

Perspective – “Reality”

My plan was to set a half empty bottle on the conference table and then ask people what they thought about it and why it was there. “Someone forgot their bottle of water.” “Someone was too lazy to clean up after their meeting?” “Why can’t people clean up after themselves?” “Let’s see who shows up to get their water.” “Someone left a half-empty bottle of water on the table.” “Someone left a half-full bottle of water on the table.” These were some of the comments.

No one understood why the bottle was on the table, so they all created a different reality base on their assumptions. After asking several questions my role in this little game became apparent and the purpose became clear. It was a simple but effective demonstration about how we each can create our own reality.

We do this every day to varying extents. It may concern something that someone said, a look that someone gave us, a piece of information that is incomplete, or any number of other dynamic parts of our daily experience. From these elements of the circumstances of our lives we easily construct our view of the world, our view of reality.

There are limits to this, of course, because most people are constantly running a type of check-and-balance system where they are comparing their current assessment of reality with their past observations, the new interpretation that’s next, and that of others around them.

If our view of reality seems to be different than others we usually talk about that and try to fill in the blanks, so we hold more in common than in conflict. If not then we hold our view in tension with others and often move on to the next subject, or the next person depending on the issues related to our differences.

It is interesting to me that we are capable of retaining a view of reality that contains assumptions and ideas that are diametrically opposed to one another. All of this stems from what we believe to be true about the circumstances, environment, and people that we know or know about.

My concern is about how the Truth of God, Who is Love, Peace, Wisdom, Life, will be experienced within our reality. This reality is our individual and corporate understanding of life, knowledge and experience; our perceived reality, or our perspective of what exists.

My reference to reality as “perceived reality” is based upon a duality or multi-layered awareness of ourselves and the world around us that exists based upon what we and other people assume to be true about life. Our perspective of reality becomes our framework of understanding our life experiences. Also, our understanding of life experiences either supports or changes our perspective of reality. It should come as no surprise that people sustain thoughts about relativity.

The confusing thing about this is the fact that we have a common physical foundation upon which we all experience life. This often causes us to assume that ultimately all of life exists as a commonality of some type; that there is one ultimate way of understanding life that is correct, which is in agreement with our physical experience.

Supporting this are basic experiences like putting our hand on a very hot stove momentarily. We will be burned. It is the same for all of us, and there are many types of common painful experiences. These crisis experiences create a common bond of understanding, lessons learned, kernels of truth and a common perspective.

Interpreted science can tell us why we get burned from several views all the way to the atomic level of cause and effect. Community can tell us why we are burned from care, safety, danger, and other perspectives.

What all of this means, our individual and corporate understanding of how to live with the experience of being burned, is processed by us based on our individual and/or corporately perceived reality of life. The physical elements of our existence are ultimately understood through our perception of that reality; what we think everything means.

Common knowledge and understanding provide another dimension of perceived reality. Common emotional response and memory provide yet another dimension of perceived reality. All of these are intertwined in our constructed ability to understand what we call life; what we call reality.

The more complex our experience becomes over time the more complex our perceived reality becomes. A common experience of all of us may be that the level of complexity, which exists in our perceived reality, acts as a barrier to our ability to reflect upon the truth of that perceived reality.

Do we act as though the understanding of life is found in the details of knowledge and our experiences? My experience tells me that we must accept the challenge of searching for the truth about our perceived reality, and that the truth is not made most apparent in the details of our existence.

So, my search for truth leads me to the root, or the beginning of our perception of reality; our perception of life. For me the record of mankind’s struggle with perceived reality is illustrated in the life of two people, Eve and Adam. In Genesis chapter three we saw the struggle concerning what mankind’s perception of life would be based upon; what would become the foundation of our understanding of reality.

The understanding of reality up to that time was based upon the fact that life ultimately comes from God. God is the creator, giver, and sustainer of all life; God is Life. The continued sustaining of that Life was based upon their sustained relationship with God.

Acceptance of this truth is fundamental to that relationship, and equates to one's faithfulness to, respect of, and reverence for God as the ultimate authority in, and over all life. In this garden event with Eve and then Adam we find a fundamental change in mankind's perception of life that becomes our perception of reality.

That foundational shift is away from God as Life, to the belief that life is derived from our physically, mentally, and emotionally experience. Central to this structure is ourselves taking the key authoritative role over our life in place of God.

In this new perception of reality life did not equal God being in relationship with us as the one with authority over our existence. Instead life equaled our experiences, with us in authoritative control of our lives, and our constructed perception of life based on the physical, mental, and emotional elements of that perception.

At that moment a unified perception of reality based upon how God defined "Life" was lost. In its place we decided what would become the details of our perceived authority within the limits of our control and the meaning of those experiences. From that moment to this moment a dual perception of reality existed based upon history, and our individual and corporate common physical, mental, and emotional elements of our experiences.

That dual perception of reality consists of God's perception of reality, and our various perceptions of reality. Each one of these is based up very different foundations of truth and fundamental principles.

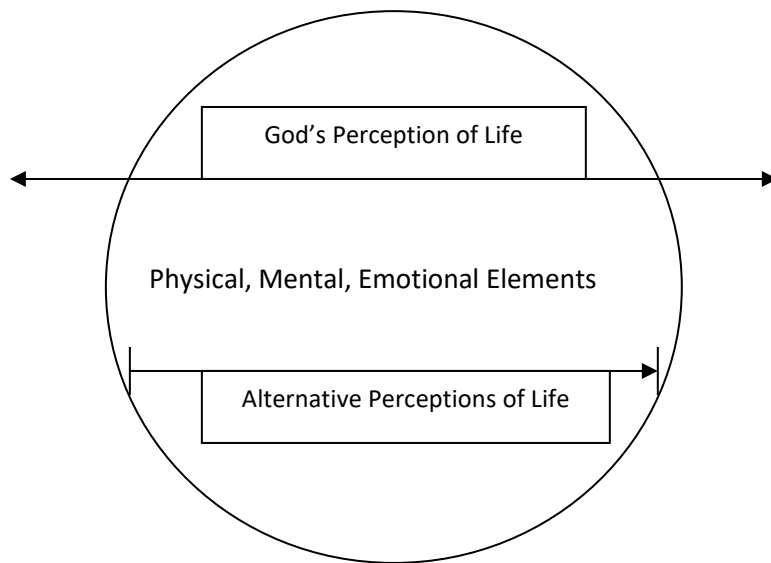
What reality is does not actually change because we perceive reality to be different than God. Our concept of reality changes and this impacts how we think about and experience our reality; how we experience "life". But it does not change the fundamental reality about the origin of Life and what is actually happening on a moment-by-moment basis.

Because we think about life differently than what God said is the Truth about life does not change the Truth; it does not change God's True Reality. The Reality established by God continues while we live as though another truth is the basis of life, as though another reality exists.

That dual perception exists today in spite of the fact that our perception of what we experience as reality is mostly, if not completely incompatible with what God said is the Truth about Life. We are either unaware of this, or we choose to ignore whatever level of awareness we might possess.

Thus our ideas about reality are incompatible with what God knows is really happening, incompatible with God's understanding of the context within which things are happening, and incompatible with the actual outcomes from what is happening. Any aspect of our perception of reality that does not come from God is wrong and incompatible with God's Eternal Reality whether concerned with the past, immediate or future elements of anything or any idea that will ever exist.

Please take a look at the illustration below:



“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways My ways,’ declares the Lord.” (Isaiah 55:8)

In the illustration above we clearly see that God’s perception of Life exists separate from ours, or any alternative perceptions of life. This means that God’s Reality exists very differently than any other form of our perceived reality.

Also note that God’s Reality does not have a beginning or end, which is different from our perceptions of reality that are often limited to the time frame of the existence of the Earth. The physical, mental, and emotional elements of our perception of reality are what we mostly rely upon as the foundation of our perspectives.

As we live out our existence on this earth, we will choose the basis of our understanding of our life, and life as a whole. The basis we choose for that understanding is the foundation of our perception of life, thus our perception of reality.

What we believe to be true about this fundamental question of “What is life?” becomes the foundation of our understanding of life, and thus the foundation of our life experience. Here our choice of what to accept as being true directly impacts what we end up believing to be true about our life. For us what is true about our life can change and will be changed over time. This is not the case with God.

Because our decisions concerning what is true determine the foundation of our perception of life it also determines our perception of reality. This in turn influences our perception of all of life’s experiences, knowledge, relationships, and memories. We need to know own perception and our subsequent decisions also determines what we will experience in our existence beyond our time on this earth.

Adam and Eve made a decision. They decided to try to live as though they were their own god. They decided to make their own decisions based on their knowledge of good and evil, and then choosing what they wanted. They chose to live their existence on this earth with their primary focus being the

physical, mental and emotional domains. They decided to replace God Who was Life in them with a self-initiated life source. They reached for a different reality other than that which God had established. They believed a lie rather than the truth.

From that time to this all people approach their existence as though life consists of their responsibility to control or manage all the circumstances of their existence. This is necessary so they can experience their desired quality of existence for themselves and those they care about. We create our idea of what constitutes an excellent, good, or acceptable culmination of our experiences; the desired quality of what we call life.

This varies greatly among people, and groups of people. The differences are very interesting. For some life would be great if they didn't have to walk two miles to fill up plastic five-gallon containers of water and carry them back to their home so they could have water that's safe enough to use. For them a well with a pump handle that provided safe water within their community would be like a gift from Heaven.

For another person they will reach the ultimate experience when they never have to get up, unless they choose to, in order to get a glass of ice water. They want to have people who serve them what they want when they want it.

Obviously, there is an extremely vast array of experiences concerning drinking water that exist between these two examples. Also, we should never forget those who have no safe drinking water at all. There are many people like this including many Native families on Reservations in the USA.

The numbers of people without safe water explodes outside of the boundaries of our blessed Nation. So, the desired experiences do indeed differ greatly. Within this part of our perceived reality there are those of us who do not realize the facts about water access in the world. Some of us try to do something to help those less fortunate than themselves. Most of us probably don't want to be reminded of the facts, and there are a few who don't care anyway.

Just think of how much variation there is among all of us concerning our circumstances. Now, grasp the Reality that God knows every aspect of everyone's perceived reality down to the finest detail concerning everything. This is not just for one moment in time it is for every moment of time that has existed, does exist as we read this page, and every moment ahead that will exist as time continues to pass.

How amazing is that? Do we really believe God can do that? What is the truth we've each decided to make a part of our perception of reality? How does our perception of life and reality align with God's Reality? Hopefully this book is assisting us in understanding God's Reality so we can begin to answer that question for ourselves.

In accordance to my understanding, the more God reveals His Truth to me the simpler it becomes, and the greater is the difference between our usual perspectives of reality compared to God's perspective. For most of us when we say we're living life, God says we are Dead. When most of us think we are doing something good, in its essence God knows the end result to be Sin.

We think we need peace, love, joy, and forgiveness. God says He is Peace, Love, Joy, and Forgiveness. We search for the truth while changing some or much of what we accept as being the truth over time. God says He is Truth and His Truth will never change. We feel that we need to gain more of the fullness of life. God says He is Life and there is no Life apart from Him.

The more we realize these differences the more we may want to accept God's Reality as our own. What we may not want to accept is that the only accurate perception of reality is God's perspective of Reality, which is Eternally the Truth for every existing person or thing. No Truth exists outside of God's perspective.

We may say that a person's perception becomes their reality. If limited entirely to their experience this may seem correct even though their perceptions, and our perspectives concerning their perceptions may be changing on nearly a constant basis.

This is opposed to God's Reality that was spoken into existence throughout our concept of time. If we choose to accept God's Eternal Truth as our immediate Reality then God will teach us what actually is Reality. He will do this as we experience the circumstances related to our existence on this Earth.

Later we will come to understand more about how this works, and how it can be so for each of us. For now we need to understand that reality for Adam and Eve, and all of us since is our perceived reality based upon what we believe to be true about life at any given point in time. That perspective is generally based upon the physical, mental, and emotional domains of our existence as we choose to interpret what is true about our experiences and what they mean. Last, our reality is absolutely wrong unless it is derived from God's Eternal Reality.