings we have only one physical incarnation. We have one incarnation, and we have a personal existence after death where we maintain our identity as a spirit. However, during our life on earth we can be so much influenced by a spirit

---

<sup>71</sup> Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*, pp. 37-38.

that it appears that we are a reincarnation, or “second coming,” of that person.

In particular, a spirit person may have a strong desire to fulfill some responsibility that he did not complete during his earthly lifetime. In such a case, the spirit will attempt to work with people on the earth, influencing them to overcome the difficulty that prevented him from succeeding, and thus allowing both of them to experience victory. This is the way that the spirits of people who died, before completing their responsibility on earth to perfect their spirit, can achieve growth after their physical body has perished.

If the person on earth they chose to work with also fails, the spirit may try again with another person. Thus, it will seem that the spirit person lives again and again through different people on the earth.

Reverend Moon gave the following explanation of how this can happen:

Suppose a spirit A has been helping through different ages up to now. ... This spirit hopes that the first man he is working with can complete the foundation, but if he fails to complete the indemnity condition within the period and dies, this spirit chooses another man and tries to return to him.

For instance, if this spirit is Paul, in an attempt to go up through each stage, if the first man he returns to fails to complete the indemnity condition within the given period and dies, he returns to another man and helps him. Indemnity is necessary. According to the Principle, indemnity is not completed in a short time. For this reason, if the second man does not fulfill the indemnity, a third man is chosen for a returning resurrection. So

finally, Paul returns to the third man. The second man will say that he is working with Paul's assistance. Likewise, the third man in the next age will also say that he is working with Paul's assistance and even that he is himself Paul. This way, it looks as if Paul's spirit appeared in the second man and again in the third man. Looking at such a phenomenon, they come up with the theory of reincarnation.<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup> Moon, *Earthly Life and Spirit World II*, pp. 177-178.



## 14. Eternal Marriage

Are husband and wife united “till death do us part” or for eternity? In other words, does marriage survive the transition into our eternal life?

We have already discussed how our relationships with others determine how pleasant our life in the spirit world will be. This is because we can meet together only with people with whom we have developed a good relationship, either directly during our lives on the earth, or indirectly through relating to similar people on the earth. Therefore, the first determining factor regarding couples is whether or not they developed a harmonious relationship during their lives on the earth. In other words, do they actually want to be together for eternity?

Now, assuming that they desire an eternal life together, do they live together or are they just able to meet on certain occasions? Anthony Borgia’s communicator from the spiritual realm, Robert Benson, reports that:

There are many couples to be found living in charming houses here: for example, a husband and wife who were happily married when upon the earth, admirably suited to each other, and with a real bond of affection between them.<sup>73</sup>

In the ideal, it certainly makes sense that a husband and wife, who have built a loving, harmonious relationship during their time together on earth, would continue to be together in their eternal home. God is eternal, unchanging, unique, and absolute. Therefore, we can expect that God would want marriages to have these attributes. Eternal means

---

<sup>73</sup> Anthony Borgia, *Here and Hereafter*. M.A.P. Inc., 2000, p. 94.

having an eternal commitment to one's spouse, not just a temporary one while they are beautiful, rich, or able to bear children. Unchanging also means commitment to that one person, without seeking relationship with others for variety, or to avoid responsibility to that person and their children. Unique means that there is no other couple exactly the same: each couple has the potential to make a special contribution to humankind and to bring joy to God in a way that no other couple can. Each couple also produces unique children. Absolute means that there is an absolute standard for marriage: marriage is for eternity; between a man and a woman who develop a unique harmonious relationship, practicing fidelity, and who take responsibility to raise their children according to the original ideal of creation.

When a couple experiences such a relationship of true love on the earth, they will also experience it eternally in the heavenly spiritual realm:

As a husband and wife, we should resemble God's love and become one with His love that constantly desires to give and give. Then our love and beauty will be returned to God as a precious offering. How many couples exist on earth today actually practicing and living God's love according to His desire? The kingdom of heaven in spirit world is a beautiful place where a couple lives, returning love and beauty to God. ... Since the conjugal love is given and returned centered on God, it should have the standard of supreme value. During the earthly life, a couple should live a life that is totally united with God's

true love ... Otherwise, even if we go to spirit world, we cannot possess the love of the kingdom of heaven.<sup>74</sup>

Even though God planned such a joyful, eternal relationship for us, it is not guaranteed. God also gave us free will, and with that comes responsibility. The path to true love may not be smooth, or easy. It requires our utmost dedication and effort:

If you do not cultivate your inner self well, you are going to encounter many problems in making your love complete in heaven. ... Then how can these couples make a complete love? When the husband's heart to respect his wife and the wife's heart to love her husband become one, their love can develop and mature into a complete love. Since this takes a longer time to achieve in heaven, when you are on earth, with your own physical body, you have to try to cultivate your heart and bear the fruit of complete love. In conclusion, we should use our short life on earth well, in anticipation of the complete love that will be awaiting the mature couple in heaven. Couples bear the fruit of complete love by cultivating and encouraging each other to achieve true love.<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>74</sup> Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*, p. 54.

<sup>75</sup> Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*, pp. 34-35.

## **15. Communicating with the Spiritual Realm**

In the previous chapters we have quoted a number of people who sent information to the earthly plane. So far, these have all been rather educational in nature, describing scenes and providing information that they hope will be useful, using a channel they trust to convey their words accurately.

For example, Anthony Borgia acted as the medium for Robert Benson, an English clergyman and author. They knew each other well during Benson's life on earth. When Benson passed into the spirit world he recognized that much of his writings had been wrong, and so he used Borgia to act as his scribe in the task of correcting his misconceptions through writing new books. Dr. Sang Hun Lee, a medical doctor who developed the philosophical system of Unification Thought based on Reverend Sun Myung Moon's revelations, dictated his messages through a former colleague. His goal was to complete his work by explaining the nature of the spirit world. Thus, although in these cases there was a connection between the communicator in the spirit world and the medium on earth, their messages are somewhat focused on theological and philosophical issues. However, not all communication from the spirit world is like this!

### **Signs, dreams and visions**

Sometimes we receive communication from the spirit world that is not in the form of words. This could be in the form of a fragrance that reminds us of a departed loved one, the unexpected appearance of their favorite flower, or someone singing their favorite song. Such signs are personal to the recipient, and they feel strongly the presence of their loved one.

## **Dream of Dad**

Diesa Seidel reported an experience she had of her father after his passing. First, she dreamed of him, and then he sent her a sign of his presence through music:

Last night (the night before his birthday) I had a nice dream of Dad... I was hugging him and giving him silly kisses, and he was laughing. Then when I opened my computer, classical music started playing from some application that I must have downloaded a while ago - but somehow it was playing! Then, when I got in my car to drive to school, my radio was playing classical music (and I normally do not have that station set). It was special and I could really feel him.

## **Signs from above**

Sometimes the person on earth receives signs to guide them in their life, without necessarily knowing their source. For example, Elisabeth Seidel, Dietrich's wife, spent the summer of 2017 in Europe, visiting family and friends in France and Italy, as well as in Vienna, Austria, Dietrich's hometown. In addition to receiving communication from Dietrich through a medium (see the section "From Dietrich Seidel to his family" below), she reported having several experiences related to the Virgin Mary:

Before leaving France, I went one more time to the Chappelle de Bonne Nouvelle in my hometown, Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, where I met my new friend Catherine. You have to go the mountain by foot as no road goes all the way there. Before Mass there was a special gathering for reciting the rosary for about one hour. The Virgin Mary was really there by the end, before

Mass. Father Eulair gave a simple but very profound message about the two most important teachings of Jesus: Love God and love your neighbors. If you love your neighbors you already love God.

After Mass a light dinner was served with quiche, soup and chocolate cake. I started a deep conversation with Catherine. She had been working with end of life patients and assisting them in these difficult moments. She said most of her patients choose to go at night time, and she had been helping them to pass by reassuring them that everything will be OK. She went many times to Lourdes to help and felt deep joy doing that. So she and I shared for a long time. Before departing she told me that Mother Mary is her mother and many times she has been guiding her.

So today our encounter was organized by Mother Mary and she was so convinced about that. I also was convinced. During the Mass the priest also shared that when Mary passed, angels came to help her soul to detach from her body.

Then I traveled to Italy, to Voghera, to stay for three days with my German friend Inge. Voghera is near Milano and Torino, and in the past it was part of Savoie, the last city frontier to go to Italy. I had an Italian coffee in the beautiful city, looking at passersby dressed in the utmost beautiful fashion; I believe the best in the world.

There I saw a store with everything 70 percent off to celebrate the end of the summer. I entered and started chatting with the owner and two of her friends, very easy conversation as Italians do. I told them how their country

has such beautiful art and fashion. The owner's friends were trying on dresses, and I was admiring their Italian taste. Then they started dressing me up with a white dress, which I felt looked like a dress for Mother Mary! I ended up buying it because of the 70 percent off. By now we were all friends. Then the owner said she wanted to offer me a gift: a beautiful bracelet with two medals of the Virgin Mary and a necklace also with two medals of the Virgin Mary. I said, "Oh it looks like Mother Mary is entering my life!" Of course, this is Italy! I love my new jewelry.

Two signs of the Virgin Mary in three days. We are living in a special time where spirit world and physical world cooperate, and our friends from above want to let us know that they are here with us. We are not alone.

### **Dream of my father**

Working on this section on communication with the spiritual realm reminded me of a dream I had of my father, not long after he passed away. He was a university professor, and always had a study at home with a desk and books, book shelves and filing cabinets. The room was small, but I remember all that stuff was in there!

In my dream, I found my father in a large, very beautiful room, with wooden shelves on the walls and a large desk. The desk was beautiful, shining, obviously made of the best wood. I remember it was a magnificent brown color. I could see it clearly because there were no books or papers on it. The bookshelves were also empty, but the room felt like it had been prepared for someone; I realized it was to be my father's room. My father was a bit

uncertain, looking around and wondering if he dared sit in the chair at the desk, although he knew the room was for him. He said something about not being good enough for such a beautiful room and desk. I told him that of course he was and to enjoy it!

It seemed to me after waking up, that there must be a wonderful place prepared for scholars. The rooms would be large and light, with windows that look out onto the kind of scenes that would inspire and encourage those working diligently inside. And the desks are the best, beautiful wood, large and empty whenever you need to start a new project! Bookshelves in abundance, of course, filled with whatever books are needed at the time. I definitely want one of these amazing rooms when I get there.

### **Communication through a medium**

Even though most of us are not able to have long conversations directly with our loved ones after they ascend to the spirit world, there are channels available. These are the mediums, people who are able to receive messages from those in the spirit world and then pass them on to the intended recipients on earth.

Now I will present several examples of such communication from those in the spiritual realm to their loved ones on the earth. Here you can feel the love.

#### **To Dr. Sang Hun Lee from his wife**

As noted earlier, Dr. Lee developed Unification Thought but was reluctant to address issues regarding the spirit world. After his wife ascended, he received several letters from her through a medium, and was able to ask her questions about the situation in spirit world. He was expecting serious answers to his serious questions, his focus being the work of completing his publications on Unification Thought. However,



his wife, understanding that well, was also unable to resist adding some more personal touches that show the love she has for her husband.

The following are excerpts from one letter, in which his wife responds to his queries about food, clothing, and living situation, how do they communicate without air to make sound, is there music, and how to express love to others, especially those in difficulties. His wife willingly answers his questions, knowing how important this information is to her husband. Still, she includes something from her heart, reminding him to remember his warm underwear in the cold weather, before concluding her message:

Dr. Lee, maybe you think that here in spirit world we live naked, without clothes because spirit world is invisible, don't you? But we wear clothes. Maybe you ask me where the clothes are. If we think to wear some kind of clothes we can wear those clothes naturally. Since whatever we think happens, we don't worry about clothes, food, and shelter. It is incredibly convenient. But in the lower place, such poor people cannot do the same thing. ...

We can understand each other by feeling (mind by mind) even without calling name or shouting names as in the physical world. And if we want to listen to a hymn, suddenly the sound of a hymn reaches to our ears. In other easy words, whatever song or refined music we think reaches to our ears. Everything we can hear together. We can dance too. Always we can keep such a mood as flowers in the full moon. It is very difficult to express unless you come here.

Really, love is the supreme. In spirit world also love is the most fundamental as in the physical world ... We have many struggles, but if we keep a loving mind, this mind is

immediately transferred to the other and will melt those struggles like melting snow in spring. But if we go to a lower level of spirit world, love doesn't work at all. ...

Dear Dr. Lee, I will never leave you. Please wear warm underclothes, and please take care of your health.

From a far distant heavenly place, your wife Han Sook

### **To Ron and Connie Pappalardo from their son**

Ron and Connie Pappalardo lost their teenage son, Joshua, to suicide. In response to this tragic experience, Ron began a quest to reach his son in the spiritual realm. The first message he received was on the day of the memorial service, when the person who was going to lead the service was preparing his talk in Joshua's bedroom. He called for Ron to come as he felt Joshua's presence. They asked if Joshua had a message for his friends, and the reply came slowly: "Don't ... ever ... do ... this!"

After the memorial, Ron was introduced to a medium who subsequently received several letters from Joshua. Ron published Joshua's story, including these letters.<sup>76</sup> In the first letter, Joshua was emotional, repentant for what he had done. Through tears he tells his father that he is so proud of him, proud to be his son; and to his mother that he loves her and will always remember her love. Such love from a son to his parents is the foundation for his communication to them, and surely provided them with so much comfort.

In this second letter, the medium reported that he was much more light-hearted and confident of finding his way:

---

<sup>76</sup> Ron Pappalardo, *Reconciled by the Light: The After-Death Letters from a Teen Suicide*. Lulu, 2009.

Hi Mom and Dad. Hi to everyone! I know you think that I am somewhere far away, but you would be so amazed to discover that I am right here with you. There is not like distance between us in space, but distance in consciousness. In other words, the distance is really in our minds.<sup>77</sup>

Later letters described life in the spirit world, including his experience of being able to fly like a bird, with arms outstretched, free as a bird. He also encouraged his father to develop his spiritual senses so that he could experience this realm of existence himself:

If you could see the brilliance of this world that I live in, experience the wholeness that is, you would be so comforted and you would be so happy, not just because you would know that I am fine, but because you would be so transformed by the beauty and wonder of this world of spirit. You would experience your own brilliance and beauty.<sup>78</sup>

### **From Dietrich Seidel to his family**

Dietrich and Elisabeth Seidel were married for 40 years, during which they had their struggles, as any couple does. But their love grew stronger and deeper, and they became each other's eternal beloved partner. Dietrich's passing in November, 2016 was not the end of their love story. His last words to his beloved Elisabeth were "I will be always

---

<sup>77</sup> Pappalardo, *Reconciled by the Light*, p. 82.

<sup>78</sup> Pappalardo, *Reconciled by the Light*, p. 90.

with you, forever together.” Their story can be read through the letters they wrote to each other over the years.<sup>79</sup>

Since his passing, Elisabeth and their daughter Diesa have both received communications from Dietrich through a medium, Elizabeth Kiedler. The following account explains how Elisabeth first met her.

### **Encounter with Elizabeth Kiedler**

While visiting Vienna in the summer of 2017, Elisabeth remembered how she used to walk with her husband through these same streets, and she felt his absence acutely. In the church they often attended together, she met a British lady who gave her the first message from Dietrich:

This morning I went to church in Vienna. I have been a little teary here for a few days with Dietrich’s mother and his beloved sister, Gisela, have been asking many things about him. After the subway drive, I got lost a little, and started to reminisce how in the past I just held Dietrich’s hand and always arrived where we were supposed to go, like this morning to the Vienna family church. When I arrived at church I felt even more teary as I saw many of Dietrich’s friends from long ago, and they started telling me all kinds of beautiful stories about how much they cared for and loved him.

During the service I took a seat rather in the back, next to a British lady, because I was feeling Dietrich’s presence very strongly and did not want to cry in public. Towards

---

<sup>79</sup> Dietrich F. Seidel and Elisabeth M. Seidel, *Beloveds, Forever Together: Letters of Eternal Love*. Lulu, 2017.

the end of the service, the lady, her name is also Elizabeth, handed me a piece of paper which said, “Dieter said he wishes to go hand in hand with you and embrace you. Go the way together always.” That was very nice to hear. She said Dietrich appeared to her and gave her this message for me. She truly made my day.

This same Elizabeth Kiedler continued to give Elisabeth several messages from Dietrich, or Dieter as he was always known in Austria.

### **First message to Elisabeth:**

My Dear Sister Elisabeth,

Today was a very beautiful day together with you in the City of Eisenstadt. Although the weather managed to reach 40°C it was very precious to have time in the castle grounds and the city. I wished to share with you something that graces a medium’s life and empowers the life of the other.

During our lunch you could really pour out your heart, sharing a lot of things that you and your children carry from the time you had with Dieter before he left us. Dieter is never far from you and as you spoke he too wished to embrace you all and take all these heavy feelings and memories away. He listened very carefully to all that you shared, holding your hand and knowing how important it is that you share and free your heart. He spoke then saying, “It’s alright now, I’m free. I wish that you hadn’t had to experience all those things and make your heart heavy. Now all that is gone, move forward, forget it, let’s go on.” He kneeled down before you and placed his head on your lap, put his arms around your waist and rested.

God bless you, cultivate your heart, the love that you have for each other is great.

Your sister Elisabeth.

**Second message to Elisabeth:**

My Dear Sister Elisabeth,

I wish to share a little with you today. Spiritual abilities are a gift that you can communicate love to the living from friends and family that have passed into the next life. Coming myself from Wales, I grew up in a home where, as my mother was a medium, the spirit was very active. I made a commitment this year to help and support people when I can.

Dieter is very curious and as a professor interested in what young people are doing. My daughters sang at a wedding in Vienna. Dieter was very inspired by the words of the song "A Thousand Years" by Christina Perri. This song he sends to you with his love and gratitude for your life together.

With love, your sister Elisabeth.

**Third message to Elisabeth:**

My Dear Sister Elisabeth,

Many greetings and God's blessings on this new day. The last time we were together you asked me if I could find out what Dieter was doing, if he had a mission and how best you can support him.

So, last night I dreamt of Dieter, he was at a desk, books piled up and some in the middle of the desk opened and laid one upon the other. The book that was on the top, opened up had the same lilac color on the cover as the book you recently published.

For me it seems like you are already helping him very much in publishing the books. He is a seeker and continues in the afterlife.

Your sister Elizabeth.

### **Message to Diesa**

Elizabeth also received a message from Dietrich for his daughter, Diesa. It is filled with the love he shared with her in his time on earth:

My beloved daughter Diesa,

I am so happy. I waited for you to come, to hear your voice, like music to my ears. My heart became full and tears flowing like a waterfall, my chest heaving. I hold you, embrace you, take your hands and we spin around and around and around. I don't see anything except my daughter. We begin to take flight, up and up. I want to show you things, where I am, what it's like, all the beautiful things that I see all the time, things you can't imagine. The spinning slows down, we land softly on the ground. I let go of you, it's like watching you begin to walk again, carefully then always faster. I am always there, to steady you, keep a balance with your wild love for life. Hold my hands, don't lose eye contact with me. I will teach you how to fly.

## Writing letters to the ascended

To send a message to our loved one in the spirit world it is not always necessary to use a medium. Many people have found that writing a letter and then reading it, like a prayer, to the loved one is effective. Elisabeth sent such letters to Dietrich, writing them down and then reading them out loud to him.<sup>80</sup> There is no reason to doubt that he received them.

### Let's Go Home Tonight

This first letter was written while Elisabeth was visiting Vienna.

Dear Dietrich,

Let's go home tonight! We could drive our former car, and turn left there at Renveg. This was our way home at night, leaving the bustle of Vienna and driving by the green countryside, next to each other's warmth.

Your love and spirit would fill out the rooms at home. We could just cuddle together on the sofa, and watch a funny movie or a romantic one. We could hold hands and you could tell me funny things or talk about your favorite subject: How the universe was made. And I would ask you questions, and you always had all the answers.

Please let's go home tonight.

I wish Adam and Eve had not fallen. The two worlds could be apart, but totally together. I could see where you live in the spirit world; if you needed anything. I could

---

<sup>80</sup> For more of the communication between Elisabeth and Dietrich after he ascended to the spirit world, see Elisabeth M. Seidel, *Stories of My Life*. Lulu, 2018.



see your face, and hear your voice. If Adam and Eve had not fallen.

I just want to go home tonight, like we did before. See your green eyes and feel your hand and hear your laughter and feel warmth all over.

If Adam and Eve had not fallen, there would be no tears dropping from my eyes right now. But I know Our Heavenly Parent, and together we will make a world of peace and love and happiness. And tears of joy will come when we meet again.

Elisabeth

### **Response to second message from Dietrich**

After receiving the second message through Elizabeth Kiedler, which included the song “A Thousand Years,” Elisabeth wrote this reply to Dietrich:

Dear Dietrich,

I will love you much more than 1,000 years! I will be always with you and you with me. God made eternity to live for ever and ever, so our earthly world is only a passage where we learn to love.

There is an energy tying us together, never to be broken, like an invisible cord.

*Où tu iras j'irais* (Where you will go, I'll go)

What you are saying I am saying. What you are doing I am doing. I love you more than anything. More than the

sky and the stars. More than your Father and Mother. You are always mine and I am always yours.

*Où tu iras j'irais* (Where you will go, I'll go)

I will do what you say and you do what I say. No beginning and no end.

Thank you, God, for True Love.

Elisabeth

### **Only Two Mice were Allowed in the House**

In this letter she shares how precious terms of endearment continue to connect them.

Dear Dietrich,

The only mice allowed in the house were you and me – as this was our nickname. You called me “Mousey” and I called you “Mousey.” I miss that.

Sometimes you called me “mon petit trésor” or “Schatzy” (trésor in German). But most of the time I was your “Mousey” and you were my “Mousey.”

We were also “Mamas” and “Dadas” (plural). We used those terms when we were together as a family. It made us feel we were representing all the fathers of the past and present and future, and all the mothers of the past, present and future.

Words of endearment are so precious to use and remember forever. These words are good to the ear, warm

to the heart and make love grow and multiply – and reach out again to the invisible world and back.

Yes, I can always write you letters, and basically I know your answers. I love you forever and more.

Elisabeth

### **I Miss You Tonight**

Elisabeth finds comfort in writing to her beloved Dietrich, assured that their love is eternal. Yet, she misses his physical presence, as this next letter reveals.

Dear Dietrich,

True love can transcend everything. Because of our love and unity on earth I can easily speak to you now and sometimes I feel your presence, a masculine being which I do not see but is definitely here. If I ask you a question I sense your answer. Because after living 40 years with you, I know how you would answer questions – with extreme logic, common sense and matter of fact.

But I miss you tonight. I remember in the past hearing the sound of your car engine arriving home. I was feeling excitement in my heart, you opening the door with a big smile, and giving each other a hug, made me feel warm all over.

So, I miss you tonight. Without you everything seems empty and sad. But again, I know what you would say: “Mousey”! This time on earth is so short compared to all eternity – we have all eternity to be together and love

each other. I am most grateful that God made another world and we have all eternity.

Elisabeth

### **Thank you for the Hug**

Finally, here is a beautiful message Elisabeth wrote for her beloved Dietrich a few months after his passing.

Dearest Dietrich,

Most beloved, I love you! Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the 40 years we spent together here on earth. It was most amazing. Happy times like Heaven on earth; difficult times like the pit of hell; amazing times like the world is mine; tearful times till there were no more tears. In health and sickness, I always loved you. I know you did too.

I have to say, we were always connected by a most special energy, like a rubber band. If we went too far apart this rubber band would not stretch more but made us return to the starting point. You could swallow my sharp edges, and I made your sweetness more salty. We had some good fights; you always forgave me. It took me more time to digest the difficult memories, but ultimately I did too.

So what is left is the true love we feel for each other, because we did always include our Heavenly Father in whatever we did. I think this is the conclusion of our beautiful life together on earth with our God whom we both love. Without this ideal our life has truly no meaning. I am so grateful that your last words to me on

earth were: “I will be always with you, forever together.” This sentence gives me strength and new life as we are now in two different worlds, apart but together.

So, every morning when I get up after reading some spiritual texts, I pick up my phone and go outside in the beautiful creation as we did all our life. I say:

“Hi, this is Elisabeth, your beloved wife. I love you so very much. I hope you are well. I am calling from the earth all the way to the spirit world where you now live.

I hope you are happy! I miss you, I am sure you miss me too.

I do not hear you back, because the connection is not so clear yet, but one day I will. But I know you are there and we are praying together.

Thank you, Dietrich for your love. Truly, true love will prevail.”

By the way, thank you for the hug I got yesterday in my dream. It was truly from you. I did not want to let go of that hug, but then I woke up and said to you, “Thank you for the hug.”

God bless you, Elisabeth

## Concluding Thoughts

---

By Jennifer P. Tanabe

In all this discussion of our eternal spirit, of the existence of the spiritual dimension of life which is all around and extends limitlessly and is our eternal home, the existence of God our Creator is understood. Yet, we have not addressed the question of where God is, and how can we see or experience God.

M. Scott Peck, in his fictional account of the afterlife, described characters experiencing God through working in committees.<sup>81</sup> As one who hates committee meetings, I had a hard time with this idea initially! However, I soon realized that his point is that we experience God through harmonious relationships with others.

Unification Thought explains that God is not seen, even in the spirit world:

When you go to the spirit world, you absolutely cannot see God. God's being exists. You are able to hear His voice, but you are not able to see Him with your eyes.<sup>82</sup>

God is a being, but of a different quality than all created beings. God is the Creator. We can understand God to be like the mind while all creation is in the position of the body:

---

<sup>81</sup> M. Scott Peck, *In Heaven as on Earth: A Vision of the Afterlife*. Hyperion, 1997.

<sup>82</sup> Moon, *Earthly Life and Spirit World I*, p. 193.

Who is God? You should know this. God is like the mind of the universe, do you see? Now you know who He is, right? As we come to understand it, He is like the mind of the universe. Can you see the mind?<sup>83</sup>

The mind is not visible, is not finite, is not measurable, and is not divisible. In like manner, God cannot be analyzed:

God is the master of the spirit world, which is limitlessly wide, which our reason cannot understand, which we cannot see with our physical senses, and which we cannot grasp or explain. You cannot describe God, no matter how long you study Him. He is the One who cannot be described nor explained in terms of any of our senses or emotions. . . . God is the master of the eternal light that cannot be divided nor analyzed. God is the one who guides the providence and leads people profoundly with His resplendent light.<sup>84</sup>

In fact, it is a mistake to try to understand God with our human faculty of reason:

We all have been unable to see God. Then, can we see God when we come to the spiritual world? If He is the one that we human beings can see, He may not be God.

God is He whom we cannot see with our human eyes or touch. He is not a being who can be seen within the limit of human vision. God is the parent of all humankind, the

---

<sup>83</sup> Moon, *Earthly Life and Spirit World II*, p.148.

<sup>84</sup> Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*, pp. 62-63.

creator of all things. If such a God can be determined and analyzed within human thinking, then we can conclude that any other great being could become God.

God is only God. My arrogance that I would be able to analyze God when I came to the Kingdom of Heaven completely collapsed into small pieces. If there is anyone who would analyze God, he would be the most foolish one, and no different from an idiot. This effort, then, is no more than a waste of time. If anyone could analyze God with their human brain, that person would have to be God.<sup>85</sup>

Dr. Sang Hun Lee in his earthly life was the ultimate scientist and intellectual scholar. His work was based in the scientific method, using logic and verifiable experience. Although he wrote that true love is the key that connects everything, still it was expressed in terms of reason and intellect, rather than emotion. After ascending to the spirit world, his messages to those on earth affirmed that God's greatest gift to us, His children, is love, and he expressed this with sincere emotion:

Love is the core of God's image received by human beings when they are born. Human beings should inherit God's love as is. However, having gone wrong, the relationship with God was disconnected. To re-establish this relationship, human beings should resemble God. The best way to resemble God is to restore the original image of love as sons and daughters. Love! Love! Love! It is the fundamental power with which we can overcome and

---

<sup>85</sup> Lee, *Messages from the Spirit World*, p. 108.



melt down every difficulty, and thus accomplish everything. Love is the biggest gift we received from God and the sealed proof that we are His children. Love! We have to strive and exert ourselves to find the love we lost.<sup>86</sup>

Betty Eadie came to a similar realization:

A powerful thought hit me, and I repeated it over and over in my mind: "Love is really the only thing that matters. Love is really the only thing that matters, and love is joy!"<sup>87</sup>

It is only through our hearts that we can connect directly to God, when we realize true love. This is our ultimate destiny, on earth and in the eternal spiritual realm.

---

<sup>86</sup> Lee, *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*, p. 45.

<sup>87</sup> Eadie, *Embraced by the Light*, p. 114.

## Recommended Readings

---

- Alexander, Eben. *Proof of Heaven*. Simon & Schuster, 2012.
- Borgia, Anthony. *Life in the World Unseen*. M.A.P. Inc., 1993.
- Borgia, Anthony. *More About Life in the World Unseen*. M.A.P. Inc., 2000.
- Borgia, Anthony. *Here and Hereafter*. M.A.P. Inc., 2000.
- Byrne, Lorna. *Angels in my Hair*. Harmony, 2011.
- Byrne, Lorna. *A Message of Hope from the Angels*. Atria Books, 2013.
- Eadie, Betty J. *Embraced by the Light*. Bantam, 1994.
- Franchezzo. *A Wanderer in the Spirit Lands*. AIM Publishing, 1993.
- Greaves, Helen. *Testimony of Light: An extraordinary Message of Life after Death*. TarcherPerigee, 2009.
- Küng, Hans. *Eternal Life? Life After Death as a Medical, Philosophical, and Theological Problem*. Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2003.
- Lee, Sang Hun. *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth*. FFWPU, 1998.
- Lee, Sang Hun. *Messages from the Spirit World*. FFWPU, 2001.
- Long, Jeffrey. *Evidence of the Afterlife*. HarperOne, 2010.
- Moody, Raymond. *Life After Life*. HarperOne, 2015.
- Moody, Raymond. *The Light Beyond*. Bantam, 1989.
- Moon, Sun Myung. *Exposition of the Divine Principle*. HSA-UWC, 1996.
- Moon, Sun Myung. *Earthly Life and Spirit World I*. FFWPU, 1998.
- Moon, Sun Myung. *Earthly Life and Spirit World II*. FFWPU, 1998.

- Moon, Sun Myung. *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen*. The Washington Times Foundation, 2010.
- Pappalardo, Ron. *Reconciled by the Light: The After-Death Letters of a Teen Suicide*. Lulu, 2009.
- Pappalardo, Ron. *Reconciled by the Light II: Spirit Messages from a Teen Suicide*. CreateSpace, 2012.
- Peck, M. Scott. *In Heaven as on Earth: A Vision of the Afterlife*. Hyperion, 1997.
- Pobanz, Kerry. *The Spirit-Person and the Spirit-World*. HSA Publications, 2001.
- Pobanz, Kerry. *Life in Eternity*. Lulu, 2013.
- Ring, Kenneth. *Life at Death: A Scientific Investigation of the Near-Death Experience*. William Morrow, 1982.
- Rivas, Titus, Anny Dirven, and Rudolf H. Smit. *The Self Does Not Die*. International Association for Near-Death Studies, 2016.
- Rose, David, and Leonard Fox (eds.). *Conversations with Angels: What Swedenborg Heard in Heaven*. Chrysalis Books, 1996.
- Sabom, Michael B. *Recollections of Death: A Medical Investigation*. HarperCollins, 1981.
- Seidel, Dietrich F., and Elisabeth M. Seidel. *Beloveds, Forever Together: Letters of Eternal Love*. Lulu, 2017.
- Seidel, Elisabeth M. *Stories of My Life*. Lulu, 2018.
- Selig, William P. *Preparing for the Afterlife Based on the Teachings of Sun Myung Moon*. Lulu, 2014.
- Spurgin, Nora N. *Circles of Angels: How you Can Call your own Circle of Angels to Energize your Life*. HSA Publications, 1999.
- Swedenborg, Emmanuel. *Heaven and Hell*. Swedenborg Foundation Publishers, 2010.
- Tanabe, Jennifer P. *Contemplating Unification Thought*. Lulu, 2013.

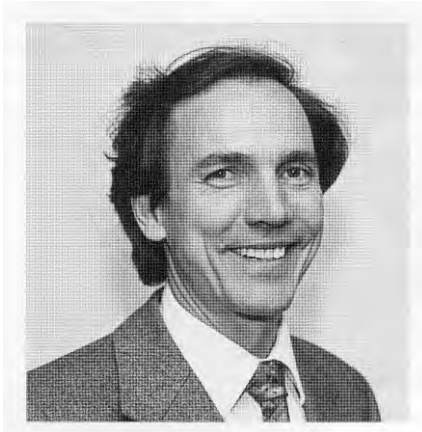
- Jennifer P. Tanabe (ed.). *Unification Insights into Marriage and Family: The Writings of Dietrich F. Seidel*. Lulu, 2017
- Unification Thought Institute. *Essentials of Unification Thought*. Unification Thought Institute, 1992.
- Wilson, Andrew (ed.). *World Scripture*. Paragon House, 1991.



## About the Authors

---

### Dietrich F. Seidel



Dietrich Seidel was born in Austria; his father was German and his mother Austrian. He showed a keen interest in both science and religion from an early age, studying engineering at the Vienna University of Technology and religion at the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) in Barrytown, New York (Masters) and then at the University of St. Michael's College in

Toronto, Canada (Doctorate).

As a professor, he won the Templeton Prize for developing a course on "Science and Religion." A diligent and reflective scholar, Dietrich taught students on three continents: North America, Europe and Asia. He developed a passion for marriage and family enrichment, expressed both theoretically through his studies of such thinkers as Friedrich Schleiermacher and in practice through the many seminars and workshops he conducted together with his wife, Elisabeth.

Visit their website at [www.dietrichfseidel.com](http://www.dietrichfseidel.com)

## **Jennifer P. Tanabe**

Jennifer Tanabe was born in Scotland and earned both her Bachelors and Doctoral degrees in Psychology from the University of Edinburgh. She moved to the United States as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Minnesota's Institute of Child Development.



She currently works as a freelance educational consultant, editor and writer. She is married and has one adult daughter. Her husband, Yuichi Tanabe, is an artist, inventor, and musician and hails from Japan. They live in the Mid-Hudson Valley of New York State.

Visit her website at [www.jenniferptanabe.com](http://www.jenniferptanabe.com)

Humankind is achieving higher and higher levels of awareness of the spiritual dimension of life. Scientists acknowledge that the physical world, confined by the space-time continuum, is inadequate to describe the totality of the cosmos. There is another dimension to our world. After our physical body dies, our spirit continues to live for eternity in this other world. This is the belief of many of the world's religions, as well as individuals whose life was changed by a near-death experience or the passing of a loved one.

This book continues the collaborative work of Dietrich F. Seidel and Jennifer P. Tanabe. Here, Dr. Seidel discusses the philosophical and theological background to our understanding of the spiritual realm. He presents numerous testimonies that affirm the continued existence of the spirit after the death of the physical body.

Dr. Tanabe expands the theoretical understanding of the spiritual realm based on Unification Thought. She also discusses practical information on life in the spirit world and how we on earth can communicate with our ascended loved ones. A number of messages between those in the spirit world and their loved ones on the earth are included.

The reader is left with the understanding not just that the spirit world exists, but that our life on earth is a preparation for our eternal life in that spiritual realm. During our life on earth we have a physical self and a spiritual self; the spirit world is not just for our afterlife. Death of the physical body comes to us all, but it is nothing to fear. It behooves us to spend our time on this earth well, growing our eternal spirit through learning to love; for our ability to love is the most important thing we take with us.

