Truth in Spirit and Material

Spiritually the body is entirely divided from the realm of the material world around it. It is our disconnection that allows us to separate our spiritual life from our modern physical life. Two great philosophers Plato and Kant agree that a higher truth is accessible through experiences in life. Although the two differ on what the higher truth actually is. Plato believes every soul is immortal and that truth is the best food for the soul. Meanwhile Kant believes that the spirit is not immortal and not connected to the material world. Life is experienced through one’s senses and material world interactions, with one’s spiritual life left to find a meaning and connection the to the material world.

The belief that the spirit is immortal leads one to believe that there is no connection to the material world which is believed to not be immortal. How could an immortal object be connected to a world that is not immortal? Plato answers this in his writings by hypothesizing that the soul is always passed on accordingly. Justice equals good fate for good people, injustice equals bad fate. If the spirit is being passed on accordingly to its actions, then the spirit is truly connected to the material world around it. Plato believes that this connection is not one of a permeant relationship, but one that is limited in time and space, but not in impact.

Kant believes that the soul is not immortal, and also that it is not connected in either time or space to the material world around it. Meaning that the afterlife is nothing but a fallacy that not is impacted by one’s beliefs or actions while on earth. Kant’s ideas align most with what modern science proves through practical testing and experimenting. Science has denied
Kant the ability to find meaning in the world around him through spiritual connection. Living a life and experiencing what happens in the material world are all for not if one does not believe in an afterlife for the spirit. This raises the question, can one find meaning and purpose with the individual spirit or the individual material world without believing in a link between the two? Kant does not feign his knowledge of the spiritual world in Critique of Pure Reason stating, “...yet they are incomparably more moderate than those of any author of the commonest program who pretends to prove the simple nature of the soul or the necessity of a first beginning of the world.” (102, Kant). The answer believed by some is yes, and others no. Ideals aligning with Plato would answer no, that the only way to have purpose and meaning in either the spiritual or the material world is to feel the connection between the two and how they interact, that one without the other is impossible. Ideals aligning with Kant may agree that even though they find no connection between the spiritual and the material world, that meaning can still be found through their experiences on earth and are not impacted by a lack of belief in an afterlife.

Even though the two men differ on belief in what happens to the soul, they both believe in a spiritual soul which is essential to answering the question how the spirit is connected to the material world. The entire philosophy of both men and the question its self is entirely incorrect if one takes the mindset, all we know is all we can see, meaning that not only is the spiritual world not connected to the material world, but there is no spiritual world, there is no spirit. We base our entire idea of having a spirit on nothing but pure and blind faith that there is more to ourselves and that we deserve to move on to another life after this one. In which case if there is no spirit than we suddenly are no longer connected to the material world, we are the material
world. Modern science has proven that every seven years every single cell in your body has completely been regenerated, meaning your human form of being is entirely different from what you were the previous seven years. It’s not until one realizes there is no disconnect from the material world and spirit world that they will realize that life, even without an afterlife, has enormous amount of meaning if one is willing to feel connected to the world around them. Until one approaches the question from a different angle, an answer may be impossible to discover even while leaning on the greatest philosophers of all time.

It is our connection to the material world that allows for us to feel a deeper spiritual understanding and discover the answer to what is the meaning of life. Feeling connected to the world around us will not allow us to understand the meaning of life, but it may make it easier to solve such a deep and seemingly unanswerable question. Marcel Proust explores the discovery of the meaning of life through his 7-part series titled, In Search of Lost Time. In his works Proust discovers that there are only 3 logical reasons for the meaning of life. The first being social success. We would view this today as being famous and rich, while in Proust’s days it was about being an aristocrat. Proust discovers that this is not the true meaning to life, because the aristocrats are just as subjected to lives vices and downfalls as those around them, so Proust continues his search. Second, Proust hypothesizes that that the meaning of life is in finding true love. Although Proust does not find the answer he was hoping for, he instead comes away with the feeling that love is dark; that we as humans will never be able to fully understand or accept people; that life is a lonely journey in a vast ocean with no moonlight. Proust begins to believe that the reason he is unable to find the true meaning of life is because of the habits he has fallen into in the material world, and that those habits are preventing him from seeing the
freshness and newness in the world around him. Third, Proust hypothesizes that the true meaning of life is art. He comes to the conclusion that he is correct because artists spend their lives attempting to paint the world in a new light and allow for one to view the world from a different angle. Proust speaks about this in part one titled *Combray*, “Perhaps the immobility of the things that surround us is forced upon them by our conviction that they are themselves and not anything else, by the immobility of our conception of them” (5, Proust). Proust is suggesting that the material items around us appear to be nothing special and very mundane because we are unable to see them as if it was the first time that we were seeing them, in order for the physical and material world to have meaning to the spiritual world and one’s self, those material objects must be seen in a new light and as if they were not normal habitual sightings.

Understanding the connection between the material and spiritual world is as difficult as it comes for everyday humans, and even the greatest philosophers of all time. The difficulty in finding such a complex answer lies in the fact that so many different answers exist. Kant would answer that there is no connection between the two, the spiritual world and material world are independent of one another and do no influence the other. Plato would answer there is a strong connection between the two, the spiritual world and material world are interwoven with each acting upon the other. Proust would answer that there is a small connection between the two but the connection is worthless if one does not approach everyday life as if they were a child and were experiencing the material world around them for the first time. The multitude of answers and the inability to prove a correct answer leads one to the traumatic understanding that not everything in life is understood, that answers can be sought after yet not attainable. Truth is subjective, how one is connected to the world around them spiritually and materially,
or if there even is a connection is entirely dependent on their view of the truth, and what they believe to be true.