Chapter 5 - At this point in our studies, we have finished the first subsection of section one called “Basic Considerations of True Spirituality.” Chapter 5 begins a subsection that Dr. Schaeffer calls “Biblical Unity and True Spirituality.” Here Dr. Schaeffer picks up where he left off and wishes to further clarify the unity of the Bible and its practical connection with the spirituality of the Christian in time and space. He begins by further elaborating on the "reality" of the spiritual universe and challenging the notions of Naturalism.

Against Naturalism
His first words are, "Our Generation is overwhelmingly naturalistic." It is important to realize that what Dr. Schaeffer means to teach us in this chapter is different from the previous chapters. It is simply this… if the spiritual world and the natural world are linked as he has already established, then when one removes the spiritual perspective, spiritual words no longer have meaning. Logic as a whole breaks down, and this has happened on a global scale. Yet truth is found through living by the agency of the Holy Spirit.

For example, we have said that we are to love God enough to say, 'Thank You' even for the difficult things. We must immediately understand, as we say this, that this has no meaning whatsoever unless we live in a personal universe in which there is a personal God who objectively exists.\(^1\)

We also have considered Christ's redemptive death, which has no meaning whatsoever outside the relationship of a supernatural world. The only reason the words 'redemptive death' have any meaning is that there is a personal God who exist and, more than that has a character. He is not morally neutral. When man sins against that character, which is the law of the universe, he is guilty, and God will judge that man on the basis of true moral guilt. In such a setting the words 'redemptive death of Christ' have meaning, otherwise they cannot.\(^2\)

Face to Face Relationship
Likewise, Dr. Schaeffer wishes the reader to grasp a “face to face” relationship with the supernatural world. This is not unlike the view of the Reformers, "Coram Deo: Before the face of God." Schaeffer elaborates that this prescription requires a complete view of the supernatural concept. He puts special emphasis on our role as the Bride of Christ.

The Bible insists that we live in reality in a supernatural universe. But if we remove the objective reality of the supernatural universe in any area, this great reality of Christ the bridegroom bringing forth fruit through us immediately falls to the floor,

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and all that Christianity is at such a point is a psychological and sociological aid, a mere tool.\(^3\)

Dr. Schaeffer takes a moment here to contrast this view with that of Aldous Huxley. For the uninitiated, Aldous Huxley was a writer who heavily influenced the 60s drug culture and advocated the use of LSD and other drugs to aid in spiritual experience. Huxley viewed religion as a mere psychological mechanism. Schaeffer makes a rather significant reply at the end of this chapter addressing the Huxleyan notion.

**The Supernatural Is Not Remote**

We also need to be clarify that Scripture affirms the spiritual world is not remote or abstract as some like Huxley have proposed, but rather very close. The following verses illustrate this point.

And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. - Luke 24:31

Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them he said, 'This is God's camp!' So he called the name of that place Mahanaim [meaning 'two camps']. - Genesis 32:1-2

When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, 'Alas, my master! What shall we do?' He said, 'Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.' Then Elisha prayed and said, 'O Lord, please open his eyes that he may see.' So the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. - 2 Kings 6:15-17

**The Two Chairs**

Dr. Schaeffer uses an illustration involving two chairs (Note: Schaeffer also further elaborated on this concept in his book *Death in the City*). The imagery of the chair was common in the philosophy of Plato, for example, when he contemplated ultimate ideals and realities. In a different sense, Schaeffer in a rather poetic manner uses here the imagery of the two chairs to ask us to examine what ultimate reality we embrace. He asks us to contemplate sitting in one of two chairs of thought. It is like Socrates said: "The unexamined life is not worth living." We not only need to examine our lives, but also our perceptions of ultimate realities, and what these perceptions mean for foundational truth for life in time and space.

I suggest that this may be illustrated by two chairs. The men who sit in these chairs look at the universe in two different ways. We are all sitting in one or other of these chairs at every single moment of our lives. The first man [the Christian] sits in his chair and faces this total reality of the universe, the seen part and the normally unseen part, and consistently sees truth against this background. The unbeliever however, is the man who sits in the other chair, intellectually. He sees only the natural part of the universe, and interprets truth against that background. Let us see that these two positions cannot both be true. One is true: one is false.\(^4\)

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Furthermore, the question is made even more personal.

If a man sits in one chair, and denies the existence of the supernatural portion of the world, we say he is an unbeliever. What shall we call ourselves when we sit in the other chair but live as though the supernatural is not there? Should not an attitude be given the name 'unfaith'?¹⁵

Schaeffer goes on to say that those who are living in this way are only "playing at it." It is really that simple: it is not real, it is unfaith!

**Not Merely a Good Philosophy or Dialectic**

There have been so many who have wished to borrow from the Christian faith with and affirmation of certain Christian thoughts and values that are comfortable to them and yet not give it full credence. These people sit in the second chair of unfaith.

Christianity is a good philosophy. I think it is the best philosophy that ever has existed. More than this, it is the only philosophy that is consistent with itself and answers the questions. It is a good philosophy precisely because it deals with problems and gives us answers to them. Nevertheless, it is not only a good philosophy. The Bible does not speak in abstractions; it does not tell about a religious idea far away. It tells about man as man. It tells about each individual, as each man is an individual. And it tells us how to live in the real universe as it is now. Remove this factor, and it becomes only a dialectic.⁶

**Our Experience is Not a Bare Supernaturalism**

While our faith is not merely intellectual, it is also not merely experiential.

We do not need a dark room; we do not need to be under the influence of a hallucinatory drug; we do not need to be listening to a certain kind of music; [we don’t need to be uncertain.] we can know the reality of the supernatural here and now.⁷

The experiential result, however is not just an experience of 'bare' supernaturalism, without content, without our being able to describe or communicate with it. It is much more. It is a moment-by-moment, increasing, experiential relationship with [Christ, and] the whole Trinity. The doors are open now: the intellectual doors, and also the doors to reality [are open before us].⁸

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Note: the Audio lectures on True Spirituality by Dr Schaeffer add “we don’t need to be uncertain” See The L'Abri Ideas Library http://labri-ideas-library.org
Dr. Schaeffer's mention of the "intellectual doors" is no mistake. It is a vivid reply to the ideas of secular mysticism and Aldous Huxley. One of Huxley's books in fact was titled *The Doors of Perception & Heaven and Hell* taken from a quote from William Blake.

> If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things through narrow chinks of his cavern.

The doors however Dr. Schaeffer is talking about is not the mystical “doors of perception” spoken of Huxley, but true intellectual doors, that are of a sound mind. It is not elusive to our senses, but a spirituality that impacts our lives tangibly.

Interestingly enough, some of you may know that Huxley’s concept of the doors of perception would later inspire the name of the psychedelic rock band, The Doors. Schaeffer was mindful of these type of connections and the perils of the 60s drug culture. He even visited Berkeley during this time and not only observed but also was well versed in much of the music of the day. Biographer Colin Duriez documents that he even went to a Jefferson Airplane concert. Here are Edith's remarks.

In Berkeley... we not only sat and talked about the problems of the '60s, but after the discussion one night, went to Fillmore West. There we mulled around with the hippies and druggies... We watched the light show, breathed the heavy air, and sorrowed over... the glassy-eyed young people... Our brains whirled not only with the music, which threatened in volume to break the eardrums, and the dizzying effect of the light show, but with the lostness of humanity in search of 'peace' where there is no peace.... A time of listening is needed—listening to what the next generation is saying, listening to the words of the music they are listening to, listening to the meaning behind the words. If true communication is to continue, there is a language to be learned *Edith Schaeffer*  

**A few interesting historical notes in regard to Huxley:**

It is rumored that Aldous Huxley was introduced to peyote by occultist Aleister Crowley in October of 1930. Aleister Crowley also influenced such occultists as Anton Lavey, the founder of the so-called "Church of Satan" and author of the Satanic Bible.

Lastly, one has to wonder at the curious providence, in the fact that Aldous Huxley and C.S. Lewis both passed away on the same day that J. F. Kennedy was assassinated. Three figures who perhaps most uniquely defined distinct aspects of the of the cultural climate or our time.

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Note: the Audio lectures on True Spirituality by Dr Schaeffer add “Christ, and”

See The L'Abri Ideas Library http://labri-ideas-library.org

9 William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

Closing Remarks
Dr. Schaeffer closes the chapter explaining "how" to live and exhibit true reality and true spirituality. The "how" is constantly affirming and being consistent with our faith in the crucified and risen Christ, living by the aid of the Holy Spirit by faith. This is not an arbitrary idea, but something connected with the foundation of our faith and existence.