# Finding Life Video Series 1

# Video 4: Principles and Beliefs

Hello and welcome back. My name is Tim Spiess. This is the 4th video in a series designed to help you evaluate yourself and your life so that you might find the true purpose of your life.

In the last video, we learned that you will not find the meaning and purpose you need for your life if you are living by your feelings or emotions. We learned that oftentimes the most important or meaningful things we must do in life are the most difficult. Thus, if we are living by our emotions, we are very likely to dismiss things we consider difficult or hard because they won't feel good or we might be afraid to try, and thus we will not accomplish those important things. That is especially true of this journey! If you hear something true that you don't like or that you disagree with, you will bail out and stop considering, thus ensuring your blindness in that area. And if we build up enough blind spots, we become fully blind to that which is true and right, and we become something significantly less than what we are meant to be as human beings.

We learned that there are two basic kinds of people – those who make a conscious effort to know what is true and right and to try and live by those beliefs or principle, and those who do not.  If you, dear viewer, don't care about what is true and right or false and wrong in an objective manner – not just things that are true and right that you benefit from - then you cannot take this journey…you will never find the purpose of your life nor will your life ever have deep meaning…you will merely wander around trying to get what pleases you no matter what it does to other people, and thus you will never become what you were meant to be.

So, let's explore the topic of principles and beliefs.  I'm about to say some preliminary things and ask some questions that you will need to reflect upon and think about.

Does not every physical thing that exists have a cause?  In other words, can you think of anything physical that does not have a cause?  Let's take some examples.  Let's consider a rock you find I your yard.  What is its cause of existence?  Well, it was caused by geothermal events that happened a long time ago, unless you live right next to an active volcano!  OK, another example, how about your refrigerator or computer or cell phone or car?  They were was designed by engineers and manufactured by a companies

some years ago. All of their components were likewise designed and manufactured by people - that is, people took existing materials and shaped them into those objects.

What about an events…does every event have a cause? The answer is yes. The cause might be difficult to discern, but everything that happens has a sufficient cause. For example, let's say you are hiking and a good size rock or boulder comes rolling down the hill right in front of where you were walking. That boulder did not have 'no cause' to start rolling. Something – whether the erosion of that which was holding it against the force of gravity wore out; or something with enough force pushed it – caused that stone to roll down the hill. The bolder rolling down the hill also needs to have a sufficient cause, meaning that a particle of dust without enough mass to overcome the obstacle holding the boulder up, could not have caused the boulder to start rolling…the sufficient cause had to be able to move the boulder, not something smaller or of a lesser mass.

The same could be said of human events…every human event has a human based cause and the cause has to be sufficient. For example, a world war has as its cause pride, fear or selfishness, and the people who express those

things towards another group of people must be numerous enough to bring the war to pass.

OK, now what about non-physical things.  First of all do they exist?  Let's use some examples.  Does the number 1 exist?  Yes it does, but it is not locked up in some vault somewhere, rather it exists in the minds of people…it is a metaphysical entity.  It is expressed through human language or writing, but those expressions don't equal its existence, for it would exist whether or not it was written anywhere or whether or not anyone ever spoke it or understood it.  Numbers are metaphysical or non-physical entities that are real – they clearly exist and just as clearly are not physical entities.

Here is another example - how about beauty – does it exist?  That is to say, is it a concept that is real that people can know and communicate about?  The answer is yes.  And yet beauty – whether in the natural world or some human characteristic or creation – is clearly a metaphysical or non-physical thing.  That is to say that the concept of beauty does not exist in a physical form, rather, it is a non-physical characteristic that people attribute to something, either physical – like a flower – or non-physical – like the inner attitude of a woman which attitude has outward expressions.  To prove this simple truth, there are many people that others consider physically

beautiful, and yet these same physically beautiful people are also known as ugly people.  So, what is the "ugly" if not non-physical?

Let's look at another example of a non-physical thing – human knowing and reasoning.  Obviously people can reason with their minds, and yet their thoughts – the things reason works with – are non-physical.  For example, a person could have a nobel prize willing surgical team looking at their brain with all the latest technological instruments, and yet those surgeons can never know that the person on the table is thinking about a beach in the caribbean.  We will look more closely at this truth a bit later on.  For now, suffice it to say that with not much effort, and a willingness to admit to simple self-evident truths, clearly non-physical things do exist.  Can you agree to that simple truth, dear viewer?  Will you submit to reason and truth, or not?

A physicalist – that is someone who believes that everything in the human experience can be explained by physical means – and thus who does not like the evidence of non-physical things - will try very hard to deny the plain evidence of a metaphysical or non-physical entities like thoughts or numbers, but they are both un-reasonable in their objections and they use non-physical things – thoughts - to articulate their objections!

So, let's get back to principles.  Do they exist.  Yes they do!  They exist just as much as a person being able to solve a mathematical equation in their mind proves that math exists even while mathematics is obviously not a physical thing.  So, let's take that a step further.  Remember how we agreed that anything that exists must have a sufficient cause?  Do principles need a cause to exist?  Not the specific principle, but rather any principle.  The answer is clearly yes.  *If principles exist in people's minds – and they do - then there must have been a sufficient cause behind our minds having he capacity to  know and hold principles.*  Please let me repeat that important point.  Does not observation, experience and reason lead you to the truth that whatever beliefs or principles you hold are metaphysical or non-physical things?

OK, so let's recap where we are.  We have used observation and reason to prove that non-physical things like numbers and principles exist, and that there is a cause for everything that exists that we can know either through our senses or through reason.

Let's look at another important non-physical thing.  How is it that people can believe that something is right or wrong?  Why is it wrong to murder, for example.  'Well, because it is' or 'everybody knows that murder is wrong',

would be a common, yet non-reasoned responses.  But we committed to using reason on this journey!  So, why is unjustified killing – that is killing someone other than to defend oneself or other innocent parties from harm - wrong?  How do you know it is wrong?  Was it really learned in the past as merely a factual truth, or do you know some other way than the intellect, that it is wrong?  In other words, would you know it was wrong if you saw someone murder someone even if you were never told that murder was wrong?  If you are honest with yourself, you would answer, 'yes'.  It is evident that humans have an internal moral compass that informs them of human behaviors that are right or wrong.  Traditionally, this is called the human conscience.  Can you acknowledge that simple truth, dear viewer?  That is not to say that people follow their conscience, but rather they possess a conscience.  Nor am I denying that some people have ruined their conscience.  So, dear viewer, is it not true that you possess a conscience that informs you at a basic level what basic human behavior is right and what basic human behavior is wrong?   And further, that you have some ability to know what is right and what is wrong human behavior?  What is the cause of you ability or capacity to know non-physical things and to know what is right or wrong human behavior?  More precisely, what is the sufficient cause

for your ability to reason…to hold or know non-physical beliefs or principles…to know right from wrong?  Please don't say, 'my parents', for your parent's no more designed or created your capacity to reason or know right from wrong, anymore than the guy who drives the steel delivery truck to the automobile plant created or designed the car that comes out at the other end!  Your parent's merely caused a new human being by bringing the raw materials together…they did not design or cause your human characteristics, abilities or capacities.

It is self-evident that we humans have a non-physical aspect to our person, traditionally called a soul or spirit.  To deny this is unreasonable.  To try and use physics to explain how you have the capacity to love another person is un-reasonable.  To use physics to explain how you have the capacity to look at a sunset and understand the concept of 'beauty' is unreasonable.  As an illustration to help convey that concept, it is unreasonable to use bricks and wood and metal to explain the whys and hows and 'what does it mean' of the play going on inside the theatre.  We will look at this concept – that molecules and matter are insufficient explanations for much of the human experience - more closely in the next video.

It is a fact, you have beliefs and principles, and those beliefs and principles are not physical, meaning you have a non-physical component to your person. Most person's principles are selfish one's and they might not be able to willing to articulate them…meaning principles like, "I need to make sure I come out on top" or "I need to make sure I win" or "I need to make sure I get what I need out of this" – but they still have them.

What are your most important principles, dear viewer, and are some principle's better than others? For example, let's say one person has the following principle, "I need to make money when I help orphan children find adults who will care for them" and as such, they will not actually help the child unless they are paid to do so. Another person has the principle, "Helping the orphan children find parents to care for them is more important than money, so I will help the children even if I don't receive money to do so". Which person has the superior principle regarding their involvement with helping orphan children? The truth is you intuitively know that one principle is better than the other. You know - if you were an orphaned child – which person you would like helping you…and that is the person with the superior belief or principle regarding their involvement with orphan children. Please don't deny this simple truth. In your ability to

make those judgments and know those things, you are saying that you know what is good or bad and further, that one person can be a better person than the other – for a person living by better principles will be a better human being than the person living by lesser or worse principles.  Again, I ask, what is the first and sufficient cause for your ability to know and judge like that?

More importantly, you just acknowledged that you have the capacity to judge yourself…how good of a person are you?

The truth is that all humans have the capacities to know, reason and judge right from wrong.  This **capacity** – not the things known or the reasons articulated or the judgments made – but rather the capacity is NOT dependent upon a certain culture or time in history…rather all human being have this capacity irrespective of the time or place they exist – it is part of our nature.

In addition, the principles or what is decided as right and wrong behavior are not relative to a particular human culture, but rather are universal.  For example, all people in all cultures the earth has ever supported know that it is wrong to torture a baby.  Thus, to say that the moral compass of a human culture is relative with no absolute moral beliefs or principles is erroneous.  The truth is that all humans have been designed with both the capacity to

reason as well as the capacity to know what basic human behavior is right or wrong…they have been given a conscience…to use a computer analogy, they have been given an operating system of basic rules.

Furthermore, those people who hold to better beliefs and principles will in fact be better human beings if they live by those beliefs and principles. And so we come to the final question of this video – can you judge yourself to determine if you are a good person or a bad person? In other words, you would have no problem judging another person's words or behavior as good or bad, right or wrong – you do it every day to some extent - so how about you do the same with yourself? Take some time to look in the mirror and ask the question, "Am I a good person or a bad person? Am I living by good principles, or bad ones? Am I living by any principles other than "I need to make sure I come out on top" or "I need to make sure I win" or "I need to make sure I get what I need out of this"? Where to my principles come from? If you are able to look at yourself with any level of objectivity – if you can escape the pride-fear-selfishness cocoon even for just a moment – then you will have done well … you will get some very important answers and you will experience the difficulty of this journey, and you can continue.

Until next time, be real, get past the shallowness and pretentiousness of

American life and look deeper to find what you really need.