

314RecallRepomix

- [314_Completion](#)

Files

File: 314QuotesRecall/Journal314 Part I, 1-6 Recall Summary.md

Quotes from Jesus on Trust, Detachment, and Humility

- The section from the document 'Journal314_1-6' titled 'Journal314 Quotes' dated 1/1/2020
- The quotes from Jesus emphasize the importance of trusting in God's providence
- Jesus also teaches about the importance of detachment from material possessions
- Additionally, Jesus warns against laying up treasures on earth, where they can be stolen
- Other quotes from Jesus emphasize the importance of living a life of humility
- Jesus also teaches about the importance of putting his words into practice, using the metaphor of the fig tree
- The section from the document 'Journal314_1-6' contains a collection of teachings from Jesus

Jesus' Teachings on Anxiety, Giving, and Family

- Jesus teaches his followers not to be anxious about their needs, such as food and clothing
- He also instructs them on how to give to the needy, saying that they should do so secretly
- Jesus warns his followers that he has come to bring a sword, not peace, and that they must be prepared for persecution
- The section also includes Jesus' interactions with his disciples and others, such as the Parable of the Lost Sheep
- [[Jesus]] also teaches that it is difficult for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God
- Throughout the section, Jesus emphasizes the importance of faith, humility, and love

Augustine on Worldly Desires and God's Law

- The text from 'Journal314_1-6' discusses the importance of prioritizing godly desires over worldly ones
- It highlights the attractiveness of worldly things, such as beautiful bodies, wealth, and power
- The text also quotes Heidegger, who states that suddenly every vain hope became a reality

Grief, Loss, and Spiritual Interpretation

- It touches on the theme of grief and loss, as the author expresses their sorrow over the death of a loved one
- The text advises to praise God for physical objects that bring pleasure, but to not become attached to them
- The author reflects on their past mistakes, including barking against the Catholic Church
- The text concludes with the author acknowledging that they had panted after worldly desires

Seeking God and Abandoning Worldly Pleasures

- The author expresses a desire for their [[Soul | soul]] to cleave unto God, h
- The author recognizes the joy of a faithful hope lies beyond the vanity of wo
- The author, now in their thirtieth year, reflects on their past and how they
- The author reads the books of the Platonists, which teach them to search for
- The author is assured of God's existence and nature, and recognizes that all
- The author is influenced by the writings of the Platonists, which led them to
- The author is also inspired by the life of Anthony, which they read about in

Augustine's Inner Struggle with Worldly Desires and Spiritual Aspirations

- The narrator of the text, likely [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]], is refle
- He questions the motivations behind his public service and the fleeting natur
- The narrator describes the conflict within himself as a struggle between his
- He recalls a moment of clarity in which he glimpsed the truth and understood
- The narrator references [[Bible | the Bible]], specifically a passage that wa
- He acknowledges that many people, including himself, struggle to return to a
- The narrator describes his inner conflict as a battle between his old, carnal
- He recognizes that the "law of sin" is a powerful force that holds him back,

The Influence of a Friend's Devotion and the Search for Wisdom

- The narrator of the text is expressing increasing anxiety as they go about th
- The friend had been reading and discussing wisdom, and had come to the realiz
- The narrator is struck by the fact that their friend, as well as others, incl
- The narrator reflects on their own life, realizing that they have been deferr
- The narrator is aware of the contradiction between their desire for wisdom an
- The narrator is torn between their desire for spiritual growth and their atta
- The narrator recognizes the power of the mind to command the body, but they a

The Power of the Mind and the Conflict Between Eternity and Temporal Goods

- The mind is capable of commanding itself, but it can also be resisted, leadin
- The City of [[God]] references the ideas of [[Socrates]], who believed that t
- [[Plato]] is mentioned as possibly entertaining an idea of God as the cause c

Mystical Experiences and the Path to the Greatest Good

- The text also references Miguel de Molinos' The Spiritual Guide, which descri
- The idea of nothingness and misery is presented as a means by which the Lord
- The overall theme of the text appears to be the importance of seeking and lov

Embracing Nothingness and Misery for Spiritual Perfection

- The passage from 'Journal314_1-6' emphasizes the importance of embracing nothingness.
- In this state, the soul despises, abhors, and plunges itself into the knowledge of its own nothingness.
- The text suggests that if one keeps constant quiet and resignation, with a true faith, one can attain this state.
- It is necessary to believe that the goodness of divine mercy is at work when one is in this state.
- The happy soul that has attained this holy hatred of itself lives overwhelmed with the love of God.
- The passage concludes by emphasizing the importance of silence, belief, suffering, and prayer.

Humility and Abandonment of Worldly Desires for Divine Wisdom

- The section from the document 'Journal314_1-6' discusses the importance of humility and the abandonment of worldly desires for divine wisdom.
- According to the text, one should not think that spending time in prayer, even if it is long, is a good thing.
- The text also warns that the journey to spiritual growth will be marked by internal struggles and temptations.
- However, the text reassures that these trials are necessary for purging one's soul of worldly attachments.
- The text quotes Isaiah, who says that all human righteousness is like filthy rags.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that the process of spiritual growth and purification is a journey of humility and abandonment.

Purification Through Tribulation and Temptation

- The purification of the soul is necessary through the fire of tribulation and temptation.
- It is essential to believe that the goodness of divine mercy is at work when one is in this state.
- Internal recollection requires shutting up the senses, trusting God with all one's heart, mind, and strength.
- During the time of recollection, peace, and resignation of the soul, God will purify the soul.
- The effort to resist thoughts can be an impediment and will leave the soul in a state of dryness.
- The fruit of true prayer consists not in enjoying the light or having knowledge of God, but in loving Him.

Internal Recollection and the Devil's Interference

- Nature will torment the individual, being an enemy to the spirit, and will tempt him to sin.
- The Devil often attempts to disrupt the soul's internal conversation with God.
- Many individuals who begin the practice of prayer and internal recollection encounter these temptations.
- The Lord revealed to Mother Francesca Lopez of Valenza, a religious of the thirteenth century, that the Devil often attempts to disrupt the soul's internal conversation with God.

Sensible Love, Internal Recollection, and Mystical Silence

- The soul's delight in sensible love is inversely proportional to God's delight in the soul.
- The idea that the faculties are inactive during internal recollection or prayer is a misconception.
- The soul can attain happiness and perfection by retreating within itself, shrinking from the world, and turning inward.
- Few souls achieve this perfect way of praying due to their inability to strip away all worldly attachments.
- Engaging in daily occupations such as studying, reading, preaching, eating, and sleeping is a distraction from the soul's journey.
- The text discusses the importance of mystical silence and resignation to God's will.
- To gain this treasure, it is not enough to simply forsake the world or renounce worldly desires.

Disordered Desires, Internal Light, and the Rarity of True Spiritual Masters

- The text warns against the dangers of disordered desires, vain complacency, and the rarity of true spiritual masters.

- St. Paul is referenced as recommending the care of one's own soul before that
- The text also emphasizes the importance of internal light and experience, whi
- The author warns against self-confidence and the undertaking of ministry with
- The text quotes Father [[John the Evangelist | John]] Davila, St. Francis of
- The mystical Science is not received by many due to the lack of individuals w
- The mystical Science has a great efficacy in rejecting worldly honor, self-co
- Many souls deprive themselves of the benefits of the mystical Science by beli

Preparation for Interior Souls and the Mystical Science

- The second preparation for interior and spiritual souls involves living with
- It is emphasized that one can receive the mystical Science every day with hum
- The text also touches on the idea that God's infinite majesty can be received
- Ultimately, the goal is to keep the heart strongly united with [[God]], annih

Excessive Penances, Humility, and the Sweetness of Christ's Yoke

- The use of excessive and severe penances can lead to a bitterness of heart to
- When the [[Soul | soul]] begins to retire from the world and vice, it is nece
- The ideal state is one of loving fear of God, contempt of oneself, and true h
- The continual exercise of those who have achieved this state is to enter into
- According to S. Bernard, to serve God is nothing else but to do good and suff
- The soul that would be united to Christ must be conformable to Him, following

Suffering and Affliction in the Spiritual Journey

- The text from 'Journal314_1-6' discusses the importance of suffering and affl
- It is stated that all knowledge and union with [[God]] arises from suffering,
- The text warns that the path to spiritual growth is not easy, and one can exp
- Despite the intense suffering and desolation, the text encourages the reader
- The text also quotes [[Augustine of Hippo | St. Augustine]], emphasizing that
- Ultimately, the text suggests that embracing suffering and affliction can lea

Spiritual Growth Through Suffering and Tribulation

- The text from 'Journal314_1-6' discusses the importance of suffering and trib
- According to the text, pure and perfect love consists in self-denial, resigna
- The text also highlights the need for tribulation to make a person's life acc
- Additionally, the text quotes [[Leo Tolstoy]], who says that the infallible r
- The text emphasizes the importance of resignation, courage, and gallantry in
- Ultimately, the text suggests that the goal of spiritual growth is to die to

The Doctrine of Jesus vs. the Doctrine of the World

- The doctrine of [[Jesus]] is considered preferable to the doctrine of the wor

- According to philosophers such as Tillich and Spong, as well as [[Swami Vivek
- The quotes from Vivekananda highlight the absurdity and meaninglessness of an
- The author notes that even when individuals appear to be content, it is often
- The text also touches on the theme of spirituality and faith, with the author

The Author's Search for Meaning and the Illusion of Worldly Passions

- The author reflects on their own experiences, describing how they were encour
- The author realizes that they and those around them were essentially living i
- The author's search for the meaning of life is temporarily diverted by their
- Ultimately, the author comes to the conclusion that they must understand the

Existential Crisis and the Futility of Human Existence

- The narrator of the text, from the document 'Journal314_1-6', describes a sta
- The narrator explains that they have lost all desire and wish for anything, a
- The narrator recounts how they had to take measures to prevent themselves fro
- The narrator is astonished that they had not realized the meaninglessness of
- The narrator questions the point of living and engaging in activities, given
- The narrator also grapples with the idea of loving and caring for their famil
- The narrator feels lost and desperate, like a man trapped in a wood, trying t

The Limitations of Knowledge and the Search for Meaning

- The narrator criticizes the branches of knowledge, such as physiology, psych
- The narrator notes that while other branches of knowledge may be impressive i

Philosophical Perspectives on the Meaninglessness of Life

- The text discusses the meaning of life and the search for answers to fundamer
- According to these thinkers, the pursuit of knowledge and understanding ultir
- The text also touches on the idea that the human desire for happiness and ful
- The author of the text seems to be in agreement with these philosophers, stat
- The text also quotes various philosophers, including Socrates, who says that
- Overall, the text presents a pessimistic view of life, suggesting that it is

Nihilism, Faith, and the Terror of Existence

- The author of the text describes their experience with Nihilism, which led th
- The author reflects on the fact that they, along with philosophers like Schop
- The author comes to realize that they were searching for faith, which is not
- The author notes that people around them, including those of the same social
- The author recalls that they began to question their own explanations of the
- The author mentions the idea that to live, one must either be ignorant of inf
- The author references the thoughts of Schopenhauer and [[Solomon]], as well a

- Ultimately, the author's reflections lead them to a turning point, where they

Non-Resistance to Evil and the Teachings of Jesus

- The concept of a spiritually induced suicide is mentioned as a potential conc
- Tolstoy's writings, such as "[[A Letter to a Hindu]]" and "[[What I Believe (
- Jesus' command "Resist not evil" is emphasized as the central point of his do
- The text also touches on the idea that adopting the law of [[Jesus]] would le
- Nietzsche's work, specifically "The Anti-Christ", is mentioned, and the text
- The text concludes by highlighting the disconnect between the professed belie

The Nihilistic Experience and the Doctrine of Jesus

- The nihilistic experience had a profound impact on the core views of two indi
- According to the text, Jesus' doctrine denounces all human errors, and his te
- The author reflects on the life and teachings of [[Jesus]], stating that Jesu
- The author also critiques the social organization of their time, suggesting t
- The author notes that both sceptics and believers have a false conception of

Saving One's Life and the Reality of Death

- The author references the wisdom of various historical figures, including [[S
- The text emphasizes the inevitability of death and the futility of attempting
- The passage also explores the difference between the conception of human life
- The text critiques the idea of individual immortality of the [[Soul | soul]],
- The author argues that living for self alone is not reasonable and that human
- The passage concludes by emphasizing the importance of renouncing self and se

Following the Doctrine of Jesus and the Search for Truth

- The author reflects on their life, considering it a "stupendous farce" that w
- The author criticizes those who pray, observe sacraments, and give charity, b
- The author notes that people live without truth and without a desire to know
- The author questions why life is full of evil and wrongdoing, and whether it
- The author highlights the contradiction between the doctrine of Jesus and the
- The author argues that the belief that the doctrine of Jesus is excellent but
- The author notes that many people have suffered and died in the name of the d
- The author emphasizes that Jesus' teachings, such as taking up the cross and

Following Authority vs. Following Jesus

- The text from 'Journal314_1-6' discusses the idea that people are more willin
- The author notes that people are accustomed to believing that happiness and s
- The author references the story of the ostrich hiding its head in the sand, a
- The text also explores the idea that poverty, in the sense of living a simple

- The author emphasizes the importance of following the teachings of Jesus, including love and forgiveness.
- The text concludes by highlighting the idea that enmity towards others, or any form of hatred, is ultimately self-destructive.

Personal Transformation and the Importance of Humility

- The author reflects on their personal transformation, realizing that they can no longer maintain their previous judgmental and angry attitude towards others.
- The author recognizes that their previous judgmental and angry attitude towards others was a barrier to true understanding and peace.
- The author has come to understand that true greatness lies in humility and service to others.
- The author can no longer support anything that lifts them above or separates them from others.
- The author has also come to realize that the distinction they once made between themselves and others is meaningless.
- As a result of this newfound understanding, the author's estimate of what is truly important has changed.
- The author has even come to see that being harmed by others, including foreigners, is not a tragedy.

Revealing Truth, Worldliness, and the Christian Perspective

- The text from 'Journal314_1-6' discusses various philosophical and religious ideas, including the nature of truth and the relationship between the world and the spiritual realm.
- The text also quotes [[G. K. Chesterton | G.K. Chesterton]] from his book 'Orthodoxy', where he discusses the importance of faith and the role of the Church.
- Chesterton further discusses the idea that people need a life of practical reason and that the Church is the only institution that can provide this.
- The text also touches on the idea that thoroughly worldly people do not understand the spiritual realm.
- Additionally, the text quotes Chesterton as saying that the main point of Christianity is to love one's neighbor.
- The text also discusses the relationship between religion, philosophy, and the human condition.
- Overall, the text presents a range of ideas and perspectives on philosophy, religion, and the human condition.

Mental Disorder, Materialism, and the Loss of Humanity

- The text discusses the concept of mental disorder and how individuals with mental disorders are often misunderstood and stigmatized.
- The author criticizes the modern scientific society for discouraging people from exploring the spiritual realm and for focusing solely on materialism.
- Materialism is seen as a form of "insane simplicity" that attempts to explain everything in terms of material things.
- The author argues that materialism can lead to a loss of humanity, including the loss of empathy and the ability to love.
- The text also explores the concept of reason and how it can be used in a way that is both practical and spiritual.
- The author critiques the idea that reason and faith are mutually exclusive, arguing that they are both necessary for a complete understanding of the world.
- The text also touches on the concept of evolution, which is seen as a potential threat to the human condition.
- Ultimately, the author suggests that a balanced approach that takes into account both the material and the spiritual is the only way to achieve true happiness and fulfillment.

Objective Truth, Madness, and the Example of Joan of Arc

- The text discusses the idea that if everything is in a state of flux and there is no objective truth, then the only way to find meaning is through faith.
- The author agrees with pragmatists that apparent objective truth is not the same as true objective truth.
- The author criticizes philosophers like Schopenhauer, Tolstoy, Nietzsche, and others for their pessimistic views on the human condition.
- The author uses the example of [[Joan of Arc]] to illustrate a different approach to life, one that is based on faith and love.
- The author argues that there is no inconsistency between having love for humanity and having a strong sense of duty.
- The text also touches on the idea of the Laws of Nature, arguing that they are not just physical laws but also moral laws.

The Human Condition and the Need for Both Love and Hate

- The author reflects on the human condition, noting that people have forgotten
- The author discusses how modern thought contradicts the basic creed of his book
- The author argues that a person must be able to both love and hate the world,
- The author criticizes the idea that certain creeds or philosophies can only be
- The author discusses how he used to call himself an optimist to avoid being
- The author notes that Christianity is often criticized for being either too p
- The author uses the examples of St. Francis and St. Jerome to illustrate how
- The author concludes that the key to truly living is to seek life in a spirit

Spiritual Detachment and the Importance of Contempt for Worldly Things

- The text presents a philosophical and spiritual discussion, contrasting the v
- The text then quotes St. [[John the Evangelist | John]] of the Cross, who tea
- According to St. [[John of the Cross]], the whole creation, including wisdom,
- The text highlights that loving anything alongside God is wrong, and that the
- St. John of the Cross also explains that God leads humanity to perfection thr
- Ultimately, the text suggests that the soul that is attached to worldly thing

Purging Affections for Created Things to Possess God

- The text emphasizes that until our [[Soul | soul]] is purged of affections fo
- The creation, compared to the infinite Being of God, is considered nothing, a
- The text highlights that all the goodness, sweetness, riches, and glory of th
- The Divine Wisdom bewails men because they make themselves loathsome, mean, w
- The text emphasizes that it is supreme ignorance to think that one can attain
- The journey to union with God is a perpetual struggle with our desires to mak
- The text warns that those who seek spiritual food but are not content with [[
- The attainment of perfection and union with God requires the cessation of des

The Path to Union with God and the Casting Away of Earthly Attachments

- To achieve this state, one must cast away strange gods and earthly attachment
- This process involves God infusing a new understanding and love of Himself in
- The will of [[God]] is for the soul to be empty of all created things, allowi
- According to the prophet, if one does not make themselves blind to their old
- The teaching emphasized here is that faith, which is an obscure night, illumi

The Necessity of Darkness for Spiritual Light and Union with God

- The soul must be in darkness to have light and journey on the spiritual road,
- The soul is greatly embarrassed on the road to Divine union when it relies on
- To achieve this union, the soul must be detached from all created things, act
- The more the [[Soul | soul]] cleaves to created things and relies on its own
- The fitting disposition for this union is not that the soul should understand

Degrees of Union, Purity, and the Role of Faith, Hope, and Charity

- Every soul can attain to this union according to its measure, but not all attain
- The soul that does not attain to the degree of purity corresponding with the
- Faith, Hope, and Charity all play a role in this process, with Faith deriving
- [[Jesus | Christ]] our Lord has stated that to be His disciple, one must renounce
- Our Lord also teaches that the path to life is narrow and few find it, emphasizing
- Some individuals consider retirement from the world and correction of excesses
- True spirituality, as recommended by our Saviour, consists of the annihilating
- To love God truly, one must seek God in Himself, not seeking comfort and refuge
- Carrying the cross, as Christ's burden, requires an earnest resolution to suffer
- Ultimately, giving oneself up to suffer for Christ's sake and annihilating oneself

Spiritual Union, Humility, and the Limitations of Intellect

- The attainment of spiritual union with God is the highest and noblest estate
- According to the text, many people who consider themselves friends of Jesus Christ
- The intellect is limited in its ability to comprehend [[God]], and all that is
- The concept of Mystical Theology, or the secret Wisdom of God, is a way of communicating

Mystical Theology, Bodily Senses, and the Dangers of Exterior Experiences

- The outward bodily senses, such as seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching
- Aristotle's comparison of the eyes of the bat to the sun, which wholly blinds
- The soul is often led astray by its focus on material and palpable things, which
- The spiritual man must reject all apprehensions and corporeal satisfactions to
- It is sad to see individuals disturb their own souls and draw them away from
- To achieve perfect union with God, the [[Soul | soul]] must be careful not to

Spiritual Wrath, the Dark Night of the Soul, and the Purgation of Desire

- Some spiritual persons fall into spiritual wrath by becoming irritated at the
- These individuals have gained some degree of spiritual strength in [[God]], and
- In this night, the soul is unable to advance in meditation and finds insipidity
- The process of spiritual growth is described as God setting the [[Soul | soul]] on fire
- The soul may experience a dark night where it finds no pleasure or consolation
- Another sign of this purgation is that the memory is ordinarily centered upon
- The soul is freed from these struggles when the night quenches all pleasures,
- The soul's journey through this dark night, which is described as the strait
- The benefits of this journey are great, including the knowledge of oneself and
- Our Saviour is quoted as saying that few people enter by the strait gate and

The Dark Night of Contemplation and the Knowledge of Self and God

- The soul's initial satisfaction and contentment with its pleasant experiences
- The [[Soul | soul]], having donned the attire of aridity and abandonment, pos
- In this dark night of the desire, God cleanses and frees the understanding, a
- The Prophet's words, "Thy light shall shine in the darkness," are fulfilled a

The Dark Night, Virtues, and the Analogy of a Sick Man

- This dark night, although leading to a knowledge of God of a different plenit
- The dark night of contemplation absorbs and immerses the [[Soul | soul]] in i
- The spiritual light of God is so immense and transcendent that it can blind a
- The soul experiences a profound emptiness and impoverishment of temporal, nat
- God brings about this dark contemplation to purge the soul, annihilate its im
- The Prophet describes the need for the soul to be annihilated and destroyed i
- The soul feels powerless and imprisoned in its darkness, unable to move or se
- The severity and duration of the purgation vary according to the degree of un

The Dark Night of the Soul and the Inability to Connect with God

- The text discusses the concept of a [[Dark Night of the Soul | dark night of
- During this time, the soul is unable to raise its affection or mind to God, a
- The text references Divine Scripture and the story of Jacob, highlighting the
- The text also quotes Fr. [[Seraphim Rose]], who discusses the concept of Nihi
- Fr. Seraphim Rose emphasizes that the Christian's faith is placed in the one

Nihilism, Meaninglessness, and the Search for Truth

- The concept of nihilism is described as a universe where there is no point of
- The text suggests that the world is divided into two groups of people: those
- The idea that all truth is empirical or relative is self-contradictory, as th
- The text argues that faith must be rooted in truth to avoid subjective delusi
- The concept of ultimate truth, whether conceived as the [[Christianity | Chri
- The text notes that few people in positions of authority or influence today f

Liberalism, Realism, and the Rejection of Absolute Truth

- The foundation of Liberalism is flawed, as it is built upon the concept of Ma
- In the Christian order, all activities in this life are judged in the light c
- The idea of a "heaven" that is a compromise between [[Christianity | Christia
- The Liberal belief that one can lead a civilized life without immortality is
- The nihilist view, which is characterized by a focus on earthly happiness and
- The Revolution, which is accompanied by disbelief and a rejection of higher t
- The Liberal is focused on worldly ends and is indifferent to the reality of H
- The search for absolute truth is essential, and no one has rightly sought the
- The academic system, which is founded upon untruth and promotes skepticism, i

Redefining Nihilism, Realism, and the Usurpation of God's Throne

- The concept of Nihilism is being redefined, contrasting with the traditional
- The Realist world-view is described as being perfectly clear and straightforward
- The text argues that those who take scientific knowledge for the only truth are
- The difference between the Realist and the Liberal is not one of doctrine, but
- The text references philosophers such as Nietzsche, who rebelled against a di
- The text also mentions other thinkers, including [[Swami Vivekananda | Viveka

Materialism, Atheism, and the Impure Motives of the Realist

- The text discusses the concepts of materialism, atheism, and realism, stating
- The motives of the Realist are deemed impure, as they have an ulterior motive
- The text also critiques Liberalism for obscuring higher truths with "toleranc
- The concept of Vitalism is introduced, with examples including the lament of
- The text argues that much of what passes for "spirituality" today is actually
- The author notes that popular culture, including the cult of the automobile,
- The cult of "awareness" and "realization" is also seen as a form of Religious
- The text concludes by stating that Vitalism must be defined and exposed for i

Vitalism, Humanism, and the Death of God

- The concept of Vitalism is unrelated to truth and instead focuses on a differ
- The humanist attitude, influenced by Vitalism, is characterized by the axiom
- According to Nietzsche, creativity requires the destruction and smashing of a
- The "death of [[God]]" means that modern man has lost faith in God and the Di
- Nihilism is characterized by an "anxiety" and "abyss" of nothingness, which i
- The Nihilist's god is nothingness itself, not just the absence or non-exister
- The idea of a world founded upon nothingness is absurd, and the Nihilist's re
- The quote from Nietzsche, "We have killed him (God), you and I", highlights t

Nihilism as Spiritual Disorder and the Pursuit of Worldly Concerns

- The concept of nihilism is described as a spiritual disorder that can only be
- The idea of seeking [[Christianity | Christian]] ideals in this world is cons
- The author discusses the concept of Christian action and social responsibilit
- The author references Thomas Merton in a letter, highlighting the importance

Christian Action, Social Responsibility, and the True Kingdom

- The text also touches on the idea that true Christian acts are those that are
- The author critiques the notion that communist doctrine and nihilistic ideolo
- The author expresses a sense of desperation and unworthiness, feeling the nee
- The text discusses the concept of a "political crusade" to abolish social evi

- The author argues that while individuals participating in such crusades may a
- The author quotes Vivekananda, stating that one must carefully consider wheth
- The author questions the emphasis on "action" and "projects" in social Christ
- The author believes that the only social responsibility of a Christian is to
- The author criticizes the idea of a "new Christianity" that prioritizes outwa
- The author concludes that Christianity can only be "successful" if it renounc

The Earthly Kingdom, the Problem of Man, and the Importance of Spiritual Lif

- The modern mentality is focused on building an "Earthly Kingdom", which is no
- The author criticizes "prophets" like Berdyaev and Tolstoy, who are seen as s
- The author believes that Christians should focus on showing the world that th
- The involvement of Christians in social idealism projects is seen as a way of
- The author argues that what is needed is not more action or busyness, but rat
- The author references literary figures like Dostoyevsky and his character the

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Teresa of Avila's Worldly Dissatisfaction and Inward

Journey

- The section of the document 'Journal314_7-10' discusses the thoughts and writings of several influential figures, including [[Teresa of Ávila | Teresa of Avila]], [[C. S. Lewis | C.S. Lewis]], Soren [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], and Nietzsche, although the provided text primarily focuses on the quotes and ideas of Teresa of Avila.
- Teresa of Avila's writings express her deep dissatisfaction with the worldly life, describing it as a "piteous and dreadful thing" and a "sad farce", and emphasizing the importance of turning inward to find [[God]], as she quotes Augustine, who found God within himself.
- She stresses that God alone can satisfy the soul, and that all created things, no matter how good, will ultimately disappoint and torment the soul,

highlighting the need to despise the things of this world and seek humility.

- Teresa of Avila also emphasizes the importance of compassion, pity, and selflessness, encouraging her sisters to help those in need, and to take on the misery of the world, as Schopenhauer would suggest, by putting themselves in others' shoes and showing empathy.
- Her conception of humility is extremely strict, and she believes that one must let go of all worldly attachments and cling to nothing, in order to receive God's love and achieve true blessedness, as testified by the saints.
- Throughout her writings, Teresa of Avila expresses her own struggles with prayer, faith, and the limitations of her own mind, describing herself as being "like a born fool or some idiot creature" at times, and reflecting on the hurt caused by original sin.
- Ultimately, [[Teresa of Ávila | Teresa]] of Avila's writings convey a sense of longing for a deeper connection with God, and a desire to escape the sufferings and disappointments of the worldly life, seeking comfort in the knowledge that she is on her way to be judged by the God she loves above all things.

The Path to Supernatural Prayer and Mystical Union

- The text from 'Journal314_7-10' discusses the concept of prayer and the journey towards supernatural prayer, highlighting that it is not Adam's sin, but one's own sin that causes alienation and inability to connect with [[God]].
- The author emphasizes the importance of proper preparation for prayer, including meditation on the life and death of the Lord, one's own death, and the last day, in order to reach the "port of light" with God's guidance.
- The text describes the experience of mystical prayer, where the soul is engulfed in God's presence, and the individual burns with love without understanding how they deserve it, distinguishing it from natural and mental prayer.
- The author notes that supernatural prayer is a gift from God, where His Divine Majesty works in the individual, transcending their own powers and resources, and that acquiring great virtues, especially humility, is necessary to attain this level of prayer.
- To achieve true humility, one must consider themselves unworthy of everything, shun advancement, and practice daily mortification of the mind and heart, being content with the least that God allows them.
- The text also touches on the idea that suffering can be a form of acceptable prayer, like incense set forth before God, and that one's spiritual journey is not measured by their suffering, but by their willingness to surrender to God.
- The author requests that the contents of the text be shared only with spiritual persons of exceptional experience and prudence, as they fear that few are capable of understanding the concepts discussed.
- Additionally, the text warns against the distractions and harm caused by relationships with relatives and the world, advising that true devotion to

[[God]] requires withdrawal from these attachments in order to achieve peace and tranquility.

Detachment, Humility, and the Pursuit of True Devotion

- The section from the document 'Journal314_7-10' emphasizes the importance of detachment from worldly things and self, as stated by the author, who encourages the sisters to focus on their devotion to God and not be attached to their relatives or personal desires.
- The author suggests that keeping in mind the vanity of all things and their rapid passing can help individuals withdraw their affections from trivial matters and fix them on what is eternal, and that becoming detached from oneself is a hard but necessary step.
- The text also critiques the idea that some individuals may have joined the religious life for self-indulgent reasons, rather than to truly serve God, and the author urges the sisters to resolve to die for [[Jesus | Christ]], rather than practicing self-indulgence.
- The author uses examples of sufferings borne by others, such as solitude, cold, thirst, and hunger, to encourage the sisters to commit themselves wholly to [[God]], without fear of death or hardship, and to cease caring about their own pleasures and desires.
- The text also warns against the dangers of desiring honor and precedence, which can rob individuals of true honor, and against holding onto notions of personal right or entitlement, which can lead to discontent and suffering.
- The author emphasizes that true perfection can be achieved through detachment and humility, which can be practiced anywhere, but may be more challenging in the world due to worldly impediments, and that the goal of the religious life is to lead individuals to detachment from all created things.
- The text concludes by describing the house of the sisters as "another Heaven" if they can achieve this state of detachment and devotion to God, and warns against the consequences of failing to do so, which may include suffering a "hell on earth" or even in the afterlife.

Pleasing God, Renouncing Desires, and the Potential for Sainthood

- The text from 'Journal314_7-10' discusses the importance of pleasing [[God]] and renouncing personal desires, as stated, "if she wants anything more, she will lose everything, for there is nothing more that she can have."
- The attainment of freedom and self-detachment is possible with the Lord's help, and it is described as a process where one becomes uninterested in what others say, to the point where it seems like someone else's business, as mentioned, "it will seem like someone else's business."
- The text also references the idea of showing love to God and receiving His love in return, highlighting the wonderful exchange that occurs when we give Him our love, and notes that God can do all things, while we can do nothing without His enablement.

- The author encourages the daughters to reflect on their potential to become saints, stating "we can be if we will only try and if God gives us His hand," and warns against making excuses, such as "We are not angels" or "We are not saints," when committing imperfections.
- The concept of progress is clarified as not being related to the number of consolations or favors received in prayer, but rather as a journey of spiritual growth, and the text also touches on the idea of an immeasurable longing for something greater, which can sometimes lead to a desire for death, described as "happy" in a spiritual sense.
- The author criticizes the ignorance of not seeking to understand one's own nature, beyond the physical body, and encourages self-reflection, using the example of a person being questioned about their name, country, or parents, and notes that it is even more foolish to care nothing for one's spiritual nature, as mentioned in 'The Interior Castle'.

Introspection, Prayer, and the Spiritual Castle

- The text from 'Journal314_7-10' reflects on the importance of introspection and prayer in perfecting the soul, with the gate to enter this spiritual castle being prayer and meditation, as emphasized by the author.
- The author notes that while self-examination is a great grace from [[God]], too much of it can be detrimental, and that contemplating the Divinity is more beneficial for spiritual advancement than focusing on one's own weaknesses and limitations.
- The text warns against the distractions of worldly riches, honors, and affairs, which can prevent the soul from entering the second mansion, and emphasizes the need to withdraw from unnecessary cares and business to avoid losing what has already been gained spiritually.
- The author describes the struggles of a soul that is torn between its desire for spiritual growth and its attachment to worldly things, and notes that faith and reason can help the soul to see the delusion of overrating worldly things and to find satisfaction in spiritual pursuits.
- The text highlights the importance of perseverance in the right way, withdrawing from bad company, and associating with those who lead a spiritual life, in order to make progress in the spiritual journey, with the author encouraging the reader to seek guidance from those who have traveled farther into the castle.
- The author expresses a sense of urgency and warning, noting that there is no security in this life and that the soul must always be vigilant and prepared to face spiritual challenges, with the ultimate goal of suffering for [[Jesus | Christ]] and finding true happiness in spiritual pursuits.
- The text concludes by emphasizing that God does not need human works, but rather desires to see the goodwill and effort of individuals to grow spiritually, with the author expressing a sense of terror and awe at the prospect of spiritual struggle and the importance of persevering in the face of adversity.

Humility, Fear of the Lord, and the Despair of the Human Condition

- The section from the document 'Journal314_7-10' discusses the importance of humility and fear of [[God | the Lord]], warning against overconfidence in one's spiritual practices and worldly renunciations, as stated by a religious figure, and later referenced by [[C. S. Lewis]], who emphasizes the desperation of the human condition without an absolute goodness governing the universe.
- C. S. Lewis highlights the paradox that if the universe is not governed by an absolute goodness, then all efforts are hopeless, but if it is, then humans are making themselves enemies to that goodness every day, making their case hopeless again, and he notes that God is both the only comfort and the supreme terror.
- Lewis also critiques the idea that meeting absolute goodness would be a pleasant experience, instead suggesting that goodness is either a great safety or a great danger, and he emphasizes the need for people to face the terrifying facts of the human condition, which [[Christianity]] claims to answer.
- The text further explores the idea that reality is unbearable when looked at steadily, and it questions how such a reality could produce conscious beings who can see and recoil from it, with Lewis wondering about the point of trying to think about God or anything else if reality is meaningless to humans.
- Lewis also ponders the aftermath of intense emotional experiences, such as grief, and whether they subside into boredom or a dead flatness, and he presents a stark choice, stating that if the tortures that occur in life are unnecessary, then there is either no God or a bad one.

Kierkegaard's Sickness Unto Death and the Despair of the Self

- The concept of despair is discussed by [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] in his work "Sickness Unto Death", where he states that the ability to despair is an infinite advantage, as it allows individuals to become conscious of themselves as spirit and aware of the existence of [[God]].
- According to Kierkegaard, the natural man is ignorant of what is truly dreadful and instead shudders at things that are not, while the [[Christianity | Christian]] has a deeper understanding of the dreadful and is not exempt from shuddering, but rather shudders at the true nature of God.
- Kierkegaard also notes that every person, to some extent, lives in despair, with a disquietude or perturbation in their inmost parts, and that only true Christians are able to overcome this despair through faith, with the aid of the eternal.
- The idea of the "sickness unto death" is introduced, which refers to a state of despair that is not just a mortal sickness, but a spiritual one, where the individual is unaware of the true nature of God and worships an idol instead.
- Kierkegaard argues that Christianity has taught Christians to think

dauntlessly of everything earthly and worldly, including death, but has also discovered a greater evil, [[The Sickness unto Death | the sickness unto death]], which is a misery that the natural man does not know of.

- The possibility of this sickness is seen as an advantage, as it allows individuals to become aware of their true nature and to seek healing through faith, with the Christian's bliss being to be healed of this sickness.
- The concept of the sickness unto death is understood in a peculiar sense, where death itself is seen as a transition unto life, and therefore, from a Christian standpoint, there is no earthly, bodily sickness unto death, but rather a spiritual one that can be overcome through faith.

The Sickness Unto Death and the Despair of Finitude

- The concept of "sickness unto death" is discussed, where death is not the last thing, but rather a phase of the sickness, and true despair is the disconsolateness of not being able to die, as noted by Cioran, who talks about wanting to die and feeling trapped in the "Abyss of all Abysses".
- The view that despair is a necessary step towards spiritual awareness is presented, citing the idea that only through despair can one become eternally and decisively conscious of oneself as spirit, and that a life is wasted if one never becomes aware of their existence before [[God]], as discussed by Tillich in "Courage".
- The idea that people often live in delusion, erecting grand systems and theories, but failing to apply them to their personal lives, is highlighted, with the example of a thinker who builds an immense philosophical system but personally lives in a state of contradiction, as noted by Pascal.
- The importance of despair as a catalyst for spiritual growth is emphasized, with the suggestion that one must first despair completely in order for the spirit-life to break through, and that this process can be a necessary step towards gaining a deeper understanding of oneself and one's existence.
- The distinction between living a temporal life and having a true self is made, with the observation that many people can live on and appear to be normal, even successful, while lacking a true self, and that the world is often indifferent to this lack, as people are more concerned with external appearances and temporal successes than with inner spiritual growth.
- The concept of the "despair of finitude" is introduced, where a person can be in despair while still living a temporal life, pursuing worldly aims, and being praised by others, but ultimately being disconnected from their true self and spiritual nature, and that this state of being can be particularly dangerous, as it can lead to a loss of one's self without being noticed by others.
- The text discusses the concept of spirituality and the self, citing Vivekananda's statement that individuals who die without realizing their true Self as Spirit die like animals, and highlighting the idea that people who are not conscious of themselves as spirit or before God are in a state of despair, regardless of their accomplishments or enjoyment of life.

- According to the text, every human existence that is not grounded in a deeper sense of self or spirit, but rather focuses on external accomplishments or abstract universalities, is considered to be in despair, even if the individual is not aware of it, and this despair is characterized by a lack of self-awareness and a failure to understand one's true nature.
- The text also explores the idea that individuals who claim to be in despair often do not truly understand the concept of despair, and instead are simply reacting to external circumstances, and that true despair is the loss of the eternal, not just the loss of earthly things, as noted in the passage "he calls this despair, but to despair is to lose the eternal -- and of this he does not speak, does not dream".
- The passage suggests that immediacy, or the immediate experience of life, knows how to fight against despair only by despairing and swooning, and then recovering when outward circumstances change, but this does not lead to true self-awareness or spiritual growth, and is illustrated by the example of a person who "lies quite still as if it were dead, like the childish play of 'lying dead'".
- The text concludes by noting that individuals who do not develop a true sense of self or spirit may continue to live in a state of immediacy, imitating others and going through the motions of life, but ultimately remaining unfulfilled and without a deeper understanding of themselves or the world, as seen in the example of the person who "acquires some little understanding of life, he learns to imitate the other men, noting how they manage to live, and so he too lives after a sort".

The Need for Solitude and the Despairing Self

- The need for solitude is a sign of a deeper nature in an individual, and it is a measure of the spirit present in a person, as those who are purely social and inhuman are unable to tolerate being alone and require the constant presence of others to function.
- In contrast to ancient times and the Middle Ages, where people respected the need for solitude, modern society shuns solitude and views it as a punishment, which is a reflection of the fact that having spirit is considered a crime in this age.
- The despairing self is characterized by building castles in the air and fighting imaginary battles, with a focus on self-control, firmness, and ataraxia, but ultimately, there is nothing substantial at the core of these endeavors.
- The definition of faith is that the self is grounded transparently in [[God]], and this understanding serves as a guiding principle for the entire work, highlighting the importance of faith in being oneself and willing to be oneself.

The Nature of Faith and the Offense of Christianity

- In the context of [[Christianity]], the opposite of sin is not virtue, but rather faith, and this distinction is crucial in understanding the nature of

sin and faith, with sin being equivalent to nihilism and faith being the experience of living in the midst of nihilism, as echoed by philosophers like Tillich.

- The reason why people are often offended by Christianity is not because it is too dark or severe, but rather because its goal is too high and extraordinary, and it requires individuals to live on intimate terms with God, which can be overwhelming and challenging to comprehend, as noted by thinkers like Tolstoy and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- Ultimately, the idea that God invites humans to live in close relationship with Him, and that He suffered and died for humanity's sake, is a concept that can be difficult for people to accept, and those who lack the humble courage to believe it may become offended by it.
- The natural man is unable to accept the extraordinary concepts of Christianity, such as the doctrine of sin, and instead tries to bring them down to a level of understanding that is comfortable for him, often by declaring them to be nonsense or by dismissing them as absurd.
- According to the text, Christianity takes a significant step beyond the ordinary and into the absurd, which is where the offense lies, and this is something that the natural man, including skeptics and those who consider themselves wise, cannot welcome or accept.
- The concept of sin is what distinguishes Christianity from paganism, and it is assumed that paganism and the natural man do not truly understand what sin is, with the key determinant being the presence of defiant will, which is lacking in the understanding of sin held by [[Socrates]].
- The text also highlights the hypocrisy and comedic nature of individuals who can understand and be moved by concepts such as self-denial and the nobility of sacrificing one's life for the truth, but then immediately turn around and engage in behaviors that are contrary to these values, such as helping falsehood to conquer.
- Furthermore, the text criticizes individuals who claim to have understood the teachings of [[Jesus | Christ]], but then fail to live up to them, instead seeking worldly honor and security, and it questions whether such individuals have truly understood what they claim to have understood.
- The text suggests that the world needs a figure like Socrates, who can help people to understand what is right and to make decisions and take consequences based on that understanding, rather than getting bogged down in aesthetic and metaphysical distractions.
- Ultimately, the text argues that true understanding of what is right is not enough, and that it is necessary to take action and make decisions based on that understanding, rather than simply paying lip service to it, and that this is where many people fall short, including those who consider themselves wise or enlightened.

Socratic Ignorance, Christendom, and the Concept of Sin

- The Greek spirit lacked the courage to acknowledge that a person can knowingly do wrong, and [[Socrates]] intervened by stating that when a

person does wrong, they have not understood what is right, highlighting the importance of recognizing one's own limitations.

- The author emphasizes the need for a Socratic ignorance in relation to [[Christianity]], which involves acknowledging the incomprehensibility of faith and the impossibility of fully comprehending it, and instead, approaching it with a sense of reverence and humility, as Socrates did with his concept of ignorance as a kind of godly fear and divine worship.
- The author criticizes the concept of [[Christendom]], which they believe has distorted the true meaning of Christianity, and instead, advocates for a genuine and profound understanding of faith, which is rare and requires a deep sense of continuity and consciousness, as Kierkegaard's philosophy suggests.
- The author notes that true priests and poets are rare, and that becoming a priest should require more than just taking an examination, but rather a genuine call and a deep sense of vocation, and that this is particularly important in the context of Christianity.
- The author discusses the concept of sin in a Christian context, stating that it is a position that develops a positive continuity, and that it is a paradox that cannot be fully comprehended by humans, but rather must be believed and experienced, as emphasized by Kierkegaard's philosophy.
- The author references a proverb that says "to sin is human, but to remain in sin is devilish," and suggests that this proverb must be understood in a different sense in a Christian context, one that emphasizes the importance of acknowledging and repenting of sin, rather than simply accepting it as a natural part of human nature.
- The concept of sin is often misunderstood as merely a series of individual actions, rather than a continuous state of being, with the particular sins being expressions of this ongoing state, similar to how the puffing of a locomotive is a visible manifestation of its underlying momentum.
- Most people live without a deep understanding of themselves and their own consistency, existing in a state of superficiality, where they focus on individual actions and events, rather than recognizing the underlying continuity of their own sinfulness.
- The state of being in sin is what truly defines the sinner, providing them with a sense of self and consistency, with particular new sins serving only as expressions of this ongoing state, rather than being the primary focus.
- The sinner's selfishness and ambition are deeply rooted in their sinfulness, with their sense of self being inextricably linked to their ongoing state of sin.

The Despair of Forgiveness and the Desire to Be Oneself

- When the sinner despairs of forgiveness, they are essentially rebelling against [[God]], engaging in a kind of spiritual struggle, where they refuse to accept the possibility of forgiveness and instead cling to their own sinfulness.
- The concept of God is often used carelessly and without true

understanding, with people frequently invoking God's name without genuinely considering its significance, and instead using it as a way to appear pious or to justify their own actions.

- The despairer, who refuses to accept forgiveness, is driven by a desire to be themselves, even if that means embracing their own torment and using it as a way to protest against the existence of a higher power, with this desire for self-definition and autonomy being a fundamental aspect of their sinfulness.

The Despair of Weakness and the Despair of Self-Assertion

- The text discusses the concept of despair, particularly the despair of weakness, which is a passive suffering of the self, and how it differs from the despair of self-assertion, with the author noting that the weak despairer will not hear about the comfort of eternity because it would be the destruction of him as an objection against the whole of existence.

- The author explains that the despairer, who is depicted as being in despair over something earthly, is actually in despair about the eternal, because he ascribes great value to earthly things and transforms them into everything earthly, which is precisely to despair about the eternal.

- The text also describes how the despairer, with the aid of relative self-reflection, makes an effort to defend his self and understands that letting the self go is a serious business, but ultimately struggles in vain because he lacks sufficient self-reflection or ethical reflection to make a breach with immediacy as a whole.

- The author notes that despair over the earthly or something earthly is the most common sort of despair, especially in the second form of immediacy with a quantitative reflection, and that most men have not become very deep even in despair, but this does not mean they are not in despair.

- The text highlights that few men live in the category of spirit, and many who attempt to do so shy away, having not learned to fear or understand what "must" means, and therefore cannot endure the contradiction of being concerned for one's own soul and wanting to be spirit, which is often punished by contempt and ridicule.

- The author observes that there is a period in people's lives when they begin to take the inward direction, but often veer away when faced with difficulties, and that this common despair is often associated with youth, but can be found in people of all ages, and is not limited to youthful years.

- The text discusses the concept of despair and how it affects individuals, with Tolstoy noting that many people do not manage to develop beyond their childhood and youthful stage, and instead, remain in a state of immediacy with a little self-reflection.

- According to the text, it is a common misconception that people naturally acquire faith and wisdom as they age, and instead, it is a weakness to take earthly matters too seriously and to despair, as the despairer understands that it is weakness to despair, but instead of turning to faith, they become

more absorbed in their despair.

- The text also mentions that some individuals, like the despairer, may rarely go to church because they feel that most parsons do not truly understand what they are talking about, and that such despair can lead to a higher form of introversion or a breakdown of their outward disguise, causing them to plunge into life and its distractions.
- If the introversion is maintained absolutely, the text warns that suicide can be a danger, but if the individual opens up to someone, they may be less likely to consider suicide, although they may still fall into despair due to the fact that they have shared their secret with another person.
- The text quotes [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], who notes that he has no common language with others, and that the despairer may wish for a transformation, but loves to think that this change can be accomplished easily, much like changing a coat, with references to participation, Tolstoy, and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- Ultimately, the text concludes that the despairing man who is conscious of his despair is further from salvation than [[God | the one]] who is unconscious of it, as his despair is more intense, and that the despairer who remains in despair is further from the truth and from salvation.

Unawareness as Despair and the Question of Eternity

- The concept of unawareness is discussed as a form of despair that can be particularly dangerous, as it may lead individuals to desperately seek repose in their despair, and they may even resist any attempts to prevent them from despairing, as noted by the poet's poet, with mystics being conquerors through asceticism.
- This form of despair often goes unnoticed in the world, as individuals who have lost their sense of self can easily adjust to the demands of business and achieve success, making them appear to be perfectly normal and even exemplary, much like the illusion of living "concretely" discussed by Heidegger.
- However, when the distractions of the world are silenced, and individuals are faced with eternity, they will be asked only one question: whether they lived in despair or not, regardless of their social status, wealth, or accomplishments, and this question will reveal the true state of their inner selves.
- The author notes that many people talk about human suffering and wasted lives, but a life is only truly wasted if an individual never becomes aware of themselves as a spirit or self, and never recognizes the existence of a [[God]], which can only be attained through despair, and this is a concept that the author has some personal acquaintance with.
- Ultimately, the believer has an antidote to despair, which is the possibility that comes with faith, as with God all things are possible, and this allows individuals to resolve contradictions and find health, much like a healthy body can resolve physical contradictions, such as a draft being both cold and warm, and the author highlights the importance of this faith

in overcoming despair.

The Complexity of Faith and the Despair of Obscurity

- The concept of faith is complex, with philosophers like Tillich and [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] acknowledging the role of doubt in faith, and the idea that making a "leap" of faith can be challenging to actualize, even if it is true.
- According to the text, humans are designed to be spirit, but often prefer to dwell in the "cellar" of sensuousness, becoming furious when prompted to occupy the higher level of their being, which is available to them but remains unoccupied.
- The state of despair is multifaceted and cannot be reduced to simple contrasts between conscious and unconscious despair, as most people experience a nuanced and obscure awareness of their own condition, often noticing their despair but attributing it to external factors or using distractions to maintain a sense of obscurity.
- Individuals may employ various strategies to avoid confronting their despair, such as diverting their attention through work or busy occupations, or even deliberately trying to sink their soul into obscurity, but without fully acknowledging the true nature of their actions.
- When people fail to confront their inner selves and instead focus on outward appearances, they may succeed in forgetting their deeper sense of self, leading to a life of superficiality, where they become respected members of society, but without truly being in touch with their own identity, as exemplified by the individual who has become a successful and respected person, but has lost sight of their true self, and is content with being a "cultured [[Christianity | Christian]]" in a superficial sense.
- The question of immortality is a recurring theme, with the individual wondering if there really is an afterlife where one would recognize oneself again, which is particularly interesting for someone who is said to have no self.
- The concept of the Eternal is emphasized as being always appropriate, present, and true, applying to every human being regardless of age, whereas the changeable is subject to change and any statement about it is also subject to change.

The Eternal, the Good, and the Man of Prayer

- The individual is warned against seeking relief from suffering in temporal existence, which may provide temporary forgetfulness but ultimately leads to forgetting the Eternal, and instead, one should focus on the Good, which is one thing.
- A man of prayer is described as someone whose eyes are opened, and he does not need to pore over learned books, for he has a piously ignorant mind of the multitude of things, and one must even renounce learning to achieve this state.
- The experience of death is likened to the change of the perishable nature,

where the sensual man must step aside, and all becomes soberly quiet, which is also related to the experience of Nihilism.

- Worldly honor and contempt are described as whirlpools of confused forces, illusory moments in the flux of opinions, and sense-deceptions, and to will one thing cannot mean to will that which only appears to be one thing, as the worldly goal is not one thing in its essence.
- The worldly goal is unreal, and its so-called unity is actually emptiness hidden beneath the manyness, and it changes itself into its opposite, as pleasure can turn into disgust, earthly honor into contempt for existence, and riches into poverty.
- The individual is warned that even if honor were unanimous, it would still be meaningless, and the pursuit of honor leads to a life of groveling, flattering enemies, wooing the favor of those one despises, and betraying those one respects, ultimately leading to self-despise and trembling before any change.
- Finally, despair is described as double-mindedness, highlighting the importance of focusing on the Eternal and the Good, rather than getting caught up in the changeable and worldly goals.

Double-Mindedness and the Disconnect Between Ideal and Actual Life

- The concept of despair is described as having two wills, where an individual fruitlessly tries to follow one will while avoiding another, resulting in a state of double-mindedness, as noted in the reference to James' 'divided self'.
- The human experience is marked by a disconnect between the ideal life and the actual life, where individuals have great moments of hope and enthusiasm, but these are often forgotten in the daily routine, and their words of enthusiasm are not backed by actions, as warned against in James 3:5.
- People have intentions and plans for their lives, but these often lose their strength and fade away due to a lack of firm grounding and an inability to withstand opposition, leading to a life of trivial details and forgotten resolutions.
- The over-screaming of one's nature and conscience can lead to a cracking of the voice, and the infinite can become overwhelming, causing giddiness and a sense of emptiness, as described in the analogy of a singer cracking their voice.
- It is horrifying to see individuals rush towards their own destruction, and even more so when they are aware of their situation but choose to quietly witness their own downfall, seeking comfort in despair, rather than crying out for help.
- The speaker acknowledges their own share of double-mindedness and frailties, and wishes for the talk to attract listeners to the Good, rather than to themselves, demonstrating a desire for selflessness and a focus on the Good.
- The speaker also notes that if the world is not inherently Good, and

instead lies in wickedness, as stated in 1 John 5:19, then earthly rewards are of a doubtful character, highlighting the complexity of human nature and the need for a deeper understanding of the Good.

Willing the Good, Double-Mindedness, and the Temptation of Reward

- The concept of willing the Good is discussed, highlighting that true willingness to do good should not be motivated by the desire for reward, as this constitutes double-mindedness, and instead, one should will the Good without considering the reward, as noted in Karma Yoga.
- The idea of double-mindedness is further explored, with two types identified: one that wills the Good for the sake of reward, out of fear of punishment, or as a form of self-assertion, and another that wills the Good in a kind of sincerity, but only to a certain degree, as mentioned in the context of barriers to willing [[God | the One]].
- The text also touches on the idea that the world often rewards what it perceives as Good, but this reward can be a temptation, and that true reward may come from God, even if it is not willed by the individual, and that the Good is often temporarily rewarded by ingratitude, lack of appreciation, poverty, contempt, sufferings, and even death.
- The concept of wish is introduced, which is the sufferer's connection with a happier temporal existence, and is related to faith and hope, and is the life in suffering, the health in suffering, and the perseverance in suffering, as it keeps the wound open for the Eternal to heal, a concept also discussed by thinkers such as [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Zapffe, Becker, Tillich, and Ligotti.
- The text contrasts the concept of wish with hope, noting that while there are short-lived hopes that die, there is a hope that is born in death and does not die, which commits the sufferer to the Good, and that faith is still more joyful, as it seizes the Eternal and holds fast to it, committing the sufferer to the Good, even under the pain of the wish.
- The discussion highlights the importance of faith, hope, and the willingness to will the Good, even in the face of suffering, and the need to guard oneself against the temptation of reward and the desire for self-assertion, in order to truly will the Good and be committed to it.

Suffering, Faith, and the Importance of Not Despairing

- The text discusses the concept of suffering and how it can be transformed through faith, love, and hope, emphasizing that the sufferer should not seek relief in temporal existence, but rather commit themselves to the Good, which is the Eternal.
- It highlights the importance of not despairing, as despair is equivalent to denying that [[God]] is love, and instead, the sufferer should strengthen themselves in faith, hope, and love to overcome their suffering.
- The text also touches on the idea of the "wish" and how it can be a driving force for the sufferer, but notes that not all wishes are the same, and some can be healed with time, while others, such as the wish to be with

the Infinite, are fundamental to one's being.

- The author encourages the reader to be strict with themselves and not claim to be a sufferer lightly, but to be tender with those who are truly suffering, and to recognize that suffering can be a catalyst for personal growth and transformation.
- The text emphasizes the importance of pondering the suffering of others and sharing in the common lot of suffering, as this can be a powerful antidote to the "deadly disease of busyness" and can help individuals to reach the highest level of understanding and connection with the Eternal.
- Ultimately, the author urges the reader to take a single, decisive step towards the Eternal, which can be done by anyone, regardless of their circumstances, and to continually take that one step more, in order to commit themselves to the Good and find true comfort and relief from suffering.

The Unsympathized Pain and the Comfort of the Most High

- The text discusses the concept of suffering, highlighting that there is a type of pain that cannot be understood or sympathized with by others, and this pain can follow a person throughout their entire life, feeling like a constant companion that brings a sense of privation.
- The text uses a parable about a horse that attends a meeting with other horses to learn about life, where the elder horses share their wisdom about the suffering and tragic changes of fate that horses are subject to, such as hunger, cold, overwork, and abuse, which can be seen as a metaphor for the human experience.
- The text addresses the sufferer, stating that if their suffering is not hidden by choice, but rather due to misunderstandings, they can find comfort in the fact that they are not entirely without human sympathy or understanding, and that even if they feel alone, they can be bidden to the highest thing of all, and to the [[God | Most High]] Himself, as referenced in the Bible, particularly in the book of Luke and the words of Matthew.
- The text emphasizes the importance of edification, a common human concern that involves contemplation and understanding, which can find rest when it has come to understand the sufferer, and notes that one sinner who repents is more important to Heaven than ninety-nine righteous men who have no need of repentance, according to Luke 15:7.
- The text warns against edifying talk that only focuses on superficial inconveniences in life and avoids discussing more terrible sufferings, stating that such talk is without frankness and can have a bad conscience, and that those who are busy but not oppressed may think they have escaped suffering, but true edification requires a deeper understanding and contemplation of human suffering.

Suffering, Authenticity, and the Commitment to the Good

- The author reflects on the concept of suffering and authenticity, drawing parallels between the idea of "bad conscience" and Sartre's "bad faith",

which both relate to the notion of doublemindedness and the lack of authenticity.

- The author discusses the importance of contemplating suffering, using the metaphor of a pilot guiding a ship through treacherous waters, but notes that the sufferer must ultimately help themselves, and that this process involves a commitment to the Good, which requires being willing to suffer all.
- The author addresses the potential criticism that talking about suffering can be tiresome, but argues that an edifying talk never tires of it, and that even those who are considered "happy" can benefit from understanding suffering in order to improve their education and character.
- The author encourages true sufferers to remember that they can still accomplish something, even if their suffering prevents them from serving others, by willing to suffer all and remaining committed to the Good, which is the highest thing they can do.
- The author warns against the destructive power of cleverness, which can be misused to evade decisions and postpone commitment, and notes that true healing and salvation come from the Eternal, rather than from earthly or temporal solutions.
- The author emphasizes the importance of commitment and loyalty to the Good, even in the face of suffering, and notes that the pain of the wish is a sign that the suffering continues, but that the healing also continues as long as the sufferer remains firm in their commitment.

Healing Through the Eternal and the Dangers of Earthly Hope

- The text discusses the concept of suffering and the role of the Eternal in healing, suggesting that those who are healed by the Eternal do not become physically whole, but rather find a different kind of wholeness through their decision to dedicate themselves to their suffering and renounce the hope of temporal existence.
- According to the text, those who rely on earthly hope and cleverness to cope with their suffering will ultimately become superstitious, experience a dull despair, and be unable to find true relief, as they are hindered by their own cleverness and inability to make a decision to let go of their earthly hopes.
- The text also highlights the importance of taking one's suffering to heart, as this allows the sufferer to receive help from the Eternal and find rest in the trustworthiness of the Eternal, rather than relying on cleverness and excuses to avoid making a decision.
- The concept of double-mindedness is also explored, where the sufferer wishes to be healed but does not wish to be healed eternally, leading to a disease that gnaws away at their noble powers and results in increasing restlessness and uncertainty.
- The text references the philosopher [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] and the idea of Pascal's Wager, suggesting that taking things to heart and being open to the Eternal can provide a form of comfort and relief, even if

it seems like a small or insignificant thing.

- Ultimately, the text suggests that the Eternal is a riddle for those who are double-minded and love the world in a clever sense, and that true healing and relief can only be found by letting go of earthly hopes and dedicating oneself to the Eternal.

Commitment to the Eternal and the Illusion of Temporal Comfort

- The passage from 'Journal314_7-10' discusses the concept of commitment to the Eternal and how individuals often hesitate to embrace it due to their attachment to temporal things, preferring to hold on to the hope of temporal help rather than seeking eternal consolation.

- The text criticizes the "shallow cleverness" that prevents people from committing to the Eternal, instead opting for mediocre and temporary comforts that ultimately lead to remorse, and argues that commitment to the Eternal is the only true salvation.

- The author notes that double-mindedness in relation to the sufferer stems from an unwillingness to let go of worldly things, and that consoling talk often focuses on temporary relief rather than offering the highest comfort of the Eternal, which is compared to "pure gold".

- The passage emphasizes that the Eternal's comfort is not about removing suffering, but about providing a deeper sense of healing and victory, and that the true sufferer must answer for how they have used their time and whether they have allowed themselves to be eternally healed.

- The text also critiques the idea of "never giving up hope" as being equivocal, suggesting that there are certain hopes and desires that should be put to death, and that the Eternal demands a more nuanced and honest understanding of what it means to hope and to heal.

- The concept of earthly hope needs to be relinquished, as it is through the death of this hope that one can attain true salvation, and the sufferer should not accept deliverance on the world's terms, as stated in Hebrews 11:15.

- A sufferer who genuinely wills the Good can utilize cleverness to commit to their suffering and avoid the disillusionments of temporal choices, and they should not concentrate their sufferings, but rather take each day's burden as it comes, to avoid becoming terrified in a temporal sense.

- The commitment to suffering should not be understood as a concentration of sufferings, but rather as a means to launch oneself into the commitment and escape the disillusionments of choosing the temporal way, and the sufferer can work for the Good inwardly by being willing to suffer all, and also work outwardly by the power of example.

The Active One, the Sufferer, and the Outward Work for the Good

- The active one and the sufferer can both be committed to the Good, but they work in different directions, with the active one working from without to conquer, and the sufferer working inwardly to allow the Good to conquer in them, and the Good must have conquered in the active one's heart for them

to sincerely work for the Good outwardly.

- The true sufferer can always work for the Good outwardly by the power of example, and their life contains a great challenge to others, and even if they are denied the ability to work outwardly, they are still sharing in mankind's great common concern, and defending a difficult pass by saving their own soul from the difficulties of suffering, as noted by philosophers like [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- The question of whether one can will suffering is discussed, and it is distinguished between willing in the sense of inclination and willing in the noble sense of freedom, and it is noted that for many men, it is almost impossible to unite freedom and suffering in the same thought.

Willing Suffering, Courage, and the Freedom in Patience

- The passage discusses how people often view those who choose to suffer or take the harder path in life, perceiving them as either fanatics or lunatics, and believing that they do not know how to make use of their fortunate circumstances, as noted in the context of the 'Journal314_7-10' document.
- The concept of courage is illustrated through the example of a courageous knight who voluntarily wills suffering, with the knight representing the courageous aspect and the horse representing the skittish, or low, aspect of human nature, as referenced by the author, potentially alluding to the philosophical ideas of Tillich.
- In contrast to courage, patience is defined as the courage that voluntarily accepts unavoidable suffering, allowing the sufferer to find freedom in the midst of suffering, and is considered to perform an even greater miracle than courage, as it achieves freedom in situations where suffering cannot be avoided.
- The passage also explores how people often view those who choose to bear unavoidable suffering patiently, seeing them as making a virtue out of necessity, but this is actually a testament to the sufferer's ability to bring a determination of freedom out of necessity, which is the healing power of the decision for the Eternal.
- Ultimately, the true sufferer's condition is one of voluntarily accepting compulsory suffering, and it is through this acceptance that one may learn what the highest is, and find freedom in the midst of suffering, as discussed in the 'Journal314_7-10' document, which provides insight into the human experience of suffering and the importance of patience and courage.

Cleverness, the Good, and the Slow Progression of Time

- The concept of suffering is discussed in relation to cleverness, where a Good person utilizes their cleverness to remain committed to the Good, even in the face of suffering, by accepting the necessity of suffering and being willing to endure it.
- According to the text, a truly Good person does not will the Good for the sake of reward or recognition, but rather wills that the Good shall triumph

through them, making them an instrument of the Good, as emphasized by philosophers like [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who notes that the world is Maya and cannot be "fixed" through ego-driven efforts.

- The text warns against confusing impatience with humble, obedient enthusiasm, as impatience can lead to double-mindedness, which is distinct from true inspiration, and this double-mindedness can be hidden from the world, making it difficult to recognize.
- The existence of time and the slow progression of the Good are questioned, with the author wondering why the Good, which is eternally victorious, must creep slowly forward through time, and why individuals who sincerely will the Good are scattered and separated, making it challenging for them to connect with one another.
- The author expresses a desire to connect with other thinkers, such as Cioran, [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Vivekananda, and Huxley, across different time periods, races, and genders, to combine Eastern and Western perspectives, and to transcend the limitations of time and space.

The Double-Minded Person and the Intersection of Time and Eternity

- The double-minded person is described as someone who does not will the Good for the sake of reward or punishment, but rather wishes to sacrifice all, yet fears to sacrifice themselves in daily self-forgetfulness, and their double-mindedness is only recognizable at the boundary where time and eternity meet, where it is clear to the [[God | all-knowing]] One.
- The text ultimately suggests that true commitment to the Good requires selflessness, humility, and a willingness to suffer, and that this commitment can only be truly recognized and understood at the intersection of time and eternity, as noted in the reference to Luke 17:10, which emphasizes the importance of being a faithful servant.

Blessed Assurance, Fleeting Desires, and Eternal Responsibility

- The text from 'Journal314_7-10' discusses the importance of having a blessed assurance that the Good has always been victorious, which provides a sense of security and comfort that surpasses all understanding, and allows individuals to have pride and confidence in their actions, even in the face of adversity.
- The passage also highlights the fleeting nature of momentary desires and impulses, such as lust and anger, which may seem appealing in the moment but ultimately lead to regret and repentance, and how these momentary things are often driven by a desire to fit in with the crowd and its opinions.
- The text notes that people often rush into crowds out of fear, and that it takes boldness to not be afraid, even of [[God]], but also emphasizes the importance of fearing God in a traditional sense, as a sign of respect and awareness of one's eternal responsibility before Him.
- The author encourages individuals to live in a way that allows them to cultivate a consciousness of their eternal responsibility, which will help them to prioritize their actions and relationships, and to focus on what is

truly important, without withdrawing from life or becoming overly self-absorbed.

- The passage also quotes Ecclesiastes 7:2, which suggests that it is better to attend the house of mourning than the house of feasting, as this can provide a valuable lesson in the fleeting nature of human accomplishments and the importance of focusing on what truly matters, and the author notes that everything other than working selflessly and focusing on the Good can be considered "time-wasting".

The Eternal, Worldly Pursuits, and the Press of Busyness

- The concept of the Eternal is not forgotten, even after a thousand years, and it demands purity of heart and willing one thing, but in daily life, this claim is often set aside and ignored in the midst of busyness and worldly pursuits.

- In the world, people are often more concerned with influence, might, and wealth than with willing the Good, and they do not consider it important to scrutinize whether someone wholly wills the Good as long as they are successful in their business and have a good reputation.

- The world is characterized by a lack of contemplation and distinct thoughts, and people are often deceived into thinking they have had an experience of contemplation when they have not, which is a form of double-mindedness.

- The press of busyness is like a charm that can be harmful, especially to children and young people, who are not allowed the quiet and retirement needed for the Eternal to unfold a divine growth, and it is sad to see how its power swells and reaches out to ever-younger victims.

Anxiety, Possibility, and the Education of the Individual

- The concept of anxiety is also discussed, and it is stated that whoever is educated by possibility is exposed to danger, particularly the danger of suicide, if they misunderstand anxiety and it leads them away from faith, but whoever is educated by possibility remains with anxiety and is not deceived by its falsifications.

- The author suggests that it is important for individuals to pause and reflect on their willingness to do Good, and not just delegate this task to someone else, as every person should take responsibility for their own spiritual growth and development, and that this higher claim should command a person's whole mind, industry, and strength.

- The assaults of anxiety, although terrifying, can become a serving spirit that leads an individual to their desired destination, as anxiety is a school that educates through the concept of possibility, which is a fundamental aspect of the Absurd Perspective, where all actions are considered equal, akin to Nihilism.

- According to the text, anxiety is freedom's possibility, and it is through faith that anxiety becomes absolutely formative, consuming all finite ends and discovering their deceptions, with no other force, not even a Grand

Inquisitor, able to exert such torments or cunningly attack an individual's weaknesses like anxiety can.

- The individual formed by anxiety is shaped by possibility, and only those shaped by possibility are cultivated according to their infinitude, with possibility being the most difficult of all categories, as it encompasses all things being equally possible, including both the terrifying and the smiling.
- The common perception of possibility as being light, often associated with happiness and good fortune, is deemed a lying invention by human depravity, and true possibility is only grasped by those who have been brought up by it, understanding that nothing can be demanded of life and that horror and annihilation are always nearby.

Graduating from Possibility, Renouncing Worldly Life, and the Anticipation of Faith

- An individual who has graduated from the school of possibility will give actuality a new explanation, praising it as lighter than possibility, and will have learned to renounce worldly life, going [[Beyond Good and Evil | beyond good and evil]], through a process that can be seen as a form of renunciation, similar to the concept of maya.
- To be formed absolutely and infinitely by possibility, an individual must be honest towards possibility and have faith, which is understood as the inner certainty that anticipates infinity, as described by Hegel, allowing possibility to discover all finitudes and idealize them in the shape of infinity, ultimately leading to a state of overcoming anxiety through the anticipation of faith.
- The text discusses the concept of anxiety and its role in cultivating an individual's character, with the idea that one who passes through the anxiety of possibility is able to have no anxiety, not because they can escape life's difficulties, but because these become weak in comparison to the possibilities.
- According to the text, an individual who claims to have never experienced anxiety is likely to be spiritless, as anxiety is a necessary step in the development of faith, and cheating possibility, which molds the individual, prevents one from arriving at faith, resulting in a finitude's sagacity rather than true faith, as noted by philosophers like [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- The individuality formed by possibility is absolutely identified with the unfortunate and knows no finite subterfuge to escape, and it is through this anxiety of possibility that one is handed over to faith, with the help of faith, anxiety educates the individuality to rest in providence, as stated by Kierkegaard.
- The text also explores the concept of guilt, stating that those who learn to know their guilt only from the finite are lost in the finite, and that true guilt is infinite, and that anyone who has truly learned how to be anxious will be able to tread with ease when the anxieties of finitude

strike, as also noted by Heidegger.

Spiritual Trial, Sin, and the Demonic

- Furthermore, the text suggests that sin is a sign of a deeper nature, and that it can be concealed or expelled through precautionary measures, but that the best way to escape spiritual trial is to become spiritless, and that seeking the advice of others can lead to a lack of spiritual depth, as individuals like Tom, Dick, and Harry may advise one to become like most people, rather than striving for a higher level of spiritual awareness.
- The concept of spiritual trial is often dismissed as a mere poetic fiction, but it is a real and perilous journey that requires faith and courage to navigate, as noted by philosophers such as Tillich and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who emphasize the importance of acknowledging the interconnectedness of life and the impossibility of escaping the nothingness of the world.
- The state of sin is described as a bondage that can be likened to a game where two persons are concealed under one cloak, representing the divided self, where the individual is torn between their true nature and the influence of external forces, a concept that is also explored in the context of the demonic.
- The demonic is a fate that can happen to anyone, and it is only when it is touched by the good that it becomes visible, but sympathy can often be a way of protecting one's own egotism rather than truly helping the sufferer, as people tend to distract themselves from lonely thoughts and spiritual trials with diversions and loud enterprises.
- The demonic is not just a relic of the past, but is still present in modern times, particularly in intellectual spheres, where it can manifest in various forms, such as skepticism and nihilism, as seen in the works of authors like Tolstoy and Singer, who often ignore or talk around these issues.
- The idea of [[God]] is not just a metaphysical concept, but a thought that can obtrude on every occasion, and the lack of inwardness is what often leads to a comical or unfree relation to one's spirituality, as seen in the case of the so-called holy individuals who are ridiculed by the world, highlighting the importance of genuine faith and courage in the face of spiritual trials.

The "Holy" Person, Inwardness, and the Thought of God

- The concept of a "holy" person is described as someone who understands that the religious is not limited to specific occasions, but is something that can always be present, and this understanding is likened to someone who knows how to beat time, even if they cannot dance.
- The text critiques both rigid orthodoxy and freethinking, stating that when individuals focus too much on proving or disproving the validity of the [[New Testament]], they lose sight of the true meaning and inwardness, much like the debates on YouTube about the existence of God, where both sides are

missing the point.

- The preacher's statement in Ecclesiastes that "all is vanity" is said to be a call to earnestness, and the text emphasizes the importance of living in daily communion with the thought of God, without trying to define or pervert it.
- The author argues that earnestness is not something that can be defined or conceptualized, but rather it is a matter of truly understanding and being committed to the object of earnestness, which is oneself, and that one who becomes earnest about something else, such as external concepts or ideas, is a joker.
- The text also discusses the concept of inwardness, stating that when it is lacking, the spirit is finitized, and that inwardness is the constituent of the eternal in the human being, a concept also discussed by Otto in relation to the numinous.
- The author criticizes the way people discuss the eternal in modern times, stating that both those who accept and reject it often lack inwardness and earnestness, and that true understanding of the eternal requires a concrete and personal understanding.
- The text concludes by questioning why people are in such a hurry, and notes that whether or not there is an eternity, the moment is just as long, emphasizing the importance of living in the present with earnestness and inwardness.

Anxiety About the Eternal and the Comical in the Temporal

- The concept of anxiety about the eternal can manifest in various ways, including mockery, a focus on common sense, busyness, and enthusiasm for the temporal, which can lead to a denial of the eternal and a comical preservation of the temporal in eternity.
- The comical is found in the temporal, where contradictions exist, and it is not present in eternity, where all contradictions are canceled, and the temporal is permeated by and preserved in the eternal without any trace of the comical.
- Eternity is not often earnestly considered by people, who instead are anxious about it and may use evasions to avoid thinking about it, and this anxiety can be triggered by various factors, including reminders, sights, jokes, speech, and silence, which can have unpredictable effects on individuals.
- The object of anxiety is often a nothing, rather than a something, and it is related to freedom's possibility, which announces itself in anxiety, and this anxiety can be triggered by the most dissimilar things, including the individual's relation to its historical environment.
- The concept of anxiety is also related to the ideas of philosophers such as Tillich, Heidegger, and Buber, who have written about the human condition, freedom, and the nothing, and the text suggests that anxiety can be a profound and complex emotion that is not fully understood by science or psychology.

Genius, Guilt, and the Religious Dimension of Human Existence

- The text also touches on the idea that genius is not significant in the most profound sense, as its compass is limited to temporal terms such as fate, fortune, misfortune, esteem, honor, power, and immortal fame, and that a deeper dialectical characterization of anxiety is excluded, with the ultimate consideration being guilt and the appearance of guilt, which is an attribute of honor.
- The state of the soul that lends itself to poetic treatment is one that can happen to anyone, but a genius would grasp it deeply and strive not with humanity, but with the profoundest mysteries of human existence, as noted in the context of the discussion on the nature of genius and talent.
- The existence of a genius, despite its splendor and glory, is considered a sin, and one can only come to understand this by satisfying the hunger of the wishful soul and learning to justify genius and talent through religious reflection, which is a key point in the exploration of the human condition.
- A genius who turns towards himself and the divine, rather than the temporal, would become a religious genius, but would also have to endure great agonies, and this is a crucial aspect of the relationship between the individual and the divine.
- The concept of immortality is also explored, with the idea that even immortal honor is merely a temporal attribute, and that true immortality is available to every person, which is a central theme in the discussion of the human experience.
- Every human life is considered to be religiously arranged, and denying this would confuse everything and cancel out the concepts of individuality, race, and immortality, highlighting the importance of recognizing the religious dimension of human existence.
- The text also touches on the idea that people often fail to consider how their religious existence relates to their outward existence, and instead get caught up in the fleeting moments of life, rather than learning to grasp the eternal, which is a key challenge in the pursuit of spiritual growth.
- The author notes that there is no time to reflect on how a religious existence pervades outward existence, and that people often grab onto what is closest to hand, even if it means becoming something great in the world, but still lacking in true religious reflection, which is a commentary on the human tendency to prioritize worldly success over spiritual development.

Repetition, Karma Yoga, and the Divided Self

- The text raises questions about the nature of repetition and how an individuality can return to itself whole, after having begun religious reflection, and whether it is possible to fuse the divided self, which is a fundamental question in the exploration of the human condition.
- The concept of karma yoga is mentioned as a potential way to fuse the divided self, and the author wonders what profound religious reflection would be required to stretch to an outward task, such as becoming a comic

actor, highlighting the challenge of integrating spiritual principles into everyday life.

- The author also notes that the Middle Ages provide an example of how people broke off from religious reflection, and that this is a relevant consideration in the context of the discussion on the nature of religious existence and its relationship to outward existence.

Annihilating Outward Gifts and the Journey of Self-Discovery

- The individual who seeks to truly understand themselves must annihilate their outward gifts, such as wit and a sense of comedy, which are often considered desirable traits, in order to embark on a journey of self-discovery and religious reflection.

- This journey is exhausting and often filled with distress, anxiety, and moments of regret, as the individual must confront the fact that they have chosen a difficult path, giving up the potential for a more carefree and successful life, but ultimately, it is through this struggle that they may hear a voice of encouragement, saying "Well done, my son, just keep on, for he who loses all, gains all."

- In turning inward, the individual discovers guilt, and the greater their genius, the more profoundly they discover this guilt, which is a necessary step in their spiritual journey, as it allows them to turn towards themselves and, in doing so, towards [[God]].

- The purpose of this inward turn is not to conceal thoughts, but to discover freedom, which is not the freedom to achieve outward success, but the freedom to know oneself and to be free from the constraints of the world.

- As the individual delves deeper into themselves, they come to realize that their happiness, reason, and virtues are not enough to justify existence, and that they must experience a moment of great contempt, as described by Nietzsche, in which they reject their current state and strive for something more, a moment that is characterized by a deep sense of sin-consciousness and a desire for true freedom and self-awareness.

- Through this process, the individual, particularly the religious genius, is able to find a sense of fulfillment and purpose, not through outward achievements, but through their inner struggle and their ability to confront and overcome their own guilt and limitations.

- The text suggests that this journey is not for everyone, and that many people are born "blind to the religious," but for those who are willing to embark on this path, it offers a profound and transformative experience, one that allows them to discover their true selves and to find a sense of freedom and bliss that is not dependent on external circumstances.

- Ultimately, the text presents a vision of the individual who is willing to confront their own guilt and limitations, and to strive for a deeper understanding of themselves and their place in the world, as the one who is truly free and truly alive, and it is this individual who is able to find true fulfillment and purpose in their life.

Nihilism, the Meaninglessness of Life, and the Transition to New Conditions

- The concept of nihilism is discussed, with the idea that a "scientific" interpretation of the world might be one of the most destitute of significance, and that an essentially mechanical world would be an essentially meaningless world, as noted by the author in "[[The Gay Science]]", specifically in section 373.
- The author argues that the appearance of extreme pessimism and nihilism might be a sign of a process of growth and mankind's transition into new conditions of existence, and that one must experience nihilism to understand the true value of their values and ideals.
- The feeling of valuelessness is reached when one realizes that existence has no goal or end, and that traditional concepts such as "aim", "unity", and "truth" are inapplicable, which can lead to a state of "creatureliness", as described by Otto.
- The author suggests that all values are psychologically considered to be the results of certain perspectives of utility, designed to maintain and increase human constructs of domination, and that these values have been falsely projected into the essence of things, highlighting the "hypermolic naivete of man" in positing himself as the meaning and measure of the value of things.
- The most extreme form of nihilism is the view that every belief is necessarily false because there is no true world, and that this perspective is a result of human necessity for a simplified world, with the author noting that the measure of strength is the extent to which one can admit to themselves the merely apparent character of things without perishing.
- The author also notes that those who have abandoned [[God]] cling more firmly to the faith in morality, and that every purely moral value system ends in nihilism, citing the example of [[Buddhism]], and that this is to be expected in Europe, where people hope to get along with a moralism without a religious background, but this necessarily leads to nihilism, as discussed by philosophers such as [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who speaks of 'rights' and 'justice' as being lower ways of speaking about Truth and the Good.

Philosophical Nihilism, Morality, and the Death of God

- The text from 'Journal314_7-10' discusses various philosophical concepts, including the attempt to escape the meaninglessness of life through intoxication, whether it be through music, cruelty, or blind enthusiasm, and the pursuit of knowledge as a means to modestly understand oneself.
- The philosophical nihilist is described as someone who believes that life is meaningless and in vain, yet simultaneously holds a standard of what ought to be, which is rooted in the desire for pleasure and the avoidance of displeasure, highlighting the complexity of human emotions and the search for meaning.

- The idea of morality as a protective mechanism against despair and the absurd perspective that arises when morality disintegrates is introduced, along with the concept of a god [[Beyond Good and Evil | beyond good and evil]], and the notion that man is something that is to be surpassed, as stated by [[Zoroaster | Zarathustra]].
- The text also references the death of [[God]], with the speaker declaring "we have killed him," and pondering the consequences of this action, including the loss of direction and the feeling of infinite nothingness, as well as the [[Christianity | Christian]] resolution to find the world ugly and bad, which has ultimately made the world ugly and bad.
- The speaker reflects on their own approach to action, attacking only those things that are triumphant and standing alone against them, and shares words spoken by Zarathustra concerning deliverance from loathing and the search for joyfulness, highlighting the importance of humility and self-awareness.
- The text touches on the idea that suffering and impotence have created the concept of afterworlds, and that even those who despise the body are serving their own self, which ultimately wants to die and turn away from life, and the speaker expresses gratitude towards their long illness, which has taught them more than their health.
- Throughout the text, the speaker grapples with complex philosophical ideas, including the nature of existence, morality, and the human condition, and references various concepts and ideas from Friedrich Nietzsche's works, including "[[The Gay Science]]" and the character of Zarathustra.

Pain, Depth, and the Limits of Reason

- The author acknowledges that great pain has a profound impact on their life, leading to a higher level of health and a deeper understanding of themselves, as it forces them to re-examine their trust, good-nature, and gentleness, and to descend into their final depth.
- The author expresses doubt that pain improves us, but believes it deepens us, and notes that most people do not find it contemptible to hold beliefs without being aware of the ultimate reasons for and against them, including the most gifted men and the noblest women.
- The author criticizes the idea that language embodies the highest wisdom concerning things, and instead suggests that language is only the first movement in all strivings for wisdom, implying that the language builder is not modest in their claims.
- The author argues that if [[Christianity]] were true, with its allegations of an avenging [[God]] and eternal damnation, it would be irrational for people not to dedicate their lives to their own salvation, and that the everyday Christian is a pitiable figure due to their intellectual incapacity.
- The author views Christianity as a relic of antiquity, with assertions that are no longer believable in modern times, citing examples such as the idea of a god begetting children by a mortal woman, and the concept of an innocent person being sacrificed for the guilty, which seem ghostly and

outdated.

Nihilism, the Decay of Values, and the Transvaluation of All Values

- The text discusses the concept of nihilism and the decay of traditional values, with the author referencing Friedrich Nietzsche's ideas and quoting from his work, including "The Antichrist", to argue that the values humanity holds in high regard are actually decadence-values.
- The author contends that the highest values of humanity have been emptied of their true meaning and are now driven by nihilism, with people using rhetoric such as "the other world", "God", or "Nirvana" to conceal their tendency to destroy life.
- The author also discusses the concept of a "transvaluation of all values", where free spirits are already declaring war and victory against old concepts of truth, and notes that the most valuable intuitions are often the last to be attained, particularly those that determine methods and principles.
- The text touches on the idea that humanity has unlearned certain things, such as deriving man from the "spirit" or "god-head", and instead regards humans as the strongest of beasts due to their intellectuality, but also acknowledges that humans are relatively speaking, the most botched and sickliest of animals.
- The author critiques the traditional view that human consciousness or "spirit" is evidence of a high origin or divinity, instead arguing that consciousness appears as a symptom of a relative imperfection of the organism, and that the idea of a "pure spirit" is a piece of pure stupidity.
- The text also discusses the concept of an imaginary teleology, such as the "kingdom of [[God]]" or "eternal life", which is seen as a fictitious world that falsifies and denies reality, and is differentiated from the world of dreams, which at least reflects reality.
- The concept of "nature" being opposed to "God" has led to the word "natural" taking on a negative connotation, resulting in a fictitious world that stems from a hatred of reality and a profound uneasiness in the presence of it, as explained in the provided text from 'Journal314_7-10'.

The Fictitious Morality of Religion and the Preponderance of Pains

- The preponderance of pains over pleasures is the cause of a fictitious morality and religion, which is a formula for decadence, and it is the individuals who suffer from reality, being a botched reality themselves, who have a reason to live their way out of it.
- Religion, in its original form, is a way for individuals to express gratitude for their own existence, projecting their joy and feeling of power into a being to whom they can offer thanks, but the concept of a god has been corrupted, particularly in [[Christianity]], which has made God a god of goodness alone, contrary to human inclination.
- The Christian concept of [[God]] is seen as a corrupt and decadent concept, declaring war on life, nature, and the will to live, and deifying

nothingness, whereas [[Buddhism]], on the other hand, is considered a more realistic and positive religion, facing problems objectively and coolly, and focusing on the struggle with suffering rather than sin.

Buddhism, Christianity, and the Hygienic Measures for Excessive Sensitiveness

- Buddhism is differentiated from Christianity in that it puts the self-deception of moral concepts behind it, and is [[Beyond Good and Evil | beyond good and evil]], with its epistemology being a strict phenomenalism, and it grounds itself on two physiological facts: excessive sensitiveness to sensation and extraordinary spirituality, which produced a depression that [[The Buddha | Buddha]] tried to combat with hygienic measures, as noted by the author, who also references the ideas of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] in relation to the concept of nothingness.
- The prescribed way of life to combat excessive sensitiveness includes living in the open, traveling, eating in moderation, being cautious with intoxicants, and avoiding the arousal of passions that can heat the blood, as well as refraining from worry and fostering ideas that promote quiet contentment or good cheer.
- The concept of goodness is understood as something that promotes health, and this approach does not involve prayer, asceticism, or any categorical imperative, and it also does not encourage conflict with unbelievers, instead emphasizing the importance of avoiding revenge, aversion, and resentment.
- According to the teachings of Buddha, egoism is considered a duty, and the goal is to lead spiritual interests back to the ego to combat mental fatigue, which can result from too much objectivity and a loss of interest in oneself.

The Exaltation of Faith, the Jewish People, and the Corruption of God

- In contrast, when faith is exalted above everything else, reason, knowledge, and patient inquiry are discredited, and hope becomes a powerful stimulant to life, as noted by [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], who suggests that hope can sustain individuals in suffering and that it should be so high that no conflict with actuality can dash it.
- The text also discusses the Jewish people, who are described as having chosen to be at any price, involving a radical falsification of all nature, naturalness, and reality, and evolving an idea that stands in direct opposition to natural conditions, distorting religion, civilization, morality, history, and psychology.
- Furthermore, the instincts of resentment are seen as having invented another world in which the acceptance of life appears as the most evil and abominable thing imaginable, and this is linked to the idea that decadence is a means to an end for the priestly class, who have a vital interest in making mankind sick and confusing the values of good and bad, true and false.

- The concept of a [[God | god]] is also criticized, as it becomes a weapon in the hands of clerical agitators, who interpret happiness and unhappiness as rewards or punishments for obedience or disobedience, setting up a moral order of the world and standing the fundamental concepts of cause and effect on their heads.
- The concept of natural causation has been replaced by unnatural causation, leading to the denial of nature, as a result of doctrines that emphasize reward and punishment, and this has significant implications for morality and the human experience.

The Moral Order of the World, the Priestly Class, and the Teachings of Jesus

- Morality is no longer based on the conditions that promote the sound life and development of people, but has become abstract and opposed to life, with the idea of a "moral order of the world" being a lie that has been perpetuated by philosophers and the church.
- The idea of a "moral order of the world" is based on the notion that there is a will of God that determines what is right and wrong, and that the worth of individuals and peoples is measured by their obedience to this will, but this is a perversion of reality.
- The priestly class has taken advantage of this idea to exert control over people, using the name of [[God]] to justify their own power and interests, and estimating the value of individuals and peoples based on their subservience to the priestly order.
- [[Christianity]], as represented by the [[Gospel | Gospels]], actually denies the church and its power structures, and instead promotes a message of love, gentleness, and non-resistance, with the idea that everyone is a child of God and equal to one another.
- The teachings of [[Jesus]], as interpreted by thinkers like Tolstoy and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], emphasize the importance of living in the present and finding the true life within oneself, rather than seeking external authority or heroism, and this challenges traditional notions of spirituality and civilization.
- The concept of "genius" is also called into question, as it is a product of modern civilization and would have had no meaning in the world that Jesus lived in, and instead, a more nuanced understanding of human experience and morality is needed, one that takes into account the complexities of human nature and the importance of living in the present.

The Hatred of Reality, the Kingdom of God, and the Peaceful Preacher

- The physiological habit of escaping reality can lead to an instinctive hatred of all reality, causing individuals to flee into the "intangible" and "incomprehensible", as noted by Tolstoy and Vivekananda, who quote "The Kingdom of [[God]] is within you".
- This hatred of reality is a consequence of an extreme susceptibility to pain and irritation, making every sensation too profound to bear, and is

characterized by a distaste for all formulae, conceptions of time and space, and established institutions, including customs, the church, and other social structures.

- The concept of the "Kingdom of God" is described as an "inner" world, a "true" world, and an "eternal" world, where the individual feels at home, and is reminiscent of the ideas of Perennialism, as discussed by [[Aldous Huxley]].

- The peaceful preacher, such as [[Jesus]], is contrasted with the aggressive fanatic, and is characterized by a faith that is not embattled, does not denounce, and does not defend itself, but rather lives and guards itself against formulae, and is similar to the ideas of a "free spirit" who cares nothing for what is established.

- The language and concepts used by Jesus, such as those of the Last Supper, are seen as symbolical and not to be taken literally, and it is suggested that he would have used different concepts, such as those of Sankhya or Lao-tse, if he had been speaking in a different cultural context.

- Jesus' idea of "life" is opposed to every sort of word, formula, law, belief, and dogma, and he speaks only of inner things, using words like "life", "truth", and "light" to describe the innermost, and his "wisdom" is a pure ignorance of all worldly things, including culture, politics, and knowledge.

- The results of this point of view are a new way of life, the special evangelical way of life, which is characterized by a focus on inner things and a rejection of external structures and institutions, and is seen as a way of living that is outside of all religion, worship, history, and worldly experience.

The Christian Way of Life and the Misunderstanding of the Gospels

- The [[Christianity | Christian]] is distinguished by a unique mode of action, characterized by a lack of resistance to those who oppose him, no distinction between strangers and countrymen, and no anger or disdain towards anyone, as well as a refusal to engage with the courts of justice or heed their mandates.

- The life and death of [[Jesus | the Saviour]], as described in the [[Gospel | Gospels]], exemplify this way of life, rejecting the Jewish doctrine of repentance and atonement, and instead emphasizing the importance of living a certain way to feel a connection with [[God]], with the Gospel way being the path to God itself.

- The Gospels, according to the author, abolished the Jewish concepts of sin, forgiveness of sin, faith, and salvation through faith, replacing them with a new understanding of these ideas, and the author notes that Tolstoy's interpretation of the Gospels may have been influenced by or expanded upon Nietzsche's ideas.

- The author also discusses the concept of the "Son of God" as a psychological symbol, rather than a historical figure, and argues that the church's literal interpretation of this concept is a disrespect for symbols

that amounts to world-historical cynicism, a critique that is echoed by thinkers such as Spong, Tillich, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and Huxley.

- The text further explores the symbolism of the "Father" and the "Son", with the "Father" representing the feeling of eternity and perfection, and the "Son" representing the transformation of all things, and criticizes the church's distortion of these symbols, such as the dogma of immaculate conception.
- The "kingdom of God" is described as a state of the heart, rather than a physical place or a future event, and the author argues that the idea of natural death is absent from the Gospels, with death being seen as a symbol rather than a physical reality, and the "hour of death" being a non-Christian idea.
- The author concludes that the Saviour's death, like his life, was a demonstration of his way of living, and that he bequeathed to humanity a way of life, rather than a means of salvation, with his demeanor before his judges and on the cross serving as an example of this way of life.

The True Meaning of the Gospels and the "Holy Lie" of Christianity

- The author describes a person who does not resist or defend themselves, instead submitting to evil and loving those who do them harm, as a true embodiment of the original teachings of the [[Gospel | Gospels]], which have been misunderstood for nineteen centuries.
- The author, referring to themselves as a "free spirit", claims that they and others like them are the first to understand the true meaning of the Gospels, and that they possess a discipline of the spirit that allows them to see through the "holy lie" of [[Christianity]], which was created by mankind's egoism and denial of the original teachings.
- The author argues that the history of Christianity is a history of misunderstanding the original symbolism of the Gospels, and that the church has become an incarnation of hostility to honesty, loftiness of soul, and discipline of the spirit, with Christian values being antithetical to noble values.
- The author criticizes modern people who call themselves Christians while engaging in activities that are anti-Christian, such as being a soldier, judge, or patriot, and argues that true Christianity denies these worldly values and instead promotes selflessness and humility.
- The author expresses their contempt for modern humanity, feeling suffocated by their "foul breath" and disgusted by their indecent claim to be Christians, and argues that what was once a sickly barbarism has now become indecent in modern times, with the word "truth" no longer being able to be uttered by a priest without causing disgust.
- The concept of Christianity is a misunderstanding, as the true Christian way of life, as lived by [[Jesus | Jesus Christ]], has been lost over time, and what is referred to as Christianity today is actually the opposite of his teachings.

- According to the text, there are no true Christians, as those who claim to be Christian are actually ruled by their instincts and have not followed the example set by Jesus, who died on the cross without feeling resentment or seeking revenge.
- The death of Jesus was meant to be an example of his teachings, but his disciples misunderstood the message and instead sought revenge, which is the opposite of what Jesus taught, and this misunderstanding led to the corruption of the concept of the Saviour.
- The idea of the "kingdom of [[God]]" was also misunderstood, as it was seen as a future event with judgment and punishment, rather than a state of being that can be achieved in the present, and this misunderstanding was further complicated by the concept of sacrifice and guilt.
- The text also critiques the idea of sacrifice, particularly the notion that God would sacrifice his son for the forgiveness of sins, which is seen as a barbarous and pagan concept that goes against Jesus' teachings of unity between God and man.

Buddhism, Christianity, and the Corruption of the Gospels

- The author notes that [[Buddhism]], in contrast to [[Christianity]], promises nothing but actually fulfills its teachings, while Christianity promises everything but fulfills nothing, and that the true meaning and law of the [[Gospel | Gospels]] have been lost over time due to corruption and misunderstanding.
- The author references Vedanta and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], suggesting that their teachings are in line with the original message of [[Jesus]], which has been lost in the corruption of Christianity, and that the concept of "free will" and the "moral order of the world" are lies that have been perpetuated by theologians and priests who know they are speaking falsely.
- The author argues that the concept of personal immortality is a destructive idea that takes away the centre of gravity of life, leading to a lack of reason, natural instinct, and a sense of purpose, as people become more focused on the afterlife than on the present.
- The author criticizes Christianity for promoting a selfish and vain worldview, where every individual believes they are as good as every other and that the universe revolves around them, citing the ideas of [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] and Tolstoy as examples of this "me"-centred philosophy.
- The author contends that Christianity is a revolt against everything that is lofty and noble, and that it teaches a misunderstanding of the body and a superstition about the soul, making a virtue of insufficient nourishment and combating health as an enemy.
- The author expresses contempt for the idea of a [[God | god]] who intervenes in everyday life, seeing it as an absurd and stupid concept, and argues that the worth of a cause is not altered by the fact that someone has laid down their life for it, citing the example of martyrs who have damaged

the truth.

- The author believes that great intellects are sceptical, using the example of [[Zoroaster | Zarathustra]], and that men of fixed convictions are prisoners who do not see far enough, whereas a mind that aspires to great things and wills the means thereto is necessarily sceptical, able to see multiple convictions and perspectives.
- The author concludes that a healthy and contemptuous attitude towards life is necessary, one that despises a religion that teaches misunderstanding of the body and refuses to rid itself of superstition, and that true intellectual power and freedom manifest themselves as scepticism, allowing individuals to see beyond fixed convictions and determine what is fundamental in values and lack of values.

Freedom from Conviction, the Limits of Reason, and the "Holy Lie"

- The concept of freedom from conviction is associated with strength and an independent point of view, as stated in the quote "Freedom from any sort of conviction belongs to strength, and to an independent point of view."
- The idea of knowing the limits of reason is considered genuine philosophy, and this concept is highlighted in the quote "To know the limits of reason—that alone is genuine philosophy."
- The text criticizes priestly organizations and their use of concepts such as "the law," "the will of [[God]]," and "holy books" to maintain power, referring to these concepts as "the holy lie" that is common to various religious and philosophical systems, including those of Confucius, Mohammed, and the [[Christianity | Christian]] church.
- The superior caste, referred to as "the fewest," is described as having privileges such as happiness, beauty, and goodness, and it is stated that only the most intellectual individuals have the right to beauty and goodness, as expressed in the phrase "Pulchrum est paucorum hominum," meaning "goodness is a privilege."
- The text also discusses the concept of nihilism and its relationship to Christianity, with the author suggesting that the belief in immortality and the concept of "hell" can be used to devalue the world and master societies, and noting that Eugene Seraphim believed that Nietzsche misunderstood his own view of nihilism.
- The Christian church is criticized for its perceived depravity and its impact on values and truth, with the author stating that the church has turned every value into worthlessness and every truth into a lie, particularly in the context of naturalism.
- The text includes quotes from [[Thus Spoke Zarathustra]], which criticize the state and societal values, describing the state as a place where all are "poison-drinkers" and where the slow suicide of all is called "life," and praising poverty as a means of being less possessed by material goods.
- The author also highlights the importance of inventors and creators of new values, stating that the world revolves around them, albeit invisibly, and that people and glory revolve around actors and those who seek power and

recognition.

- The text concludes by emphasizing that values are human constructs, created to maintain oneself, and that human significance is assigned to things in order to give them meaning, as expressed in the quote "Values did man only assign to things in order to maintain himself - he created only the significance of things, a human significance."

The Lack of a Unified Goal for Humanity and the Importance of Individuality

- The text from 'Journal314_7-10' discusses the concept of humanity and its lack of a unified goal, with the author stating that if humanity itself is still lacking, then its goal is also still lacking, and this idea is reflected in the words of the author who says "if the goal of humanity be still lacking, is there not also still lacking- humanity itself".
- The author critiques the idea of following the herd and conforming to societal norms, instead suggesting that individuals should strive to think for themselves and not be swayed by the opinions of others, as expressed in the phrase "He who seeks may easily get lost himself" and the notion that "all isolation is wrong".
- The text also touches on the idea that humans are inherently illogical and unjust, and that this is a fundamental discord of existence, as stated in the phrase "We are primordially illogical and hence unjust beings and can recognise this fact".
- The author notes that most people endure life without protest because they are focused on their own personal experiences and do not consider the broader implications of existence, and that those who can sympathize with the suffering of others may doubt the value of life, as expressed in the idea that "the great lack of imagination from which he suffers is responsible for his inability to enter into the feelings of beings other than himself".
- The text raises questions about the nature of truth and morality, suggesting that traditional notions of right and wrong are no longer applicable, and that the only remaining motives are pleasure and pain, benefit and injury, which are also based on error and partiality, as stated in the phrase "Our knowledge can permit only pleasure and pain, benefit and injury, to subsist as motives".
- The author proposes a way of living that is free from the influences of societal expectations and morality, where individuals can live naturally and authentically, without praise or reproach, and suggests that in certain cases, suicide can be a rational and respectable decision, as expressed in the idea that "suicide in such a case is a quite natural and due proceeding that ought to command respect as a triumph of reason".

Nietzsche's Critique of Saintliness and the Ascetic Ideal

- The text discusses the human condition, highlighting the flaws in the way people perceive themselves and their place in the world, with a particular

emphasis on the ideas of [[Friedrich Nietzsche]], who argues that people's eagerness to survive and seek medical counsel without striving for their ideal life is less worthy of respect.

- Nietzsche also critiques the concept of saintliness, suggesting that the visions, fears, and delights of saints are symptoms of sickness that are misinterpreted due to deep-rooted religious and psychological delusions, and he even questions the nature of Socrates' "demon" as a possible malady of the ear.

- The text notes that individuals often compare themselves unfavorably to a hypothetical being, such as [[God]], which leads to discontentment and a sense of inadequacy, and it also asserts that people can only feel emotions for themselves, not for others, as they are inspired by the feelings that others evoke in them.

- Nietzsche further argues that the embrace of asceticism, humility, and sanctity is often a manifestation of vanity, where individuals master themselves through self-denial and then deify this aspect of themselves, and he criticizes the ethic of the sermon on the mount as belonging to this category.

- The text also touches on the pessimistic view of procreation as evil in itself, as seen in some religions, and it notes that [[Christianity | Christian]] pessimists had an interest in promoting an opposing belief in order to have an "ever living enemy" to conquer and appear sanctified.

- Additionally, the text references Nietzsche's work "Ecce Homo" and his character [[Zoroaster | Zarathustra]], who embodies the idea that a creator must first be a destroyer and break existing values, and Nietzsche himself claims to be the most terrible man to have existed, but also the most beneficent.

- Finally, the text concludes that the existence of good is based on falsehood, or the refusal to see reality as it truly is, and that considering distress as an objection to be eliminated is a form of nonsense that can be disastrous, as it ignores the complexity and unpredictability of life.

The Terrors of Reality, Zarathustra's Overman, and the Embrace of Suffering

- The passage from 'Journal314_7-10' discusses the concept of reality and the human perception of it, highlighting that the terrors of reality are more necessary than the pursuit of petty happiness, which is often based on a falsification of instincts, as noted by Nietzsche in his work, particularly through the character of Zarathustra.

- Zarathustra's views on humanity and morality are presented, where he expresses his horror of men due to their knowledge of the good, and suggests that his idea of the "overman" would be perceived as terrible by others, implying that true greatness can only be achieved by embracing the reality of the world, including its terrible and questionable aspects, which is a notion that resonates with the ideas of philosophers like Huxley, Augustine,

or Luther, and also echoes the thoughts of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].

- The author reflects on their own experiences and perspectives, including their danger of loathing mankind, and their ability to see both sides of various dichotomies, such as Theism and Naturalism, which is a theme that is also explored in the context of Zarathustra's views on the overman and the role of morality in human society.
- The passage also touches on the author's personal struggles with physiological weakness and suffering, which they believe have contributed to their intellectual clarity and dialectical abilities, allowing them to think through complex ideas, such as the relationship between health and illness, and the role of suffering in stimulating life, as they mention that they "became a master" of looking at concepts and values from different perspectives, including those of the sick and the healthy.
- The author describes their self-imposed solitude and discipline as a means of discovering what is most needful for them, and notes that while an intrinsically morbid nature cannot become healthy, an intrinsically sound nature can use illness as a stimulus to life, which is a idea that is also relevant to the broader discussion of Zarathustra's views on humanity and morality, and the importance of embracing reality in all its complexity.

Illness, Solitude, and the Rejection of Traditional Religion

- The author reflects on a period of illness and how it led to a newfound appreciation for life, allowing them to develop a philosophy centered around their "Will to Health and to Life", as they mention that during this time, they ceased to be a pessimist due to the instinct of self-recovery.
- The author describes their approach to criticism, stating that they only attack triumphant things and those that they can criticize without compromising others, and that they have not taken any step in public without compromising themselves, which is their criterion for a proper mode of action.
- The author emphasizes the importance of solitude and self-mastery, stating that their humanity consists of enduring to understand others, but also needing time for recovery and solitude to breathe "free, crisp, bracing air", and that they find joyfulness by flying to lofty heights and finding the spring of joyfulness.
- The author expresses their rejection of traditional religious notions, such as "[[God]]", "the immortality of the soul", and "salvation", stating that they were never interested in these ideas and find them to be "palpably clumsy solutions" that prohibit thinking, and that they are instinctively atheistic and too inquisitive to be satisfied with such solutions.
- The author criticizes the scholar who is unable to think without a book, stating that they exhaust their strength in reacting to existing ideas and are no longer capable of original thought, and that the scholar is a decadent who has lost the instinct of self-defence against the influence of books, as noted in the context of the author's own thoughts and the concept

of the Nihilistic experience.

The Decadence of Scholars, Zarathustra's Difficulty, and the Limits of Understanding

- The author reflects on how gifted individuals can be worn out by the age of thirty, and criticizes the habit of reading books early in the morning, calling it "positively vicious", as stated in the book "The Kingdom of God is Within You".
- The author shares an anecdote about Dr. Heinrich von Stein's struggle to understand the author's book "[[Zoroaster | Zarathustra]]", and notes that to truly understand the book, one must have lived the experiences described in it, which can raise a person to a higher level of understanding.
- The author believes that people can only gain insight from books and experiences that resonate with their own knowledge and experiences, and that they may not be able to hear or understand things that are outside of their range of experience.
- The author criticizes those who do not engage with the content of their books, including their so-called friends, who may congratulate them on their work but do not truly understand or appreciate it.

The Ascetic Ideal, Nothingness, and the Meaning of Suffering

- In "On the Genealogy of Morals", the author discusses the concept of nothingness and how it can be perceived as a positive state by those who are suffering, and how the ascetic priest exploits methods such as mechanical activity and self-forgetfulness to alleviate suffering.
- The author explains that the ascetic ideal is rooted in the idea that something is lacking in human life, and that people struggle to justify and explain themselves, leading to a sense of void and suffering.
- The author's writings are characterized by their originality and rarity of experience, which can make them difficult for others to understand, but also offer a unique perspective on the human condition.
- The author's use of phrases such as "transvalue all values" and "incuria sui" highlights their philosophical approach to understanding human nature and the role of values and morality in society.
- The text discusses the human condition, particularly the concept of suffering, and how it is not the suffering itself that is the problem, but rather the lack of meaning or purpose behind it, as noted in the context of the 'Journal314_7-10' document.
- According to the text, the ascetic ideal provides a meaning for suffering, giving it a purpose, and allowing individuals to will it, even seek it out, as long as they have a reason for it, highlighting the complex relationship between suffering and the human desire for meaning.
- The text also critiques the ascetic ideal, stating that it represents a will for Nothingness, a rejection of life, and a repudiation of the fundamental conditions of life, as it hates the human, animal, and material, and fears happiness, beauty, and reason, as discussed in relation to the

ideas presented in 'Beyond Good and Evil'.

- The concept of the Schopenhauerian theory is mentioned, which views music as the language of the will, speaking directly from the "abyss", and as an independent art form, abstracted from the phenomenal world, as referenced by Bach.

The Right to Happiness, the Separation of the Sick, and the Confession of Philosophy

- The text argues that it is a shame for the happy, fit, and strong to doubt their right to happiness, and that the healthy should separate themselves from the sick to prevent the spread of misery, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a distinction between those who are healthy and those who are not.

- The philosopher [[Friedrich Nietzsche]] is implied to be the author of the text, as it references his work 'Beyond Good and Evil', and discusses the idea that every great philosophy is a confession of its originator and an involuntary autobiography, with the moral purpose being the vital germ from which the philosophy grows, as seen in the context of the 'Journal314_7-10' document.

- The text concludes by suggesting that the strength of an individual's intellectual vision and insight creates a greater distance and space around them, allowing for a deeper understanding of the world, and that even the most profound intellectual pursuits may be nothing more than a game or exercise for the mind, as reflected in the ideas presented in the 'Journal314_7-10' document.

The Insignificance of God, the Decline of Religion, and the Superficiality of Man

- The concepts of "[[God]]" and "sin" may one day be viewed as insignificant, much like a child's plaything, and it is possible that new conceptions will replace them as humanity continues to evolve, with the author suggesting that humans are eternal children, always in need of new playthings and pains.

- In Germany, many people have moved away from religion, with some being "free-thinkers" and others having had their religious instincts dissolved through generations of laboriousness, leaving them feeling indifferent to religion and unsure of its purpose, as they are preoccupied with their daily lives, business affairs, and family obligations.

- The author notes that people are often superficial, which is a preservative instinct that helps them avoid the depths of human suffering, and that those who are passionate about "pure forms" may be trying to escape the darkness they have experienced, with artists and philosophers being among those who may be using their work to falsify the image of life as a form of revenge or coping mechanism.

- The author suggests that the fear of pessimism and the truth about human existence has driven people to cling to religious interpretations, and that

this fear has compelled whole centuries to seek comfort in a higher power, with the "homines religiosi" being among the highest rank of artists who seek to deify and ultrify life.

- The author criticizes the idea of "equality before God" and the type of person it has produced, describing them as a "dwarfed, almost ludicrous species" that is gregarious, sickly, and mediocre, which is in contrast to the ideal of a strong and individualistic person, as opposed to someone like [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- The author also notes that the vanity of others is only bothersome when it conflicts with our own vanity, and that insanity is rare in individuals but common in groups, parties, nations, and epochs, highlighting the importance of individuality and critical thinking.
- Additionally, the author quotes Cioran, stating that the thought of suicide can be a great consolation, helping people get through difficult times, and warns that fighting against monsters can lead to becoming a monster oneself, and that gazing into the abyss can have a profound and potentially devastating effect on one's psyche.

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Luther on Faith, Works, and Free Will

- The section from the document 'Journal314_11-19' discusses the ideas of [[Martin Luther]], a key figure in [[Christianity | Christian]] theology, who emphasizes the importance of faith in [[God]] and the devaluation of earthly works.
- According to Luther, the more Christian a man is, the more evils and sufferings he must endure, and the moment one begins to have faith, they learn that all things in them are blameworthy, sinful, and damnable, which is why rituals and ceremonies should not be prioritized over faith.
- Luther's work 'Bondage of the Will' diminishes the concept of free will, as anything related to free will is considered earthly, and God is the ground of all value, leading to a rejection of self for unity between the self and God.
- Luther stresses the importance of knowing whether the will plays a role in

salvation, and understanding the relationship between free will and God's grace, as this is the core of Christian matters, and not knowing this would make one uncertain and ignorant of God's role.

- Luther also emphasizes that God foreknows nothing by contingency, but rather foresees, purposes, and does all things according to His immutable, eternal, and infallible will, which throws the concept of free will into question, and those who assert free will must either deny or ignore this concept.

- The section also touches on the idea that one can call upon God and believe in His presence anywhere, not just in a church, as Luther mentions that even in prison or a difficult situation, one can still have faith and believe in God's presence.

- The author of the text is responding to criticism and offense taken by others regarding their stance on God's presence and the defense of their cause, which they have sustained with fortitude and firmness despite facing many dangers and hatred.

Defense of the Author's Stance on God's Presence

- The author emphasizes that they have not defended their cause for personal gain, such as money or vain-glory, but rather for the sake of [[Bible | God's word]], which they believe must be maintained with an incorrupt and invincible mind, even in the face of temporal tumult.

- The author criticizes the instructions of others, which would have them compromise on the word of [[God]] for the sake of the Popes, the heads, and the peace of the community, and instead argues that one should rather despise the whole world, as instructed by [[Jesus | Christ]], and trust in God's grace and promise to the humbled.

- The author highlights the importance of recognizing one's own powerlessness and dependence on God's will, counsel, and work for salvation, and notes that God's methods of saving and justifying individuals often involve paradoxical actions, such as killing and making alive, or bringing down to hell and exalting to Heaven.

- The author references the Scripture, specifically I Samuel 2:6, which states that "The Lord killeth and maketh alive, He bringeth down to the grave and raiseth up," and notes that this is a theme that is well-explored in their writings, which their readers will be familiar with.

- The author also references Epicurus, implying that their critics may be influenced by his philosophical ideas, which consider the Word of God and a future life to be mere fables, and argues that this perspective is in stark contrast to the instruction of Christ and the truth of the Gospel.

God's Nature, Free Will, and Human Blindness

- The concept of God's eternal mercy and loving-kindness is often concealed behind His eternal wrath and righteousness, which can be perceived as iniquity, making it challenging for individuals to comprehend His true nature and requiring a high degree of faith to believe in His mercy and

justice.

- The idea of "Free-will" is discussed, with the acknowledgment that without the grace of [[God]], human free will is utterly ineffective and can do nothing good, highlighting the limitations of human power and the necessity of divine intervention.
- The distinction is made between human free will in earthly matters, such as the use of goods and possessions, and the lack of free will in spiritual matters, such as salvation or damnation, where humans are subject to the will of God or [[Satan]].
- The human heart is described as being bound by the power of Satan, requiring the quickening of the Spirit of God to enable individuals to see or hear spiritual truths, emphasizing the misery and blindness of the human race.
- The example of the Jews not being won over by Christ's works and words is cited, illustrating the idea that humans, left to themselves, are unable to comprehend spiritual truths, and that even the most evident and undeniable signs can be ignored or misunderstood.
- The notion that humans are blind to divine things without the Spirit is reinforced, making it no wonder that many talented individuals have remained blind to spiritual truths throughout history, and that the whole human race, without the Spirit, is essentially the kingdom of the devil and a realm of darkness.
- The concept of free will is further critiqued, with the argument that even inanimate objects, like stones or logs, can be said to have a form of free will, but only in a limited and conditional sense, highlighting the complexities and nuances of the idea of free will.
- The nature of ungodly individuals is described, describing them as being wholly turned to self and their own interests, much like Satan, emphasizing the idea that humans are either servants of [[God]] or servants of Satan.

Worldly Desires vs. Spiritual Growth

- The section from the document 'Journal314_11-19' discusses the importance of prioritizing one's relationship with God over worldly desires, as stated by [[Thomas Merton]], emphasizing that seeking riches, glory, and power can lead to condemnation, and instead, one should focus on spiritual growth and union with God.
- The text highlights the idea that the things of the world, such as wealth, power, and wisdom, are temporary and can be a hindrance to one's spiritual journey, and that it is better to lose the world than to lose God, who is the creator of the world and can create innumerable worlds again.
- The author criticizes those who apply elegant similitudes and sentiments in a childish or perverted manner when discussing sacred topics, stating that the things God works are divine and exceed human capacity, and that the Word of God and the traditions of men are opposed to each other with implacable discord.
- Thomas Merton's perspective on the sacred attitude toward life is also

discussed, emphasizing that it involves penetrating into the darkness and nothingness that one may feel, and realizing that God's mercy has transformed this nothingness into a temple, and that His light is hidden in the darkness.

- The section also touches on the concept of spiritual direction and meditation, stating that a contemplative is one who takes [[God]] seriously, seeks to live in generous simplicity, and is famished for truth, and that meditation is a means to enter into intimate contact with truth and God, and to experience the deepest realities of life by living them.

- The author notes that meditation is not just a matter of thinking things out, but rather a way to satisfy the soul's need for spiritual growth, and that it is especially important in a materialistic society that has robbed man's nature of its spiritual energy and tone, and that discipline is necessary, but it does not imply the obligation to follow one identical and rigid system.

- The text concludes by emphasizing the importance of maintaining a clear vision of God and the way to God, even when one's mental vision may become unclear, and that the principle of seeking union with God should always be the guiding principle.

Mental Prayer and Union with God

- The members of the Mystical [[Body of Christ]] have the divine life of [[Jesus | Christ]] within them and are mystically identified with Him, and the goal of mental prayer is to consciously realize this union, as noted by [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].

- According to the text, not everyone has the particular attraction to mental prayer, but it is essential for all to realize that the function of mental prayer is to bring them into conscious communion with [[God]], who is the source of their natural and supernatural life.

- In order to meditate, one must withdraw their mind from distractions and recollect their senses, which requires preserving moderate recollection throughout the day by living in an atmosphere of faith and with occasional moments of prayer and attention to God.

- The world today presents a challenge to those who want to acquire habits of recollection, with its numerous appeals to emotion and sense appetite, and the price of true recollection is a firm resolve to take no wilful interest in anything that is not useful or necessary to one's interior life.

- The author emphasizes the need to develop a strong resistance to the futile appeals of modern society and to mortify one's desires, not through extraordinary ascetic practices, but through self-denial required to live by the standards of reason and the Gospels.

- The author also notes that God is infinitely above us, although He is within us and is the principle of our being, and that we must enter into meditation with a realization of our spiritual poverty and our complete lack of the things we seek.

- The Fathers of the Church saw humanity as being like the Prodigal,

starving in a distant land, far from God and Paradise, due to an inordinate preoccupation with perishing things and a constant inclination to self-gratification and sin.

- The saints are more keenly aware of the gulf between themselves and [[God]] than those who live in sin, and habitual self-complacency is often a sign of spiritual stagnation, leading to meditations that are comfortable but inconclusive and lacking in real indigence or urgent need for God.

Prayer, Meditation, and the Contemplative Life

- The text from 'Journal314_11-19' discusses the importance of prayer and meditation in one's life, highlighting that trials and temptations can be a blessing as they force individuals to pray and seek God.

- It is emphasized that there is no one specific way or place to meditate, and that silence, tranquillity, recollection, and peace are the most important factors, as noted by the author, who also mentions the idea of meditating while walking in a garden.

- The text criticizes those who condemn all desire for leisure as a sin, stating that business is not the supreme virtue and that sanctity is not measured by the amount of work accomplished, but rather by the purity of one's love for God, as St. Therese of Lisieux reminds us that "God has no need of our works: He has need of our love".

- The ideal of the contemplative life is not the exclusion of all work, but rather finding a balance between work and leisure, and working with a spirit of detachment and recollection, so that even work can be a form of prayer.

- The concept of compunction is introduced, which is an awareness of one's indigence and need for [[God]], implying faith, sorrow, humility, and hope in God's mercy, and is essential for a living and personal relationship with God in prayer.

- The text also discusses the difference between meditation and contemplation, with meditation making use of definite theological and philosophical ideas of God, and contemplation being a concentration of the interior life on union with God, often involving a "dark" and confused knowledge of Him.

- Ultimately, the function of meditation is to enable individuals to realize and actualize the fundamental truths of their faith in their own experience, and can involve reflecting on one's own life, experiences, duties, and difficulties, rather than just ignoring them during prayer.

- The importance of meditation on one's vocation and response to God's will is emphasized, as it allows individuals to understand their charity towards others, fidelity to grace, and the presence of [[Jesus | Christ]] in their lives, which is essential for making spiritual decisions.

- To make meaningful decisions, it is necessary to create a religious perspective that acknowledges the inevitability of death and judgment, as this realization helps individuals to prioritize their actions and make choices that have lasting value, rather than being short-sighted opportunists.

Meister Eckhart on Detachment and Sanctification

- The use of parables and imaginative figures, as seen in [[Bible | the Bible]] and the teachings of ancient philosophers, is an effective way to convey deep truths and make them accessible to people of all backgrounds, as noted by [[Meister Eckhart]] and referenced by Tillich.
- Meister Eckhart's teachings emphasize the importance of recognizing the nothingness of all creatures and the need to empty oneself of worldly attachments in order to be filled with [[God]], as he states that "to be full of things is to be empty of God" and that one must be "dead to himself and all created things" to abide in God's love.
- According to Meister Eckhart, deadly sin is a breach of nature that leads to a range of negative consequences, including a disquiet of the heart, a weakening of power, and a blindness of the sense, and can only be overcome by renouncing oneself and the world, and seeking sanctification through the power of grace.
- Sanctification is described as a state of being that allows individuals to remain immovable and unaffected by the impact of love, hate, joy, sorrow, and other earthly experiences, and is characterized by a deep sense of inner peace and detachment from worldly desires, which is made possible by the action of grace that draws men away from the transitory and purifies them from the earthly.
- The ultimate goal of sanctification is to attain a likeness to God, who remains in immovable sanctity, unaffected by the creation of the world and all its creatures, and to achieve this state, one must be empty of all creaturely love and full of God, as Meister Eckhart teaches that "to be empty of all creature's love is to be full of God, and to be full of creature-love is to be empty of God".
- The sanctity of God is not affected by the good works and prayers of men, and He is not more favourably inclined towards them as a result of these actions, as stated in the text from 'Journal314_11-19'.

The Inner and Outer Man, Sanctification, and Divine Will

- Every person has an outer and inner man, and those who love God use their outer senses only as necessary, while concentrating their inner forces on the inner man, as they strive to love [[God | the Lord]] with all their heart, according to the teachings of spiritual men.
- The object of God's immovable sanctity is nothing, and He works in all hearts differently, depending on their preparation and susceptibility, much like the heat of an oven affects different types of bread in varying ways.
- For a heart to be ready for God's highest will, it must be vacant of all other things, and if God is to write on one's heart, everything else must be removed, just as a white tablet must be wiped clean before writing on it, as illustrated in the text.
- A truly sanctified heart prays for nothing, as it desires nothing and contains nothing it wishes to be freed from, except for the desire to be

like God, as noted by St Dionysius, who comments on the text "Know ye not that all run, but one receiveth the prize?".

- The strong attraction of the soul to the Divine reduces everything to nothingness, and when this process reaches its culminating point, knowledge becomes ignorance, desire becomes indifference, and light becomes darkness, as stated by St [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]].
- No bodily or fleshly delight can occur without spiritual loss, as the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and the quickest means to bring us to perfection is suffering, which is a key aspect of the spiritual journey, as noted in the text.
- Ultimately, those who share in Christ's bitterest pangs and suffer with Him will enjoy everlasting blessedness, and nothing is sharper than suffering, yet nothing is sweeter than to have suffered, as emphasized in the text from 'Journal314_11-19'.

Humility, Suffering, and the Spiritual Journey

- The foundation for achieving perfection is humility, as stated, and it is through humility that the Spirit can lift individuals to great heights, with love and suffering being closely intertwined, and this concept is echoed in the idea that the aim of man is not outward holiness by works, but life in [[God]], which expresses itself in works of love.
- The moral task of man is a process of spiritualization, where individuals must grow liker and nearer to God through diligence in spiritual business, and this aim is beyond the temporal, residing in the serene region of the everlasting Present, as emphasized by the notion that the merely temporal life is a negation of real being because it depends on itself and not on the deepest foundation of life.
- The love of the Cross is essential, as it must swallow up personal grief, and sorrow is considered the root of all virtue, with the right fear being the fear of losing God, and God brings forth His Son in individuals, whether they are aware of it or not, as noted by [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]].
- The end of all creation is concealed in the darkness of the everlasting Godhead, and God Himself remains unknown, with the light of the everlasting Father shining in darkness, and the darkness comprehending it not, and three things hinder individuals from hearing the everlasting Word: fleshliness, distraction, and the illusion of time.
- To hear the everlasting Word, individuals must renounce themselves, and God is equally near in all creatures, with the best way to serve God being with both fear and love, and to know God, individuals must know Him everywhere and outside time and place, since God is neither in this or that, but One and above them.

Hearing the Everlasting Word and Plato's Allegory of the Cave

- The soul must look at nothing in time to recognize [[God]], and God is always ready, but individuals are often unready, and this idea is reflected

in [[Allegory of the cave | the Allegory of the Cave]] by [[Plato]] and [[Socrates]], which explores the concept of individuals being disabused of their error and achieving a deeper understanding of reality.

- The text describes a scenario where a prisoner is liberated from a state of darkness and suddenly forced to confront the light, which causes him sharp pains and distress, and he is unable to see the realities that he had previously seen as shadows.

- The prisoner is then instructed to name the objects that are being shown to him, but he becomes perplexed and fancies that the shadows he formerly saw are truer than the objects that are now being revealed to him.

- If the prisoner were to compete with the other prisoners who had never moved out of the den in measuring the shadows, he would be at a disadvantage due to his weak sight, and men would ridicule him, saying that it was better not to attempt to ascend to the light.

- The allegory is then interpreted by the speaker, who says that the prison-house represents the world of sight, the light of the fire represents the sun, and the journey upwards represents the ascent of the soul into the intellectual world, according to the speaker's belief, which he expresses to [[Glaucou]].

- The speaker acknowledges that his interpretation may be correct or incorrect, and only God knows, but he has expressed his belief at Glaucou's desire, and now appends this allegory to the previous argument.

- The idea of good is considered to be the last concept to appear in the world of knowledge, and it can only be seen with effort, but once seen, it is inferred to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, and the source of reason and truth in the intellectual, as discussed in the context of "Simple Salvation, participation is needed".

- Those who attain a deep understanding of this concept, often referred to as a "beatific vision", are unwilling to descend to human affairs because their souls are drawn to the upper world, which is a natural desire if the allegory is to be trusted.

- The power of the idea of good is the foundation for rational action in both public and private life, and it is the responsibility of individuals to fix their eyes on this power in order to act rationally.

- When individuals transition from divine contemplations to the imperfect world of human affairs, they may struggle to adapt and behave in a ridiculous manner, much like someone who is compelled to fight in courts of law or other places about the images or shadows of justice without having seen absolute justice.

- The process of transitioning from a state of enlightenment to one of darkness, or vice versa, can cause bewilderment and weakness of vision, and it is important to consider the cause of this bewilderment before laughing or judging others, as noted by the concept that "anyone who has common sense will remember that the bewilderments of the eyes are of two kinds, and arise from two causes".

- The capacity for learning and understanding exists within the soul

already, as argued in the text, which also references notable figures such as Luther, Tolstoy, and Jesus' concept of the "holy spirit".

- If individuals were to be freed from the impediments of sensual pleasures and worldly desires from a young age, they would be able to see the truth as clearly as they see the things that they are currently focused on, and this is supported by the idea that "the very same faculty in them would have seen the truth as keenly as they see what their eyes are turned to now".
- Ultimately, the only life that looks down upon the life of political ambition is that of true philosophy, which is a key takeaway from the discussion.

Socrates' Search for Wisdom and the True Philosopher

- The speaker, [[Socrates]], recounts his experiences of conversing with various individuals in Athens, including those who were thought to be wise, in order to understand the nature of true philosophy and wisdom.
- Socrates explains that he went to many people, including politicians, poets, and artisans, and found that those who were most renowned for their wisdom were often the most foolish, while others who were less esteemed were actually wiser and better.
- He notes that poets and artisans, although skilled in their crafts, often claimed to have knowledge of higher matters, but in reality, they did not understand the meaning of the things they said, and this lack of self-awareness overshadowed their wisdom.
- Socrates' inquisition and questioning of others led to him having many enemies, who accused him of being a troublemaker and a philosopher who teaches false ideas, such as having no gods and making the worse appear the better cause.
- The accusations against Socrates are largely based on misconceptions and a lack of understanding of his true intentions, which is to show that human wisdom is worth little or nothing, and that only [[God]] is truly wise.
- Socrates is aware that his actions and words may lead to an untimely end, but he is driven by a sense of necessity and a desire to follow the word of God, which he believes is more important than avoiding enmity or danger.
- Throughout his conversations and experiences, [[Socrates]] comes to realize that he has a slight advantage over others in that he is aware of his own ignorance, and he does not claim to have knowledge that he does not possess, whereas others often think they know more than they actually do.
- Ultimately, Socrates' goal is to understand the truth and to live a life of true philosophy, even if it means facing opposition and criticism from others, and he is willing to accept the consequences of his actions in order to follow his convictions.
- The speaker argues that a person who is good for anything should not calculate the chance of living or dying, but rather consider whether their actions are right or wrong, and that the fear of death is a pretence of wisdom, not real wisdom.
- The speaker believes that their mission as a philosopher is to search into

themselves and others, and that deserting this post through fear of death would be strange and unjustified, as it would mean disobeying the oracle and fancying oneself wise when one is not.

- The speaker criticizes those who prioritize accumulating wealth, honor, and reputation over wisdom, truth, and the improvement of the soul, and claims that they reproach those who undervalue the greater and overvalue the less.

- The speaker's teaching is that virtue is not given by money, but rather that virtue comes first and is the source of all other goods, and that they persuade people to care about the improvement of their souls above all else.

- The speaker reflects on the idea that death may be a good, either as a state of nothingness and unconsciousness or as a migration of the soul to another world, and suggests that conversing with those in the afterlife would be a great delight.

- The speaker asks the judges to be of good cheer about death and to know that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death, and requests that when their sons are grown up, they should be punished if they prioritize riches or anything else over virtue.

- The speaker's overall message is that one should prioritize virtue, wisdom, and the improvement of the soul above all else, and that death should not be feared, as it may be a transition to a better state, and that the unexamined life is not worth living.

- The speaker's philosophy is centered around the idea that one should strive to be a good person, and that this is the greatest good of man, and that one should not be afraid to question and examine oneself and others in pursuit of wisdom and virtue.

Phaedo on the Pursuit of Knowledge and the Soul's Liberation

- The philosopher Phaedo discusses the concept that a true philosopher has reason to be of good cheer when facing death, as they have spent their life pursuing death and dying in a metaphorical sense, by constantly seeking to understand and attain the greatest good in the afterlife.

- According to Phaedo, the true votary of philosophy is likely to be misunderstood by other men, who do not perceive that the philosopher is always pursuing death and dying, and that the philosopher should not care about the pleasures of eating, drinking, or other bodily indulgences, but rather despise anything that exceeds nature's needs.

- The philosopher's primary concern is with the soul, not the body, and they strive to separate the soul from the body's influences, which are seen as distracting elements that hinder the acquisition of truth and knowledge, as noted in a conversation between Phaedo and Simmias.

- Phaedo argues that the purest knowledge can only be attained by using the mind alone, without the influence of sight or other senses, and that the body and its lusts are the source of wars, fightings, and factions, which distract from the pursuit of philosophy.

- The repetition of the question "Whence come wars, and fightings, and

factions?" emphasizes the idea that these conflicts arise from the body and its desires, and that the love of money and the service of the body are the root causes of these impediments to philosophical inquiry.

- Ultimately, Phaedo concludes that pure knowledge can only be attained when the soul is separated from the body, and that this can only be achieved after death, at which point the soul will exist in itself alone and be able to behold things in themselves, allowing the attainment of the wisdom that philosophers desire.

- The pursuit of knowledge is most effectively achieved when one has minimal interaction with the body and its desires, and instead maintains a state of purity, as stated in the given text, which is a reflection of the ideas presented in the document 'Journal314_11-19'.

- According to the text, a person who fears death is likely not a lover of wisdom, but rather a lover of the body, and possibly also a lover of money or power, as they are reluctant to let go of the physical world.

- The founders of the mysteries are referenced as having a deeper meaning when they suggested that those who pass into the afterlife without purification will suffer, while those who arrive purified will dwell with the gods.

- The concept of absolute equality is discussed, with the idea that our understanding of equality is derived from a prior knowledge of its absolute form, which is a notion also explored by philosophers such as Descartes and Aquinas in their works, including Aquinas' 'fourth way'.

- A soul that is polluted by its association with the body and its desires will not be able to depart in a pure state, but will instead be held back by its corporeal nature, which is heavy and earthy, and will be depressed and dragged down into the visible world.

- Only those who have studied philosophy and are entirely pure at the time of their departure are allowed to enter the company of the gods, as they are the true lovers of knowledge.

- The true votaries of philosophy are characterized as abstaining from fleshly lusts and holding out against them, and they recognize that the soul was previously trapped and ignorant, but was freed by the pursuit of philosophy, which allowed it to view real existence in and through itself, rather than through the limitations of the physical body.

- The original state of the soul is one of confinement, caused by its own doing, and philosophy gently comforts and seeks to release it by pointing out the deceptiveness of the senses and encouraging the soul to trust in its own pure apprehension of pure existence.

- The soul of the true philosopher abstains from pleasures and desires, as well as pains and fears, in order to achieve deliverance, and this is because intense feelings of pleasure or pain can nail the soul to the body, making it believe in the truth of bodily affirmations and leading to a loss of purity.

- The philosopher [[Phaedrus (dialogue) | Phaedrus]] notes that he is still unable to know himself, as the Delphic inscription orders, and therefore

does not concern himself with other things, instead looking into his own self and accepting what is generally believed.

- Those who have achieved holiness of life and have purified themselves with philosophy are released from the earthly prison and go to their pure home, where they dwell in a purer earth and live without the body in fairer mansions.
- The pursuit of knowledge and the adornment of the soul with virtues such as temperance, justice, courage, nobility, and truth are considered a glorious venture, and individuals who have sought after these pleasures should be of good cheer about their soul and its journey to the world below.

Beauty, Truth, and the Human Experience

- The philosopher who stands outside human concerns and draws close to the divine may be thought to be mad by ordinary people, but is actually possessed by [[God | god]] and is like a bird fluttering and looking upward, careless of the world below.
- Few people retain an adequate remembrance of the other world, and when they behold an image of it, they are rapt in amazement, but are ignorant of what this rapture means because they do not clearly perceive, and everything can be beautiful only insofar as it partakes of absolute beauty.
- The provided text appears to be a collection of quotes and passages, likely from the works of [[Plato]], with added commentary and reflections from the author of the document 'Journal314_11-19', highlighting the importance of beauty, truth, and the human experience.
- The text describes the human perception of beauty and justice, noting that they are often seen imperfectly, and that only a few individuals can behold the true reality of these concepts, with the author drawing parallels between psychedelic experiences and philosophical introspection.
- The passage also explores the concept of love and the soul's response to beauty, describing the intense emotions and desires that arise when one encounters something beautiful, and how this experience can lead to a deeper understanding of oneself and the world.
- The author reflects on the importance of humility and modesty, citing Plato's mention of pride and the need for humility, and also touches on the value of discourse and the pursuit of knowledge, emphasizing that true understanding and wisdom can only be achieved through genuine effort and dedication.
- The text also critiques the written word and the concept of knowledge, suggesting that reliance on written characters can lead to forgetfulness and a lack of true understanding, with the author referencing Socrates' humility and the idea that true wisdom comes from within, and drawing connections to the ideas of other philosophers, such as [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]].
- The final passage mentions an ancient tradition from the temple of Dodona, where oaks were believed to have given prophetic utterances, adding a sense of historical and cultural context to the discussion, and highlighting the

author's interest in exploring the intersections of philosophy, culture, and human experience.

Truth, Morality, and the Human Perception of Reality

- The text from 'Journal314_11-19' discusses the concept of truth, morality, and the human perception of reality, highlighting that people often prioritize the speaker and their background over the actual truth being spoken.
- It critiques those who propose laws and write about justice and morality without truly understanding the nature of these concepts, considering such actions to be disgraceful, regardless of the applause they may receive from others.
- The text also touches on the idea that written words, whether in poetry or prose, hold little value if they are not meant to be critically evaluated or instructive, and that true principles of justice and goodness are best taught and communicated orally.
- The importance of inner beauty and the alignment of one's outward and inward self is emphasized, referencing the concept of the divided self discussed by philosophers like Tolstoy, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]].
- The text quotes [[Bertrand Russell]], who describes the human condition as one of struggle and worship in a seemingly meaningless world, where people seek to find purpose and reverence something, even if it is not worthy.
- Russell's perspective is further explored, discussing how morality evolves and the demand for an ideal world begins to be felt, leading some to reject the idea of worshiping power and instead adopting a more religious stance, believing in a harmonious relationship between the world of fact and the world of ideals.
- The text concludes by emphasizing the importance of preserving respect for truth, beauty, and the ideal of perfection, even if these are not realized in the material world, and encouraging individuals to worship only the [[God]] created by their own love of the good, as expressed by Bertrand Russell.
- Additionally, the text mentions William Lane Craig and his work on the absurdity of life without God, providing a contrast to Russell's philosophical views.
- Overall, the text presents a philosophical discussion on the human search for meaning, morality, and truth, referencing various thinkers and ideas to explore these complex concepts.

Freedom Through Thought and Aspiration

- The text from 'Journal314_11-19' discusses the concept of freedom and how it can be achieved through the power of thought and aspiration, allowing individuals to rise above the limitations and challenges of the physical world and the forces of fate that govern it.
- According to the text, true freedom comes only to those who no longer seek

personal goods that are subject to the mutations of time, and instead learn to live with a vision of the good that guides their actions in the world of fact.

- The journey to this freedom is not an easy one, as it requires individuals to traverse a cavern of darkness, where they must confront and overcome their own desires and hopes, and ultimately undergo a process of self-renunciation, symbolized by the gate of despair, in order to emerge into the daylight of wisdom.
- The text also highlights the importance of contemplating fate and the forces of death, illness, poverty, and duty, which can help individuals to develop a sense of awe and reverence for the mystery of existence, and to transcend their petty desires and struggles.
- Through this contemplation, individuals can achieve a state of emancipation, where they are no longer bound by their desires and fears, and can instead burn with passion for eternal things, achieving a state of liberation that is characterized as the free man's worship.
- Ultimately, the text presents a bleak view of the human condition, where human life is brief and powerless, and subject to the relentless forces of fate and the universe, but suggests that it is precisely in the face of this reality that individuals must find a way to cultivate their ideals and find meaning in a seemingly purposeless world.

The Absurdity of Human Existence and the Search for Meaning

- The concept of human existence is rooted in the idea that Man is the product of causes that had no prevision of the end they were achieving, and that his origin, growth, hopes, and fears are the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms, leading to the inevitable extinction of all human achievements in the vast death of the solar system.
- The pursuit of logic by great philosophers who were mystics, such as those discussed in the context of [[Mysticism]] and Logic, has been driven by a desire to understand the world, but often with a focus on convicting it of unreality in favor of a super-sensible "real" world, as seen in the works of philosophers like [[Plato]].
- The mystic emotion has led many philosophers to present their logical doctrines with a certain dryness, taking for granted the supposed insight of the mystic emotion, and believing their conclusions to be independent of the sudden illumination from which they sprang, as noted in the discussion of Symbolism.
- The concept of good and evil is subjective, and what is good or evil is merely a matter of the kind of feeling one has towards something, making it necessary to have a distinction of good and evil in active life, but this distinction belongs to the world of illusion, as mysticism regards it, and is essentially concerned with time.
- A philosophy that does not seek to impose its own conceptions of good and evil on the world is more likely to achieve truth and is the outcome of a higher ethical standpoint, as it involves an element of submission and a

realization of the limits of human power, which is somewhat lacking in the modern world, as discussed in the context of religion and the views of philosophers like Plato.

- The submission inculcated by religion in action is essentially the same in spirit as that which science teaches in thought, and the ethical neutrality by which scientific victories have been achieved is the outcome of that submission, highlighting the importance of renunciation and the limits of human power in achieving a deeper understanding of the world.

- The concept of a higher reality and knowledge is discussed, referencing the idea that the greatest philosophers have sought to harmonize science and mysticism, as noted in the context of [[Socrates]] and Parmenides, with the latter advising not to despise even the meanest things, showcasing a genuine scientific temper that is more commonly associated with the temperament of a saint.

- The nature of reality is described as uncreated, indestructible, unchanging, and indivisible, with the idea that true belief has cast away coming into being and passing away, highlighting the negative side of the mystic's initiation, which involves doubting common knowledge to make way for higher wisdom.

- The elimination of ethical considerations from philosophy is argued to be both scientifically necessary and an ethical advance, as a scientific philosophy cannot demonstrate that the world has desirable ethical characteristics, and a truly scientific philosophy will be more humble and accepting of the world without imposing human demands.

- The philosopher [[Albert Camus]] is quoted, discussing the concept of the absurd, where a person who becomes conscious of the absurd is forever bound to it, and how this consciousness can arise from the weariness and monotony of daily life, leading to a definitive awakening and potentially consequences such as suicide or recovery.

- Camus also notes that recognizing one's place in time and acknowledging the inevitability of mortality can evoke a sense of horror and revolt, highlighting the absurdity of human existence, and how people can secretly harbor inhuman tendencies, which can become apparent in moments of lucidity, making their actions and surroundings seem meaningless.

- The concept of absurdity is explored in relation to human existence, where individuals must confront the fact that they cannot fully understand the world around them, and this realization can lead to a sense of despair, as noted in the passage "you wonder why he is alive" in the context of a man's incomprehensible actions.

- The idea of reconstructing a sense of peace and familiarity is deemed impossible, as stated in the phrase "we must despair of ever reconstructing the familiar, calm surface which would give us peace of heart," and instead, individuals must adapt to the absurdity of life and find a way to live with it, which is referred to as "decency" in the pursuit of a science.

- The absurd can be seen as a transcendent force that explains the world, but it is not something that can be logically understood, and instead, it

requires a "leap" of faith, as described in the phrase "that existence which, suddenly and through a blind act of human confidence, explains everything."

- The philosopher [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] is referenced, who believed that antinomy and paradox are criteria of the religious, and that despair is not a fact, but a state of sin that alienates individuals from [[God]], as stated in the passage "despair is not a fact but a state: the very state of sin."

- The concept of the "absurd man" is introduced, who seeks truth and accepts the absurdity of life, even if it means embracing despair, as Kierkegaard warns, "if man had no eternal consciousness, if, at the bottom of everything, there were merely a wild, seething force producing everything, both large and trifling, in the storm of dark passions, if the bottomless void that nothing can fill underlay all things, what would life be but despair."

- The absurd man is willing to accept the universe as it is, without hope or consolation, and finds strength in this acceptance, as described in the phrase "he can then decide to accept such a universe and draw from it his strength, his refusal to hope, and the unyielding evidence of a life without consolation."

- The idea of suicide is also explored, as a form of acceptance of the absurd, and the concept of the "workman" is introduced, who is trapped in a life of repetitive tasks, and whose fate is absurd, but only becomes tragic when they become conscious of it, as stated in the passage "the workman of today works everyday in his life at the same tasks, and his fate is no less absurd."

- The philosophers Chestov and [[Franz Kafka | Kafka]] are also referenced, who believed that acceptance of the absurd is contemporaneous with the absurd itself, and that this acceptance can lead to a sense of hope and supernatural reality, as described in the phrase "it is through humility that hope enters in."

- Ultimately, the absurd man must find a way to live with the absurdity of life, and to find meaning and purpose in a seemingly meaningless world, which is a central theme in the works of philosophers like Kierkegaard, Chestov, and Kafka, as noted in the passage "like those of Kafka, Kierkegaard, or Chestov...They embrace the God that consumes them."

Hope, Despair, and the Absurd Man

- The text discusses the idea that the course of life can lead to a higher power, specifically [[God]], and that this prospect offers a sense of hope and outcome beyond the human condition.

- Existential thought is noted to be rooted in a profound sense of hope, contrary to popular opinion, which allows individuals to transcend the limitations of their human existence.

- The work of author [[Franz Kafka | Kafka]] is cited as an example of universal and emotionally moving literature, as it portrays a character who,

despite fleeing humanity and experiencing contradictions and despairs, finds reasons to believe and hope, with his work being described as having a religious inspiration.

- Emile Cioran's work "[[On the Heights of Despair]]" explores the idea that individuals should surrender to their inner fluidity and turmoil, rather than trying to objectify and express it, in order to experience a richer intensity of spiritual growth and inner development.

- Cioran suggests that attempting to organize and express one's inner experiences can be a rebellious and chaotic process, and that it would be more creative to simply immerse oneself in the inner struggle, allowing for a more authentic and intense experience of spiritual growth, as also noted by Molinos.

- He warns that repressing experiences that require objectification can be dangerous, as it can lead to an overwhelming power that cannot be restrained, and that salvation lies in confessing and expressing these experiences, even if it means that part of one's real self dies in the process.

- Cioran believes that the deepest subjective experiences are also the most universal, as they allow individuals to reach the original source of life, and that true interiorization leads to a universality that is inaccessible to those who remain on the periphery.

- He argues that the vulgar interpretation of universality is flawed, as it sees universality as a quantitative expansion rather than a qualitatively rich containment, and that lyricism is a peripheral and inferior phenomenon, whereas in reality, it shows remarkable freshness and depth, as seen in the ideas of Religious Symbolism by Tillich.

- Cioran notes that people often become lyrical in times of crisis, such as when they are in love or experiencing suffering, as these experiences actualize their personal resources and allow for a deeper expression of their inner infinity, and that there is no authentic lyricism without a grain of interior madness.

- He concludes that the lyrical state is a state beyond forms and systems, and that it is characterized by an inner drunkenness and a sense of infinite complexity, and ultimately, Cioran expresses a desire to retreat from the world and its complications, and to immerse oneself in the inner self, where one can experience a sense of actuality and spiritual content.

Loneliness, Death, and the Meaning of Life

- The text from 'Journal314_11-19' discusses the human existence, loneliness, and the meaning of life, suggesting that renouncing culture and ambitions would result in losing everything and gaining nothing, as there is nothing to be gained from this world.

- The author expresses that people are closed off to one another, and even if they were totally open, they would see the depths of their souls and the destiny that awaits them, highlighting the loneliness that pervades human existence.

- The willingness to live and die in society is seen as a mark of great deficiency, and the author prefers the idea of dying alone and abandoned, without the melodramatic posturing that often accompanies death, unlike those who ask to be surrounded by friends due to fear and an inability to face death alone.
- The author criticizes those who adopt a pose on their deathbed to impress others, stating that tears do not burn except in solitude, and that those who want to be surrounded by friends when they die lack infinite heroism and want to forget death at the moment of death.
- The text also touches on the idea that everything is inaccessible to humans, and that the deepest and most organic death is death in solitude, where one is severed from life, love, smiles, friends, and even from death itself, leaving only the nothingness of the world and one's own nothingness.
- The author references the idea that some experiences are impossible to survive, and that once one has reached the limits of life, everyday gestures and usual aspirations lose their meaning, and that the most terrifying intensification bursts into nothingness, throwing one into an abyss of emptiness.
- The text mentions that mystics often feel that they cannot live after their great ecstasies, and that those who sense life, loneliness, despair, and death beyond normal limits cannot expect anything from this world, highlighting the passion for the absurd as the only thing that can throw a demonic light on chaos when all other reasons for living have been exhausted.
- The author questions whether philosophers like Tillich would agree with these ideas, and mentions the need for [[Johann Sebastian Bach | Bach]], referencing the composer's music as a potential solace in times of despair, and also references Heisman, although the context of this reference is unclear.

Embracing the Absurd and Finding Meaning in the Useless

- The text discusses the concept of embracing the absurd and finding meaning in life through a connection with the useless and the illusion of life, which is reminiscent of Tillich's concrete religious symbols, and this idea is explored through various quotes and reflections.
- The author expresses a sense of being overwhelmed by the experiences and emotions that life offers, feeling like they are dying from solitude, love, despair, and hatred, and that each experience causes them to expand like a balloon blown up beyond its capacity, ultimately leading to a terrifying intensification that bursts into nothingness.
- The passion for the absurd is said to grow in individuals who have exhausted everything and are still capable of undergoing transfigurations, and for those who have lost everything, the only thing left is the passion for the absurd, which is what drives them to keep living, as they find solace in the fact that the mountains do not laugh and the worms do not sing.

- The author questions what could still move a person who has lost everything, suggesting that self-sacrifice, the public good, and the cult of the beautiful are not sufficient, and instead, they admire those who have done away with these things, even if only for a short time, because they have lived in an absolute manner and have the right to speak about life.
- The text also touches on the idea that only those who are sick or struggling are truly delighted by life and praise it, perhaps as a way to cope with their circumstances, and that true solitude is the feeling of being absolutely isolated between the earth and the sky, which can lead to a fearfully lucid intuition about the human condition and the infinite nothingness of the world.
- The author reflects on the importance of solitary walks and meditation, which can be both fertile and dangerous for the inner life, as they allow individuals to confront their own isolation and the drama of human existence, and it is through these solitary moments that one can gain a deeper understanding of the human condition, as referenced by the likes of Tillich and his concepts of concrete religious symbols.

Solitary Walks, Interiorization, and the Agony Method

- The text discusses the concept of interiorization and spirituality, suggesting that solitary walks, especially in the evening, can lead to intense revelations about the world and oneself, as one detaches from life and confronts the "wound of life".
- The author quotes various phrases, including "I am: therefore the world is meaningless," and notes that life is a privilege of mediocre people, while those who are not mediocre are consumed by inner turmoil and live at temperatures that are barely sustainable.
- The author proposes the "agony method" as a means of achieving spiritual purification, involving the infliction of intense pain and suffering, such as through whip, fire, or injections, in order to induce a vision of death and bring about a radical transformation of life.
- The author references the idea of applying this method to every generation, citing the potential for cosmic transfiguration, and notes that this concept is similar to the idea of taking psychedelics, as suggested by McKenna.
- The text also explores the concept of agony, describing it as a precise and painful sensation, and notes that true agony occurs when one passes into nothingness through death, and that every agony bears a conclusive stamp, charting the progress of death in life.
- The author references the ideas of [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] and Tillich, citing the concept of the "courage to be" and the feeling of wanting to die while being sorry for wanting to die, and notes that the complexity of the grotesque resides in its capacity to indicate an inner infinity and produce a paroxysm of the highest tension.
- The text concludes by discussing the fear of death and the fear of madness, suggesting that the latter is more complex and anxiety-provoking,

as it involves a semi-presence and a loss of life while still living, and notes that the author would prefer a shower of warm light to fall from them, transfiguring the world, rather than experiencing ecstasy or madness.

Transcendence, Light, and the Immanence of Death

- The text describes a state of being where the world is filled with light and delight, and obstacles, matter, and limits no longer exist, allowing one to transcend the mundane and experience a sense of freedom and euphoria.
- The quotes mentioned in the text touch on the idea that certain questions or pursuits can be so profound and dangerous that they can either isolate or destroy an individual, leaving them with nothing to lose and a newfound sense of seriousness and purpose.
- According to the text, only an organic and existential thinker, such as [[God | the one]] described, is capable of achieving this level of seriousness, as they are driven by a vital imbalance and a desire to uncover the truth, rather than simply engaging in abstract speculation or intellectual pursuits for their own sake, as noted by Huxley in relation to art, but also applicable to philosophy.
- The text also explores the concept of death, suggesting that it is not just a physical event, but rather a discovery that can be made in the course of life, where one can find the immanent abyss of death in life's vital signs, and that this understanding can be a transformative experience.
- The text concludes by questioning why the experience of agony, which is often a catalyst for profound transformation and growth, is so rare, implying that it is a crucial aspect of the human experience that is often overlooked or avoided.

The Metaphysics of Death and the Black Drunkenness

- The hypothesis that a metaphysics of death can be sketched is challenged by the idea that death has a transcendental nature that must be accepted in order to truly understand it, and this understanding can only be achieved by acknowledging the presence of death in every step of life.
- The average person is unaware of the progressive advance into death that occurs with every step in life, but when consciousness becomes independent of life, the revelation of death becomes overwhelming and destroys any sense of naiveté, joyful enthusiasm, and natural voluptuousness.
- The experience of death's presence is described as a state of "black drunkenness" that is necessary for great transfigurations to arise, and it is characterized by an awareness of the demonic character of life and the state of inner effervescence that it provokes.
- The revelation of death's immanence in life can occur during illnesses and long depressive states, which bring individuals closer to their inner reality and cause them to discover death in their own subjectivity, leading to a growing interiority that progresses toward the essential center of subjectivity.
- Those who truly suffer are capable of genuine content and infinite

seriousness, and they often obtain metaphysical revelations through despair, agony, and death, which can be preferable to a naive love or the voluptuous unconsciousness of dance.

- The fear of death is a fundamental aspect of human existence, and it is impossible to eliminate it through artificial reasoning, as it is an organic fear that is deeply rooted in the human experience, and even those who believe in eternity do so because they are afraid of death and seek to save the world of values in which they live.
- The belief in eternity is seen as a necessary consolation for historical man, but it is ultimately an illusion that will be demonstrated by the catastrophic ending of the tragedy of life and of man in particular, and the effort to defeat the nothingness inherent in the temporal and attain the universal in eternity is a painful and uncertain one.

The Fear of Death and the Illusion of Eternity

- The concept of death without religious faith is believed to leave nothing standing, and various philosophies and doctrines often fail to address death or offer only silence or despair in response.
- Some individuals argue that the fear of death is unjustified, as the self ceases to exist upon death, but this perspective neglects the phenomenon of gradual agony and offers little comfort to those who are deeply aware of their own mortality.
- Philosophers are often criticized for their hypocritical serenity in the face of death, as they may be more fearful of death than others, and their attempts to address existential questions through logic are ultimately null and void.
- The process of dying is considered an individual and intensely personal experience, and there is no technique or set of rules that can be learned to prepare for it, with most people only becoming aware of their own mortality in the moments immediately preceding death.
- The idea of nothingness as a form of salvation is also explored, but it is argued that salvation is unlikely to be found in either existence or non-existence, leading to a desire to reject the world and its laws.
- Melancholy is discussed as a state that can lead to a sense of expansion towards nothingness, characterized by weariness and a separation from the world, which can ultimately lead to a deeper understanding of the self and the world.
- The experience of melancholy is also associated with a sense of loneliness and detachment from the world, but this can be accompanied by a sense of voluptuousness and a appreciation for the strange beauty of the world, despite the disparity between human finitude and the world's infinity.
- Ultimately, the text concludes that nothing is truly important, and the suffering and thoughts of the individual are insignificant in the grand scheme of things.

Individual Insignificance and the Rejection of the World

- The author of the text believes that their presence in the world will have a disturbing effect on others, and they are aware of the significant impact their tragedy will have, despite feeling totally insignificant in the grand scheme of the universe.
- The author is convinced that they are nothing in the universe, yet they feel that their existence is the only real one, and they would choose to reject the world and its laws in order to maintain their individuality and glide alone in absolute nothingness.
- The author discusses the concept of metaphysical existentialism, which is born out of ecstasy in front of the world's primordial origins, and is the ultimate intoxication, ecstatic bliss in the contemplation of essence, and they wonder whether a truly metaphysical feeling is even possible without the disappearance of superficial forms.
- The author also explores the idea that solitude is the proper milieu for madness, and that even skeptics can experience ecstasy, which reveals itself through a combination of certitude and essence with doubt and despair, and they note that abstract doubt is more frequent, but less intense than despair.
- The author distinguishes between doubt and despair, stating that doubt is anxiety about problems and things, and has its origins in the unsolvable nature of all big questions, whereas despair is a more profound and intense state that arises from one's own subjective existence, and they argue that a genuinely desperate person cannot forget their own tragedy and is always aware of their painful actuality.
- The state of despair is characterized by anxiety and restlessness, where individuals suffer from their own inner torment, and it is noted that nobody commits suicide solely because problems in the world cannot be solved, as stated in the context of the 'Journal314_11-19' document.

Inner Hell, Spiritual Richness, and Superconsciousness

- According to [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], one must experience the depths of inner hell to turn their destiny into a subjective yet universal problem, highlighting the importance of introspection and self-awareness in understanding one's existence.
- The concept of a rich spiritual life is discussed, where great and dangerous contradictions are seen as a sign of a vibrant inner life, and it is argued that only those who experience chaos and the turmoil of illness can truly be considered creators, as they are able to tap into the abundant inner flow of life.
- The author expresses a fascination with death, acknowledging its grandeur and infinity, but also confessing that their despair is so vast that they do not even harbor the hope of death, and instead can only write about it in contradictory ways, echoing the sentiments of Kierkegaard.
- The idea that only those who do not think or only think about life's bare necessities are happy is presented, suggesting that true thinking is a demon that muddies the spring of life, and that constant questioning and doubting

can lead to exhaustion and weariness, as noted in the 'Journal314_11-19' document.

- The author ponders the possibility of becoming an animal who knows the history of philosophy, or even a superman, but ultimately concludes that the only solution may be to live beyond the complexities of consciousness and anxiety in a sphere of superconsciousness, where access to eternity is no longer a myth, and where one can experience a state of immaterial purity.
- The author expresses a sense of renunciation and non-movement, feeling that working towards social and political systems, or fighting for moral and aesthetic ideals, is ultimately too little, and instead yearns for a state of superconsciousness where the intoxication of eternity would do away with the qualms of this world, as discussed in the context of the 'Journal314_11-19' document.

Innocence, Renunciation, and Cosmic Loneliness

- The concept of innocence is explored, where it is suggested that not everybody loses their innocence, and that disintegration implies a total loss of innocence, which is destroyed by knowledge and life's enemy, and that the only remaining option is heroism, which means aspiring to absolute triumph, but ultimately leads to transcending life and a fatal leap into nothingness.
- The author discusses the idea that spirit in life is an anomaly, and that renunciation is an illness of the spirit, and that they have renounced so much, including the idea of a theory of knowledge, which they feel is irrelevant in a world that does not deserve to be known, as noted in the 'Journal314_11-19' document.
- The feeling of cosmic loneliness is described, which stems from an awareness of the world's isolation and objective nothingness, and the author expresses a desire for people to relinquish their duties and responsibilities and gather in the streets to refuse to do anything anymore, in a gesture of rebellion against the mediocrity of a sterile and insignificant life, echoing the sentiments of [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] and the concept of Karma Yoga and Maya.
- The author concludes by declaring that ideals, beliefs, art, and philosophy are all void, and that the only remaining feeling is one of utter confusion, where one is unable to differentiate, clarify, understand, or appreciate, and that this feeling would make any philosopher a poet, as discussed in the context of the 'Journal314_11-19' document.

From Philosopher to Poet: The Transformation through Absolute Confusion

- The transformation of a philosopher into a poet is a dramatic process, where one falls from a world of abstractions into a whirlwind of feelings and emotions, making it impossible to continue philosophizing in a systematic way, as seen in the experiences of those who have started with abstract forms and ended in absolute confusion, and can only philosophize poetically.

- The state of absolute confusion is characterized by the delights and torments of madness, where only the most intense feelings matter, and this is reflected in the idea that "only sickness gives birth to serious and deep feelings," as well as the notion that "he who has not experienced absolute fear, universal anxiety, cannot understand struggle, the madness of the flesh and of death."
- The concept of grace is described as an illusory state where life transcends its contradictions and negativity, but it does not lead to metaphysical revelations or a vision of truth, and instead, it is the experience of eternity that depends on the intensity of subjective feeling, as noted in the phrase "the experience of eternity therefore depends on intensity of subjective feeling, and the way to eternity is to transcend the temporal."
- The idea of morality is also discussed, with the argument that it cannot be saved and that reality is essentially irrational, making it pointless to distinguish between right and wrong, as stated in the text "even today nobody can tell what is right or what is wrong...since reality is essentially irrational, why set rules, why distinguish the right from the wrong?"
- The author also touches on the idea that eternity does not lead to the triumph of either good or evil, but rather ravages all, and that suffering and pleasure are both insignificant in the face of nothingness, as seen in the quote "whether you suffer or not, nothingness will swallow you forever," which is reminiscent of the concept of maya discussed by [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- The text also references the ideas of various philosophers and thinkers, including Vivekananda, Tillich, [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], and St. Therese, who have all grappled with the concepts of doubt, faith, and the infinite, and how these ideas relate to the human experience of eternity and the search for meaning.
- Ultimately, the author concludes that the experience of eternity is void of life, and that time and history are irrelevant, as stated in the phrase "time with its long train of individual moments is, if not unreal, irrelevant...without temporality, life loses its dramatic character," and that one should strive to outstrip history and live in a state of indifference to the past, present, and future, as noted in the text "why should i live in history, or worry about the social and cultural problems of the age? i am weary of culture and history; i can no longer bring myself to embrace its torments and its aspirations."

Eternity, History, and Disillusionment with Humanity

- The author finds comfort in contemplating eternity, believing that the only valid relation is between man and eternity, rather than between man and history, as outstripping history allows one to acquire superconsciousness and enter a realm where contradictions and doubts lose their meaning.
- The author expresses a sense of disillusionment with humanity, stating

that they are not proud to be a man because they are aware of the suffering and tragedy that exists in the world, and that only those who have not experienced this state intensely are proud of being human.

- The author discusses the limitations of magic in dealing with metaphysical reality, suggesting that it is useful for small and inessential things but powerless when confronted with the reality of fatality and the impotence of human existence.
- The author critiques the idea that joy is the only means of salvation, arguing that it is easy to recommend joy to those who are suffering, but that true joy must come from within, and that external help is useless if it does not spring from inner resources.
- The author advocates for fully living one's inner tragedy and agony, rather than trying to overcome them, and suggests that intense subjectivity is the way to attain universality and enter eternity through the instant.
- The author values solitude and intense subjectivity, believing that they are essential for attaining universality and entering eternity, and expresses admiration for enthusiasts who are able to be constantly reborn and live a life that is opaque to death.
- The author notes that the pursuit of immortality through great achievements is ultimately futile, as everything will eventually crumble into dust, and that even the greatest accomplishments, such as those of [[Johann Sebastian Bach | Bach]], will be lost to time.
- The author concludes that true understanding and connection to eternity can only be achieved through individual, subjective experience, and that external values and achievements are ultimately meaningless in the face of death and nothingness.

The Enthusiast, the Problematic Man, and the Nature of Ecstasy

- The text explores the concept of the enthusiast, who is described as an unproblematic person, understanding many things without experiencing agonizing doubts or chaotic sensitivity, and is characterized by their gift of abandon and naive irrationality.
- In contrast, the problematic man is unable to solve anything due to his dissatisfaction with everything, and true knowledge is seen as a tenebrous darkness that brings tragedy, with the biblical myth of knowledge as sin being the most profound myth ever invented.
- The text also discusses the concept of ecstasy, which is described as a sensation in which one feels they are dying due to the intensity of light and darkness, and is often associated with oriental religions and [[Mysticism | mysticism]], revealing inner shadows and glimmers of light that give an impression of metaphysical hallucination.
- The author reflects on the idea of renunciation, citing the example of ascetics who renounce life and flee into the desert, believing they have overcome human weaknesses, but ultimately betraying their inability to free themselves from their own contempt for humanity and pleasure.
- The author argues that suffering and the consciousness of its

inescapability can lead to renunciation, but emphasizes the importance of not condemning others' joy, as there is much envy in every act of condemnation, and instead suggests that one should not spoil another's enjoyment with their own knowledge of pain, old age, and death.

– Ultimately, the text presents a nuanced exploration of the human experience, highlighting the complexities of knowledge, ecstasy, and renunciation, and encouraging a more compassionate and understanding approach to others, rather than one of condemnation or contempt.

Renunciation, Infinity, and the Human Experience of Suffering

– The text from 'Journal314_11-19' explores various philosophical and existential themes, including the concepts of renunciation, infinity, and the human experience of suffering, with references to Buddhism and [[Christianity]] as examples of how people cope with suffering.

– The author discusses the idea that a world full of philosophers would be terrifying, and that they should be wiped out to allow life to proceed naturally, highlighting the preference for vital, organic truths over abstract wisdom, as seen in the works of Taoism and the discussions of Sean Carroll on the multi-verse.

– The text touches on the essence of social life being injustice, and the idea that infinity, both in time and space, leads to nothing, making it difficult to accomplish anything in the future, with the author referencing their own earthly reflections on poverty.

– The author also explores the concept of absolute becoming and the destructive power of infinity, which dissolves all forms into a fluidity, much like music, and wonders why great composers have not all gone mad, given the intense concentration required for their creative work.

– The importance of overcoming banality and embracing transfiguration is emphasized, with the author suggesting that work is the negation of eternity, and that a feeling for eternity is destroyed by frenetic activity and trepidation, citing the thoughts of Tillich and Tolstoy on inward reflection.

– The text contrasts the limited perspective of active and energetic people with the keener perception of metaphysical reality held by the lazy, preferring an intelligent and observant laziness to intolerable activity, and referencing the idea that Saints are Conquerors and the concept of Quietism as an undying participation with Nothingness, as discussed by Underhill.

– The author reflects on the themes of sadness, anxiety, and the joy of nothingness, suggesting that existence may be exile, and nothingness, home, and that life should be lived with the speed and intensity of a lightning bolt, with each action being either triumph or fall.

– The text also explores the idea that when men can no longer bear the monotony of ordinary existence, they may find in experiences of the absolute an opportunity to commit suicide, and that suffering is not a path to love, but rather a descent into hell, with the author referencing the satanic

essence of suffering.

- The concept of disjunction from the world through suffering is discussed, leading to excessive interiorization and a high level of consciousness, making the world seem exterior and transcendent, and the author notes that despite the pain of agony and isolation, the distance from the world renders it more accessible, highlighting the pantheistic paradox.
- Finally, the text emphasizes the importance of the immediate, citing Jesus' teachings on anxiety about tomorrow, and suggesting that man has lost touch with the immediate, and that there's no salvation without it, with the author referencing their own thoughts on the matter.

The Present Moment, Subjectivity, and the Absurdity of Life

- The text from 'Journal314_11-19' discusses various philosophical ideas, including the concept of the present moment, as mentioned by [[The Buddha | Buddha]], and the idea that all salvation comes from embracing the notion that there is no truth.
- The author suggests that an excess of subjectivity can lead to megalomania or self-denigration, and that individuals should stop being rational animals and instead become lunatics, risking everything for their fantasies and being capable of exaltations.
- The idea that "nothing matters" is a recurring theme, with the author arguing that everything is possible and yet nothing is, and that all is permitted and yet nothing, highlighting the absurdity and meaninglessness of life.
- The author also critiques the concept of morality, suggesting that it is incompatible with generosity and that true morality begins when we have done with morality, and that vice is a tragedy of the flesh that bursts out of its own fatality.
- The text also touches on the idea that efforts to attain happiness are futile, and that unhappiness is a path of no return, with the author questioning the point of achieving something and suggesting that it would be better for individuals to stand still in calm and silent immobility.
- Ultimately, the author concludes that the only answer and reality is silence, and that expressing opinions, taking stands, and making impressions are useless, highlighting the absurdity and nonsensical nature of human actions and endeavors.

Knowledge, Ego-Death, and the Nihilistic Experience

- The text discusses various philosophical and psychological concepts, including the idea that having too much knowledge can be overwhelming and lead to a sense of disgust, as stated by Cioran, who notes that "a little knowledge is delightful; a lot, disgusting" and that the more one knows, the less they want to know.
- Cioran also describes the concept of "ego-death" and the Nihilistic experience, which is compared to a religious experience, but is also referred to as "madness" in a pejorative sense, drawing parallels with the

ideas of Eckhart, [[John of the Cross]], [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]], and Luther.

- The text quotes Cioran as saying that "fine psychological understanding is the product of a life of self-contemplation, a life which sees itself in other lives as if in so many mirrors," and that this understanding can lead to a sense of boredom and disconnection from others.

- The concept of time is also discussed, with Cioran describing it as "an ever-growing nothingness, a dilating void, a threat from beyond," and the text notes that this perspective is shared by other philosophers, including Tillich, who believed that the meaning of life is to despair over the meaninglessness of life.

- The text also explores the idea of escaping one's fate and the search for meaning in a seemingly meaningless world, with Cioran suggesting that "to escape our fate— what is the good of striving for that?" and that instead, one should focus on finding a way to subsist in the peace of decay, amid the benefits of decrepitude.

- Additionally, the text touches on the idea of the abyss, which is described as being both within and outside of oneself, and is seen as a presentiment of yesterday, a question of today, and a certainty of tomorrow, echoing the ideas of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who believed in the importance of turning inward and renouncing selflessness.

- The text also quotes Cioran as saying that "since in us has awakened the evil that slumbered in the remainder of the living, it remains for us to destroy ourselves so that they might be saved," highlighting the theme of selflessness and self-abnegation, and rejecting the idea of a personal [[God]], which is a key tenant of the Nihilistic Mystical experience.

- Finally, the text describes a post-apocalyptic scenario in which the survivors of a catastrophic event seek to abolish the memory of the old humanity and erase all traces of the past, instead embracing a new way of living that values oblivion and unlearning, with Cioran noting that "one rachitic tree will be worth more in their eyes than a museum or a temple," and that the focus will be on "courses in oblivion and unlearning to celebrate the virtues of inattention and the delights of amnesia."

The Decline of Knowledge, Literalism, and the Search for Spiritual Unity

- The text from 'Journal314_11-19' discusses various philosophical and spiritual concepts, including the potential decline of interest in knowledge and the rejection of literalism, as hinted at by Vivekananda's quote "good to be born in church, but not die in a church", which suggests a need for spiritual progression and unity among different sects.

- The author reflects on the idea that humanity is facing a crisis, having lost its old beliefs and lacking any metaphysical assets, which is described as a "death agony" and a "débâcle", and that this realization could lead to a moment of pause and introspection, potentially revealing the true nature of the crisis and inspiring prayers or lamentations.

- The text also explores the relationship between faith and understanding,

with the author suggesting that having faith is not necessary to understand spiritual concepts, as evidenced by the quote "What advantage would having faith be to me, since I understand [[Meister Eckhart]] just as well without it?"

- The author touches on the idea that true dialogue and understanding can only be achieved through a "mute dialogue with our enemies", implying that friendship and truth are incompatible, and that this dialogue can be a fruitful and meaningful way to engage with others.
- The importance of maintaining a sense of religious feeling and inner vibration is emphasized, as the author states "I would not want to live in a world drained of all religious feeling", and notes that this feeling can project one into and above [[God]], regardless of specific beliefs.
- The text includes quotes and references to various philosophers and spiritual leaders, including Meister Eckhart, Plotinus, and Ramana Maharshi, and discusses the idea that true understanding and spiritual experience are rare and difficult to put into words, as illustrated by the story of the Tantric ritual, where the initiate is given a mirror to contemplate their own insignificance.
- The author also reflects on the human condition, noting that "to be is to be cornered" and that people are often driven by a desire to change others, rather than accepting them for who they are, as seen in the example of the friend who urges the author to change their ways, and that this desire to change others can be a form of rejection.
- The text concludes with the idea that true understanding and freedom can only be achieved by letting go of hope and desire, as the author states "One is and remains a slave as long as one is not cured of hoping", and that this realization can be a difficult and painful process, but ultimately necessary for true liberation.

Rejection of Resignation, Weariness, and the Blurring of Good and Evil

- The rejection of resignation is seen as a sign of "life" rather than a sign of perspicacity or reflection, and it is noted that the sane man never lowers himself to protest or indignation, as taking human affairs seriously may attest to some secret flaw.
- The author reflects on their own struggles, stating that they do not struggle against the world, but against their own weariness of the world, and that they have less and less discernment between good and evil, wondering what it would mean to reach a point where they make no distinction between the two.
- The author also touches on the idea that as one advances in age, they become more concerned with honors and vanity, which can be a way of clinging to trifles in order to avoid realizing the nothingness that they conceal.
- The text also explores the idea that trying to cure someone of a "vice" is to attack their very being, and that the only profound thinkers are those who do not suffer from a sense of the ridiculous, while humorists are the ones who have discerned the inanity of all that is serious and frivolous.

- The author shares a childhood memory of being shocked by their father's story of a young mother who burst out laughing at her baby daughter's funeral, and notes that this reaction is not entirely uncommon, as people may feel a craving to react with hilarity in the face of absolute deception.
- The author abides by appearances and notes what they are, while also acknowledging that they do not truly identify with their words or actions, and that they are just as unreal as others, making them a conformist ghost.
- The text also discusses the idea that life is more and less than boredom, and that boredom is a way of discerning what life is worth, while suffering is localized, whereas boredom is an evil without site or support that erodes a person slowly.
- The author notes that habituation to life is the greatest vice of all, which is why it is so difficult to rid oneself of it, and that even when they are satisfied with everything, they immediately react with anxiety about the impermanence of things, such as the sun exploding in a few billion years.
- Finally, the author concludes that of two enemies at odds, it is unlikely that only one is in the right, and that the only ones entitled to grumble are individual beings, who are pitiable victims of a passing fancy, with the author referencing the ideas of Tillich in their discussion of boredom and suffering.

Evil, Eternity, and the Illusion of Philosophy

- The section from the document 'Journal314_11-19' presents a collection of philosophical quotes and musings that explore various themes, including the nature of evil, eternity, and the human experience, with the author referencing their own thoughts and those of others, such as [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and Tillich.
- The quotes touch on the idea that everything is nothing, and that eternity can only be conceived by eliminating all perishable things, with the author noting that this concept is akin to the idea that "[[God]] is Nothing".
- The text also discusses the concept of spiritual nonfulfillment, where a passionate reaction to blame is seen as a sign that one has not yet conquered their origins, and that true fulfillment can only be achieved by aspiring to be scorned.
- The author critiques the concept of philosophy, suggesting that it can be a form of "hocus-pocus" that allows individuals to avoid confronting the reality of their own mortality, but also acknowledges that philosophy can be a valuable tool for exploring the human condition.
- The quotes also explore the idea that death is not the goal of life, but rather an inevitable part of the human experience, and that regret is a fundamental aspect of human existence, with the author noting that it is often better to take no action than to suffer the consequences of one's decisions.
- The text references various thinkers and concepts, including Vivekananda, Tillich, and Symbolism, and suggests that everyone lives in illusion, with

the best we can do being to admit a scale of fictions and prefer one over another.

- The author also discusses the concept of boredom, suggesting that it is a higher state that allows individuals to confront the void within themselves, and that doubt is a fundamental aspect of the human experience, one that can be both debilitating and liberating.
- The section concludes with the idea that only the perception of the Void allows us to triumph over death, and that this realization can be a powerful tool for personal growth and transformation.

Suffering, Nothingness, and the Limitations of Language

- The given section from the document 'Journal314_11-19' presents a collection of philosophical and poetic quotes that explore the human condition, the nature of existence, and the concept of reality, with the author often expressing pessimistic and nihilistic views, as seen in statements such as "Existence = Torment" and "Life is nothing; death, everything."
- The quotes touch on various themes, including the idea that life is inherently suffering, as expressed in the modernized Buddhist phrase "All is nightmare," and the notion that the further humans get from [[God]], the more they advance into the knowledge of religions, highlighting the complexities of spirituality and the search for meaning.
- The author also reflects on the concept of the void and nothingness, suggesting that it can be transformative and liberating, as stated in the phrase "The void is nothingness stripped of its negative qualifications, nothingness transfigured," and that renunciation and self-abnegation can lead to a deeper understanding of the self and the world, as seen in the idea of "awakening to the truth of selflessness, that all is one, unity through complete and utter renunciation and self-abnegation."
- Additionally, the quotes critique the idea of a meaningful and purposeful life, with statements such as "When someone complains that his life has come to nothing, we need merely remind him that life itself is an analogous situation, if not worse," and "Beatitude is not compatible with this world," highlighting the tension between the desire for happiness and fulfillment and the inherent suffering and impermanence of life.
- The author also touches on the limitations of language and the need for symbolism and myth, as well as the idea of religious pluralism and anti-literalism, suggesting that all beliefs are superficial and govern only appearances, and that true understanding requires a deeper level of perception and awareness, as expressed in the phrase "And to understand signifies to discern the degree of awakening to which a being has achieved, in his capacity to perceive the sum of unreality which enters into each phenomenon."
- Overall, the section presents a complex and nuanced exploration of the human condition, encouraging readers to question their assumptions and perceptions, and to consider the possibility of a more profound and

meaningful existence through the cultivation of a taste for the void and the adoption of a more renunciative and selfless approach to life.

Liberation, the Void, and the Nature of Mysticism

- The concept of liberation is discussed, where it is noted that initial freedom can lead to a paralysis of impulses and a clinging to fascination, as stated by the author, highlighting the idea that we cling to anything to avoid tearing ourselves away from the primal dazzle that keeps us from discerning the nonreality in everything.
- The void is described as the liquidation of the adventure of the 'I', being without any trace of being, and a blessed engulfment, with references to psychedelics and psilocibin, and the idea that even the Buddha after illumination was only [[The Buddha | Siddhartha Gautama]] with additional knowledge, as mentioned by Mckenna, who also stated that 'no one knows what's going on here'.
- The perception of the void is said to coincide with the perception of the whole, and the entrance into [[God | the All]], with the author noting that even if the experience of the void were only a deception, it would still deserve to be tried, as it attempts to reduce to nothing both life and death, making them endurable to us.
- The concept of [[Mysticism | mysticism]] is explored, with the author stating that it is a mistake to suppose that mysticism derives from a softening of the instincts, and instead, mystics are conquerors, as seen in the example of Hernando Cortez, and that participation in mysticism is hard work, requiring intense thinking about death and the meaninglessness of life.
- The idea that all great conversions are born from the sudden revelation of life's meaninglessness is discussed, with the author noting that everything is nothing, and God is the positive expression of nothingness, and that without God, everything is nothingness, but God is the supreme nothingness, as seen in the writings of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and the concept of Maya.
- The importance of thinking intensely about death and the metaphysical consciousness is emphasized, with the author stating that science has dulled people's minds by diminishing their metaphysical consciousness, and that a great scholar who is nothing but that is inferior to an illiterate peasant haunted by final questions.
- The concept of God is explored, with the author noting that God benefits from the peripheries of logic, and that one can say or think anything about him, and that he who does not think of God will forever remain a stranger to himself, as stated by Tillich, and that God is self-knowledge, and universal history is a description of his various forms.
- The idea that theology is the negation of divinity, and that looking for proofs of God is a crazy idea, is discussed, with the author stating that theology is the atheist's mode of believing, and that only by thinking about God constantly and mercilessly can we win rich spoils in our battle with

him, as seen in the examples of Tolstoy and the need for a change in one's life.

Theology, Divinity, and the Obscurity of Mystical Concepts

- The text explores the idea that the most obscure and mystical concepts are often closer to [[God]] than traditional theological approaches, such as the Summa Theologiae, and that direct experience and ritual can be more powerful than mere belief or dogma.
- The author references various thinkers and artists, including [[Johann Sebastian Bach | Bach]], [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and Tolstoy, to illustrate the idea that true understanding and connection to God can be achieved through meditation, suffering, and a willingness to confront the unknown and the absurd.
- The text also touches on the idea that philosophy and intellectual pursuits can be limiting and ultimately unsatisfying, and that saints and mystics often possess a deeper understanding of the world and God, despite being considered "illiterate" or "out-of-date" by conventional standards.
- The author suggests that the key to true understanding and spiritual growth lies in embracing the unknown, the absurd, and the mystical, and in cultivating a sense of detachment and solitude, as expressed in the phrase "without my solitude I would be nothing but another clown".
- The text also explores the relationship between time, eternity, and the human experience, with the author noting that the emptying of time can give birth to eternity and fill one with religious courage, and that the transience of human existence can be a source of both terror and liberation.
- The author references the idea that God's nature is such that one can say or think anything about him, and that the less one tries to connect their thoughts and the more one abandons them to contradictions, the closer one may come to the truth, highlighting the importance of symbolism and the peripheries of logic in understanding the divine.
- The text ultimately presents a vision of spirituality and faith that is deeply personal, intuitive, and rooted in the human experience, and suggests that true wisdom and understanding can be achieved through a combination of meditation, suffering, and a willingness to confront the unknown and the absurd.

Saintliness, Nihilism, and the Music of Divinity

- The concept of saintliness is described as a negative sort of perfection that requires a perverse refinement of suffering and the voluptuousness of pain, with the idea that no saint can find eternity in the world.
- The author suggests that the "appetite for [[God]]" is a symptom of nihilism, which is a negation of existence, and that those who think instinctively about God betray a deficiency of vital instincts, as seen in the idea that "all nihilists have wrestled with God".
- The text also explores the relationship between music, specifically Bach's fugues, and the concept of divinity, with the author stating that "listening

to [[Johann Sebastian Bach | Bach]], one sees God come into being" and that his music generates divinity.

- Additionally, the author critiques the idea of religion and faith, suggesting that "healthy bodies and healthy minds have never been shaken by religious fears" and that "to have faith one must remain passive vis-a-vis the world", which is reminiscent of concepts like Quietism, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Karma, and Jnana Yoga.
- The author also touches on the idea that disagreement is a sign of spiritual vitality, citing thinkers like Vivekananda, and that the obsession with God can dislodge earthly love, with the author wondering about people who are "crazy for God" and have sacrificed everything for him, including their minds.
- Furthermore, the text explores the concept of nihilism and its relationship to divinity, with the author stating that "the last step towards nihilism is the disappearance into divinity" and that "God is nothing more than the projection of our longing for annihilation".
- The author also discusses the idea that thinking is not exhaustive and that there are infinite variations on the theme of God, and that intuitions of God's supreme indifference render man's revolt utterly pointless, as seen in the idea that "to be a hero only in the eyes of men is a paltry thing".
- Overall, the text presents a complex and nuanced exploration of the concepts of saintliness, nihilism, divinity, and faith, with the author drawing on a range of philosophical and musical references, including the works of Bach and the ideas of Vivekananda.

The Absolute, Solitude, and the Search for Meaning

- The concept of the absolute is associated with a specific tonality of sadness, which is reflected in the different levels of awareness and the nihilistic experience, as noted in the context of the 'Journal314_11-19' document.
- The quotes provided in the text suggest that people attempt to fill the emptiness of life with various distractions, such as women, books, or worldly ambitions, but these ultimately lead to boredom and self-destruction, with references to the ideas of thinkers like Tillich and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- The importance of solitude is emphasized, with statements like "The task of a solitary man is to be even more solitary" and "To be alone, horribly alone, is the only imperative, and it must be obeyed at any price," highlighting the need for individuals to confront their own mortality and the meaninglessness of the world.
- The text also explores the relationship between [[God]] and human existence, with quotes like "God...is he anything but the fateful moment when our life totters on the brink of destruction?" and "Let God pray for the man in whom there is nothing left to die!", suggesting that the concept of God is closely tied to the human experience of mortality and the search for meaning.

- The idea that "life is an uninterrupted religious crisis, superficial for believers and shattering for doubters" is also presented, along with the notion that "the ultimate goal of all religions: life as a diminution of the soul," which is contrasted with the idea that "All that if Life in me urges me to give up God," reflecting the complex and often contradictory nature of human spirituality.
- Additionally, the text touches on the themes of detachment, renunciation, and the search for transcendence, with statements like "Detachment is a negation of both life and death" and "Spirit means renunciation...when people, not having experienced spiritual torture, satisfy their thirst for renunciation through a derivative: heroism," highlighting the tension between the desire for spiritual enlightenment and the temptation of worldly distractions.
- The quotes also reference various thinkers and writers, including Michelangelo, Vivekananda, and Tolstoy, among others, demonstrating the breadth of intellectual and philosophical influences that shape the text's exploration of human existence and the search for meaning.
- Overall, the text presents a deeply philosophical and often provocative exploration of the human condition, one that is marked by a sense of melancholy, existential crisis, and the search for transcendence in a seemingly meaningless world, with the author drawing on a wide range of intellectual and cultural references to illuminate the complexities of human existence.

Boredom, Detachment, and the Imperfection of the Human Body

- The given text from the document 'Journal314_11-19' is a collection of philosophical quotes and musings that explore the human condition, the nature of existence, and the relationship between individuals and the world around them, with the author often expressing a sense of disillusionment and boredom with life.
- The quotes touch on various themes, including the idea that boredom is a strong argument against immortality, and that it can lead to a desire for suffering and self-torture as a means of intensifying subjectivity, with the author referencing concepts such as asceticism and the pursuit of ecstasy as a cure for pessimism.
- The text also explores the concept of detachment from worldly things as a precondition for attachment to [[God]], and the idea that consciousness is nature's nightmare, with the author referencing the teachings of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and the concept of meditation as a means of ignoring the world and achieving a higher state of being.
- The author expresses a sense of existential crisis and contradiction, noting that the desire to give up God is at odds with the human need for meaning and purpose, and that the search for truth and understanding can lead to a sense of despair and pride, with the author referencing the idea that everything in the world can be used as an argument for or against the existence of God.

- The text also touches on the idea that the human body is imperfect and insignificant, with the author referencing the teachings of [[The Buddha | Buddha]] and the concept of the flesh as a disguise that masks nothing, and expressing a sense of repulsion and terror at the idea of the flesh and its limitations.
- Throughout the text, the author grapples with fundamental questions about the nature of existence, the meaning of life, and the human condition, often expressing a sense of irony, humor, and desperation in the face of the unknown, with references to various philosophical and spiritual concepts, including the idea of the "dead center of existence" and the concept of "paleontology" with The New Gods.

Impermanence, Unreality, and the Need for Spiritual Retreat

- The text discusses the idea that one cannot live with the constant awareness of the impermanence and unreality of the world, as it would be overwhelming, and even mystics and saints, who are considered conquerors, cannot sustain this awareness.
- The author critiques the modern approach to religion, which focuses on "nice" hallucinations, Evolution, and Progress, and instead suggests that contemplating the ultimate nudity and mortality of human beings can be a salutary and liberating experience.
- The author notes that the traditional institutions of spirituality, such as monasteries, are disappearing, and suggests that new spaces for spiritual retreat and contemplation are needed, where individuals can escape the world and its illusions.
- The text explores the idea that unreality is the only thing that makes existence tolerable, and that one must constantly cultivate this awareness in order to break free from the constraints of the world.
- The author references various spiritual traditions and thinkers, including Nietzsche, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Tillich, Therese, and Kempis, and discusses the importance of renunciation, detachment, and the abandonment of desires and illusions.
- The text also touches on the idea that thinking and intellectual pursuits can be limitations, and that true understanding and awakening can only be achieved through silence, meditation, and the rejection of thought.
- The author suggests that one must act in such a way that nothing is considered one's own, including desires, and that this detachment is the key to liberation and the realization of unreality.
- The text concludes by noting that awakening and spiritual understanding are not dependent on intellectual capacities, and that even an illiterate person can possess a deep understanding and find themselves above and beyond any scholar, as exemplified by the example of [[Ramakrishna]], Vivekananda's mentor.

The Unattainable Nature of Satisfaction and the Hope of an Afterlife

- The passage from 'Journal314_11-19' discusses the human condition,

emphasizing that true and lasting satisfaction is unattainable in life, and that our existence is marked by infinite evils and the inevitability of death, which can lead to either annihilation or unhappiness.

- According to [[Blaise Pascal | Pascal]], the only source of happiness in life is the hope of an afterlife, and those who have no insight into eternity are devoid of happiness, making it a great evil to be in doubt about one's existence, but an indispensable duty to seek answers when in doubt.
- The passage criticizes individuals who are content with their ignorance and boast about it, arguing that it is unreasonable to find joy in the expectation of nothing but hopeless misery, and that a reasonable person would seek to understand the mysteries of existence, including the nature of the universe, the self, and the meaning of life.
- Pascal also quotes himself, stating that physical science cannot console him for the ignorance of morality in times of affliction, highlighting the limitations of scientific knowledge in addressing fundamental human questions and the importance of considering one's place in the universe.
- The passage references other philosophers, including [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Tolstoy, Kempis, Huxley, and [[The Buddha | Buddha]], noting that most people are not philosophers and do not ask fundamental questions about existence, and that individuals who do not seek to understand the mysteries of life are ultimately unhappy and unfulfilled.
- Ultimately, the passage encourages individuals to reflect on their existence, consider their place in the universe, and seek to understand the true value of earthly things, including the earth, kingdoms, cities, and themselves, in order to find meaning and purpose in life.

Man in the Infinite and the Limits of Human Comprehension

- The concept of a man in the Infinite is described as being part of an infinity of universes, each with its own firmament, planets, and earth, filled with animals and tiny creatures, showcasing the vastness and complexity of the universe.
- According to the text, man is a mean between nothing and everything, infinitely removed from comprehending the extremes, and is therefore incapable of seeing the Nothing from which he was made and the Infinite in which he is swallowed up, as noted by the author.
- The author criticizes men for rashly rushing into the examination of nature without contemplating the Infinities, and instead suggests that we should acknowledge our limitations, recognizing that we are something, but not everything, and that our existence hides from us the knowledge of first beginnings and the sight of the Infinite.
- The text also quotes [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who describes the human condition as being incapable of certain knowledge and of absolute ignorance, sailing in a vast sphere of uncertainty, driven from end to end, and seeking solid ground and an ultimate sure foundation, but finding that our whole groundwork cracks and the earth opens to abysses.

- The author further notes that even the duration of our life is equally removed from eternity, and that our attempts to find certainty and stability are often in vain, as illustrated by the example of magistrates and physicians who use imaginary knowledge and disguises to inspire respect.
- The text also mentions that soldiers and kings, on the other hand, establish themselves by force and might, rather than by show or disguises, and that it takes a refined reason to regard a powerful leader, such as the Grand Turk, as an ordinary man, despite being surrounded by guards, halberdiers, and other symbols of power.

Distraction and Diversion as a Means of Avoiding Inner Emptiness

- The text from 'Journal314_11-19' discusses the human condition, highlighting that people often seek distractions and diversions to avoid feeling their own nothingness, forlornness, and insufficiency, as noted by [[Blaise Pascal | Pascal]], who suggests that this emptiness is observed through non-movement and a turning inward.
- According to the text, the consciousness of the falsity of present pleasures and the ignorance of the vanity of absent pleasures cause inconstancy in humans, leading them to constantly seek new experiences and distractions, such as play, the society of women, war, and high posts, in an attempt to find happiness.
- The text also quotes Pascal, stating that all the unhappiness of men arises from one single fact, that they cannot stay quietly in their own chamber, and that a man who has enough to live on, if he knew how to stay with pleasure at home, would not leave it to go to sea or to besiege a town, implying that true happiness can be found in rest and quiet contemplation.
- Furthermore, the text notes that people have a secret instinct that impels them to seek amusement and occupation abroad, which arises from the sense of their constant unhappiness, and another instinct that teaches them that happiness in reality consists only in rest, and not in stir, resulting in a confused idea that hides itself from their view, inciting them to aim at rest through excitement.
- The text also touches on the idea that people often seek excitement and distractions as a means to escape their troubles and difficulties, such as the example of a man who has lost his son or is troubled by lawsuits and quarrels, but is able to forget his troubles by focusing on a distraction, like a hunt, highlighting the human tendency to seek diversion and avoidance of introspection.

The Pursuit of Happiness Through Amusement and Diversion

- The text from 'Journal314_11-19' discusses the human tendency to seek happiness and fulfillment through amusement and diversion, noting that even the happiest person can become discontented without some form of occupation or passion to prevent weariness from overcoming them.
- It highlights the societal pressure to be constantly busy and occupied, with individuals being entrusted from a young age with various

responsibilities and cares, which can ultimately lead to misery if not balanced with relaxation and amusement.

- The author reflects on their own experience of studying abstract sciences and feeling disheartened by the lack of fellow students, illustrating the sense of alienation that can come from pursuing intellectual pursuits.
- The text also explores the human desire to live an imaginary life in the mind of others, seeking to shine and be esteemed by others, even if it means neglecting one's true self and values, as seen in the tendency to prioritize reputation over actual virtues.
- The author critiques the vanity of human nature, noting that people are often more concerned with being known and admired by others, even after they are gone, and that this desire for esteem can be fleeting and superficial, as evidenced by the fact that people are often satisfied with the esteem of just a few neighbors.
- The text references various philosophers, including Audi, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Cioran, and Otto, who have written about the rarity of the nihilistic belief and the tendency for people to be absorbed in fame, diversion, and the thought of the future, rather than recognizing the vanity of the world.
- Ultimately, the author suggests that recognizing the vanity of the world is a rare and surprising insight, and that those who do not see it are often themselves vain and caught up in the pursuit of greatness and esteem.

Diversion, Self-Reflection, and the Christian Faith

- The human condition is marked by a tendency to seek diversion from the realities of life, such as death, misery, and ignorance, in order to avoid feelings of unhappiness and weariness, as noted by philosophers like Kierkegaard and Maya.
- According to these philosophers, diversion is a double-edged sword, as it provides temporary consolation for our miseries, but also hinders us from reflecting on ourselves and ultimately leads to our downfall, making it a significant obstacle to true self-awareness and understanding.
- The [[Christianity | Christian faith]], in a symbolic sense, emphasizes the importance of acknowledging the corruption of human nature and the need for redemption, highlighting the significance of considering one's own state and the eternal consequences of their actions.
- Humans have a peculiar relationship with their own mortality, often being indifferent to the loss of their existence and the perils of everlasting suffering, while being deeply concerned with trivial matters, demonstrating a strange confusion in human nature.
- The philosopher argues that it is essential to acknowledge and confront the reality of one's own state, rather than disguising or ignoring it, and that the search for truth and understanding is crucial in navigating the complexities of human existence.
- The text also critiques those who live in indifference to the search for truth, particularly in matters of eternal significance, and emphasizes the

importance of regulating one's actions and thoughts according to the truth of one's ultimate end, in order to live a life of sense and judgment.

- Ultimately, the philosopher urges readers to take seriously the importance of considering their own state and the eternal consequences of their actions, and to be horrified by conduct that is extravagant and ignorant of these realities, as expressed by the philosopher's statement that nothing reveals more an extreme weakness of mind than not to know the misery of a godless man.

The Human Condition, Morality, and the Existence of God

- The text from 'Journal314_11-19' discusses the human condition, morality, and the existence of [[God]], highlighting the contradictions and uncertainties that arise when considering these topics, as expressed through various quotes and philosophical reflections.

- The author describes the human tendency to be sensitive to trivial matters while being indifferent to significant issues, and notes that this inversion is a characteristic of the human condition, using the metaphor of men in chains waiting for their death to illustrate this point.

- The text also explores the idea that the short duration of human life, surrounded by the infinite and eternal, can evoke feelings of fear and astonishment, with the author questioning the reason for their existence and the allocation of their place and time in the world.

- The author critiques philosophers, including [[Plato]], for constructing ethics independently of the question of the mortality or immortality of the soul, and expresses their own doubts and concerns about the existence of a Divinity, feeling trapped in a state of uncertainty.

- The text touches on the idea that the finite is annihilated in the presence of the infinite, and that human justice and spirit are insignificant compared to divine justice, leading to a sense of nihilism and the incomprehensibility of God's existence or non-existence.

- The author references the concept of the "numinous" as described by Otto, characterized as "terrifying" and "incomprehensible", and notes that reason is incapable of deciding whether God exists or not, leaving humans to make a wager in the face of infinite uncertainty.

- Throughout the text, the author, who appears to be influenced by the thoughts of [[Blaise Pascal | Pascal]], grapples with the limitations of human knowledge and the inevitability of forgetting, striving to acknowledge and accept their own nothingness and weakness.

Scepticism, Weakness, and the Nature of Justice

- The author discusses the concept of scepticism, noting that they will write their thoughts without order, as this disorder is a true reflection of the subject matter, which is incapable of being structured or boxed in, a idea also expressed by Cioran.

- The author is astonished that people are not more aware of their own weaknesses, and instead, they follow their own modes of life as if they knew

where reason and justice truly lie, with this ignorance being a natural state of humanity, as also noted in the concept of Maya.

- The author reflects on their own life, realizing that they once believed in the existence of justice, but came to distrust their own judgment and that of others, recognizing that human nature is in a state of continual change, and that this understanding has not changed over time.
- The author references Ecclesiastes, which states that without [[God]], humanity is in a state of total ignorance and misery, and notes that scepticism can actually help religion, a idea also discussed by thinkers such as Tillich, [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- The author argues that the principles of sceptics, stoics, and atheists are true, but their conclusions are false because the opposite principles are also true, which is in line with Pascal's mistrust of contradictions as a criterion for truth.
- The author highlights the greatness of humanity, which lies in its ability to recognize its own misery, and notes that this awareness of misery is a unique aspect of human experience, as opposed to the experience of other living beings, such as trees.
- The author observes that people are not miserable without feeling it, and that this feeling of misery is a fundamental aspect of the human experience, which is also acknowledged by the fact that people often hide or glory in their miseries.
- The author points out the contradictions in human nature, where people who despise humanity still wish to be admired and believed by others, and notes that this nature is stronger than reason, convincing people of their own greatness despite their baseness.
- The author concludes that humanity is necessarily mad, and that not being mad would be another form of madness, a idea also discussed by thinkers such as Becker, Tillich, and Cioran, and that it is advantageous to show people both their equality with animals and their greatness, rather than leaving them in ignorance of either.

The Dual Nature of Humanity and the Search for Truth

- The section from the document 'Journal314_11-19' emphasizes the importance of recognizing the dual nature of humanity, acknowledging that man must not consider himself equal to either animals or angels, but rather be aware of both aspects of his nature.
- It criticizes those who either praise or blame humanity, and instead approves of those who seek the truth with a sense of lamentation, as expressed in the quote "I blame equally those who choose to praise man, those who choose to blame him, and those who choose to amuse themselves; and I can only approve of those who seek with lamentation."
- The text highlights the value of experiencing exhaustion and weariness in the search for the true good, which can ultimately lead to seeking redemption, as stated in the phrase "It is good to be tired and wearied by

the vain search after the true good, that we may stretch out our arms to the Redeemer."

- The section also explores the relationship between piety and goodness, noting that experience reveals a significant difference between the two, and that true justice and mercy involve humbling pride and combating sloth, as mentioned in the quote "The property of justice is to humble pride, however holy may be our work...and the property of mercy is to combat sloth by exhorting to good works."

- Additionally, the text warns against the dangers of self-satisfaction and the pursuit of earthly pleasures, citing the quote "There is nothing so perilous as what pleases [[God]] and man," and advises that it is better to avoid self-righteousness, as expressed in the phrase "It is better not to fast, and thereby humbled, than to fast and be self-satisfied therewith," which is attributed to [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and Francis de Sales.

- The section further discusses the importance of balancing the knowledge of God with the awareness of human misery, as stated in the quote "The knowledge of God without that of man's misery causes pride, and the knowledge of man's misery without that of God causes despair," a concept also noted by Huxley.

- The text also touches on the idea that [[Christianity]] requires a balance between recognizing human vileness and desiring to be like God, in order to avoid vanity or abjectness, as mentioned in the quote "Christianity is strange, it bids man recognize that he is vile, even abominable, and bids him desire to be like God."

- Finally, the section notes that atheism demonstrates a certain level of mental strength, but only up to a point, and that it can lead to naturalism or nihilism if taken to its logical conclusion, as mentioned in the phrase "Atheism shows strength of mind, but only to a certain degree."

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Philosophical and Metaphysical Ideas (Journal314_20-33)

- The section of the document 'Journal314_20-33' discusses various

philosophical and metaphysical ideas, starting with the concept that all reality is the expression of a unified, unchanging force, as declared by Bahnsen and characterized by different philosophers.

- Thomas Ligotti's ideas are presented, suggesting that people generally have a good opinion of themselves and their condition in the world, despite the fact that things are not always what they seem, and that our heads are full of illusions, as testified by scientists, philosophers, and spiritual figures.
- Ligotti also discusses the concept of pessimism, stating that pessimists are often sidelined in history and the media, and that they are immune to the influences of religions, countries, and other factors that drive human behavior, and that without belief in a higher power or comprehensive delusion, they would not be motivated to take extreme actions.
- The idea of a new humanity is proposed, where personal economic gain is no longer a motive, and the only defensible reason to work would be to help one another, with the possibility of euthanasia being decriminalized and offered in a humane way, raising questions about the value of human existence.
- The text also touches on the ideas of neuroscientists and geneticists, who have found that much of human thought and behavior is determined by neural wiring and heredity, rather than personal control, but who do not feel that this knowledge necessitates suicide or a reevaluation of human nature.
- The concept of the uncanny is introduced, describing a feeling of wrongness or unease, and the idea that our internal authority may be flawed, and that nothing is inherently right or wrong, a notion that is shared by philosophers such as Otto and Heidegger.
- The section concludes with an example of the uncanny, where everyday objects, such as shoes, can become abstracted and unfamiliar, leading to a sense of confusion and questioning about their nature and meaning.

The Human Desire for Meaning and the Uncanny

- The text explores the idea that the human desire for meaning and familiarity in life is challenged by the possibility that the world and our existence may be without inherent meaning, as philosopher Martin Heidegger questions why there should be something rather than nothing.
- The concept of moral realism is discussed, with determinists and indeterminists promoting some form of operative morality, which is seen as a necessary truth for human existence, allowing people to live with a sense of purpose and belonging, as noted by the idea that "without this truth, or 'truth,' we could not go on living as we always have and believe that being alive is all right."
- The text also touches on the idea that truly believing in determinism or the multi-verse could potentially lead to insanity, as it challenges the individual's sense of self and reality, with the question posed by Metzinger, "Can one really believe in determinism without going insane?"

The Buddha, the Scientific World-View, and Pessimism

- The example of [[The Buddha | Siddhartha Gautama]], also known as the Buddha, is given, who embarked on a quest to neutralize his ego by leaving behind his family, gods, and sociopolitical station, but it is noted that this path requires a near inhuman dedication, and few people have the stamina to follow it.
- The scientific world-view is mentioned as potentially damaging to human mental well-being, as noted by Metzinger, and cultural critic Jens Bjørneboe's statement that "he who hasn't experienced a full depression alone and over a long period of time— he is a child" suggests that true understanding and growth may require experiencing darkness and difficulty.
- The text also explores the idea that perfect knowledge can lead to a sense of nothingness and pain, as noted by Ligotti, who references Hume's idea that reason is a 'slave to the passions', and that emotions are what give life meaning, even if that meaning is arbitrary and inaccurate.
- Finally, the text discusses the relationship between [[Buddhism]] and pessimism, suggesting that the two philosophies are closely linked, with Buddhists claiming to be realists rather than pessimists, but ultimately accepting the idea of dukkha, or suffering, as the primary reality of existence, which is a fundamentally pessimistic view.

Buddhism and Pessimism

- The concept of pessimism is met with incredulity, but Buddhism acknowledges that suffering is a fundamental aspect of human existence and that liberating oneself from it should be a lifelong goal, as stated in the document 'Journal314_20-33'.
- According to the text, no single system or approach can cater to all individuals, and the pursuit of truth through self-examination can lead to a solitary existence, as noted by [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who views this as a positive outcome.
- Buddhism's primary objective is to attain enlightenment, or [[Nirvana | nirvana]], which is a common goal shared with other religions, but human beings often prioritize the pleasures of the present world over the pursuit of enlightenment, and this is a challenge that Buddhism faces in its teachings.

Consciousness, Ego-Death, and Non-Dualistic Meta-Realities

- Consciousness creates the illusion of purpose and direction, leading individuals to strive for something, go somewhere, be someone, and know someone, in an attempt to escape the inherent meaninglessness of existence, which is a concept that is central to the discussion in 'Journal314_20-33'.
- The idea of ego-death, or the transcendence of the self, is supported by anecdotal evidence and is often associated with mystical experiences and revealed religions, and this concept is explored in the context of the document.
- If the ego is deposed, what remains of an individual is everything except the vanity and delusion that constitutes the self, according to Horwitz,

which is a perspective that is presented in the text.

- Non-dualistic meta-realities, such as those found in [[Buddhism]], serve to make sense of human life, but they do not necessarily prioritize human well-being or happiness, instead viewing individuals as mere vehicles for a higher purpose, as discussed in 'Journal314_20-33'.

Doubt, Suspicion, and the Horror of Existence

- The introduction of doubt and suspicion can lead to a profound awareness of the horror and darkness that underlies human existence, and this realization can be overwhelming and inescapable, which is a theme that is explored in the document.
- The philosophers Becker and Zapffe concur that a full understanding of the human condition can be devastating, and that individuals often employ coping mechanisms, such as social games and personal preoccupations, to avoid confronting the reality of their situation, which is a concept that is relevant to the discussion in 'Journal314_20-33'.

Taboo Commonplaces and the Impermanence of Everything

- The concept of taboo commonplaces is discussed, where people accept the survival of entities that are extensions of themselves, such as families, heroes, religions, and countries, as a substitute for personal immortality, highlighting the human desire for continuity and legacy.
- The idea that all civilizations and species will eventually become defunct and that the universe itself has an expiration date is presented, emphasizing the impermanence of everything, and the universe is described as "nothing in motion", which is considered a crucial point.
- The pessimistic perspective is outlined, where everything is seen as recreational and lacking in significance unless it is directly related to understanding and eliminating human suffering, which is considered an insoluble problem that will persist as long as human beings exist.
- The futility of existence is expressed, with the notion that a non-linguistic modality would be needed to adequately convey the sense of uselessness of everything, and that any kind of existence is useless, with nothing being self-justifying, and everything being justified only in a relativistic sense.

Religious Perspectives and the Habitat of Unrealities

- The differences in perspectives between various religious groups, such as Christians, Jews, Muslims, and Buddhists, are highlighted, with Buddhists being more accepting of a relativistic system, while others struggle with the idea of a "potato-masher system of being".
- The concept of living in a "habitat of unrealities" is introduced, where people are disconnected from the natural environment and instead inhabit a world of illusions, with Zapffe's idea that humanity should not continue to exist on earth being mentioned, and the delusional nature of human existence being emphasized.

- The views of philosophers such as Zapffe and Ligotti are discussed, with both being critical of the human condition and the idea of existence on earth, and the idea that neuroscientists and geneticists, despite discovering that much of human thought and behavior is determined by neural wiring and heredity, do not feel compelled to consider suicide as a result of their findings.

Moral Realism and the Questioning of Existence

- The majority of people reproduce and do not question their existence, being resistant to pessimistic ideas and instead believing in a form of moral realism that supports their everyday reality and sense of self.
- Those who truly care about understanding their existence cannot help but be believers in some form of moral realism, which provides a sense of optimism and meaning in their lives, encompassing aspects such as country, loved ones, [[Job (biblical figure) | job]], and personal identity.
- It is only when individuals shed their allegiance to external factors like countries, gods, and families that they can begin to confront the concept of the self, which is rooted in consciousness and the sense of being a human entity, despite the lack of a universal definition of what it means to be human.
- The concept of self is closely tied to consciousness, and once all external qualifiers are stripped away, one is left standing before the door of consciousness, which can be a source of horror, as it reveals the true nature of existence.

The Scientific Worldview, Depression, and Nihilism

- The scientific worldview, as discussed by Metzinger, can be damaging to mental well-being, and the idea that humans are essentially puppets can be a difficult concept to accept, potentially leading to insanity.
- Cultural critic [[Jens Bjørneboe]] is quoted as saying that those who have not experienced a full depression alone and over a long period of time are like children, highlighting the profound impact of depression on one's perspective.
- Depression can reveal to individuals that there is nothing inherently compelling in the world, and that perfect knowledge can lead to perfect nothingness, which can be a painful realization for those seeking meaning in their lives.
- The alternatives to living a life of false meaning are to live as depressives or as individuals who acknowledge the truth about the world, and nihilism, as a threat to human continuance, is no longer a viable concept, as people have grown up within a nihilistic framework and do not experience it in the same way as previous generations.
- Nietzsche's philosophy, which refashions fate into freedom and makes the world's meaninglessness into something meaningful, has been popular among atheistic amoralists, and his materialistic mysticism provides a way for individuals to find meaning in a seemingly meaningless world.

The Nihilistic Experience and Human Mortality

- The text describes the nihilistic experience, where the realization of one's own mortality and the impermanence of all things becomes overwhelmingly apparent, leaving only horror as the ultimate reality.
- According to the text, humans are unique in their awareness of their own mortality, which sets them apart from other life forms and creates a sense of disconnection from the natural world, as noted in the statement "We are not from here" and "If we vanished tomorrow, no organism on this planet would miss us".
- The text also references the idea that human pleasure is limited and fleeting, and that the awareness of one's own mortality is what drives humans to take action and strive for survival, as stated in the phrase "If human pleasure did not have both a lid and a time limit, we would not bestir ourselves to do things that were not pleasurable, such as toiling for our subsistence".

Tønnessen, Ontological Despair, and the Reality of Horror

- The philosopher Tønnessen is mentioned, who believes that intellectual honesty must lead to ontological despair, and that reason can lead to a understanding of God through the lens of nothingness and despair, as stated in the phrase "Tønnessen believes that “intellectual honesty” must lead to “ontological despair”".
- The text concludes that horror is the only true reality, and that it operates autonomously, generating ontological havoc and rendering human existence insignificant, as stated in the phrase "Horror is more real than we are" and "That we all deserve punishment by horror is as mystifying as it is undeniable".
- The human condition is described as one of suffering and futility, where individuals are forced to confront the reality of their own mortality and the meaninglessness of existence, leading to a sense of desperation and hopelessness, as expressed in the phrase "Being alive: decades of waking up on time, then trudging through another round of moods, sensations, thoughts, cravings— the complete gamut of agitations— and finally flopping into bed to sweat in the pitch of dead sleep or simmer in the phantasmagorias that molest our dreaming minds".
- Ultimately, the text presents a bleak and pessimistic view of human existence, where there is no escape from the crushing reality of horror and nothingness, and where traditional concepts such as free will, redemption, and meaning are rendered obsolete, as stated in the phrase "No life story with a happy ending to tell, only a contrivance of horror, then nothingness— and nothing else".

Journal314_20-33: A Bleak and Nihilistic View

- The passage from 'Journal314_20-33' presents a bleak and nihilistic view of life, where there is no pleasure, no loving God, and no compassionate

[[The Buddha | Buddha]] to provide comfort, and instead, Azathoth is in control, making human existence a mistake or a joke.

- The text suggests that the idea of eternal return is the most horrible concept in the universe, and that human beings are left to face the horrors of life on their own, with no escape routes or ways to manage terror through isolation, anchoring, distraction, or sublimation.
- The passage also touches on the idea that nature did not design humans to feel too good for too long, and that the belief in long-lasting pleasures is a deceptive but adaptive concept that helps with the survival of the species, and that people are expected to feel good enough for long enough to avoid complaining.
- The text criticizes the societal pressure to be positive and to avoid complaining, suggesting that complainers will not succeed or influence people, and that those who are pessimistic or depressive are often blamed and ostracized, with the implication that they should either conform to societal norms or be forsaken.
- The passage ultimately presents a pessimistic and nihilistic worldview, where the individual is left to face the harsh realities of life without any hope of escape or redemption, and where the only choice is to conform to the fabricated world or be left behind, with the author suggesting that this is the reality of human existence, and that it is up to each individual to decide how to navigate this bleak landscape.
- The text mentions various concepts and figures, including the idea of the "eternal return", Azathoth, and the "Last Messiah", which are all presented as part of a larger narrative that emphasizes the futility and horror of human existence, and the ways in which societal pressure and expectations can contribute to this sense of despair and hopelessness.

Societal Pressure, Conformity, and Thought Criminals

- The passage describes a societal attitude that rejects criticism and negative thoughts, embracing a mindset that prioritizes contentment and conformity, with the phrase "Up the Conspiracy and down with Consciousness" serving as a guiding principle.
- The text argues that individuals who express dissatisfaction or pessimism are dismissed as "thought criminals" and are encouraged to either conform to societal norms or leave, implying that there is no alternative to the existing system.

Schopenhauer, Disillusionment, and the Importance of Justice

- The passage quotes philosopher [[Arthur Schopenhauer]], who notes that people often become disillusioned with the tricks and illusions of life when they are repeated, and that humans have created unnecessary needs and desires, such as luxury and material possessions, which can lead to boredom and misery.
- Schopenhauer's philosophy is referenced as highlighting the importance of justice, love of mankind, and the denial of the will to live as a path to

redemption, but this is presented in contrast to the prevailing societal attitude that values conformity and ignorance over critical thinking and self-awareness.

- The text suggests that individuals who are not content with the status quo are marginalized and dismissed, with their thoughts and feelings deemed "invalid, inauthentic, or whatever dismissive term we care to hang on you," and are encouraged to numb themselves with substances or distractions rather than challenging the existing system.
- The overall tone of the passage is one of satire and social commentary, critiquing a society that values conformity and ignorance over critical thinking and self-awareness, and highlighting the tensions between individual freedom and societal expectations.

True Christianity and the Penitentiary of the World

- The author's doctrine is considered the only true Christian philosophy, as it aligns with the spirit of the New Testament, which is rooted in asceticism, the denial of the will to live, and this concept is also reflected in the wisdom of various ages and philosophies, including Brahmanism, [[Buddhism]], and the teachings of Greek philosophers like Empedocles and Pythagoras, as well as [[Cicero]].
- The author suggests that true Christianity regards human existence as a consequence of sin and error, and that viewing the world as a penitentiary can serve as a guiding principle for navigating life and promoting tolerance, patience, and love for others.
- The author notes that individuals with a noble or genius-level soul may feel like prisoners in a world filled with common individuals, leading them to isolate themselves, and that human existence is marked by a brief period of life surrounded by vast periods of non-existence, which can evoke feelings of rebellion and discontent.
- The author argues that happiness is inconceivable in a world characterized by constant change and impermanence, as described by [[Plato]], and that humans spend their lives striving for something that will bring them happiness, but often end up disappointed and unfulfilled.
- The author challenges the idea that pleasure outweighs pain in the world, using the example of one animal eating another to illustrate the brutality of existence, and suggests that misfortune can have its uses, as a world without challenges would lead to boredom and stagnation.
- The author acknowledges that their philosophy may be seen as comfortless, but asserts that it is based on truth, and that people who prefer comforting doctrines should seek out priests or sham philosophers, rather than expecting genuine philosophers to compromise their principles.

Boredom, Suffering, and the Philosophies of Ethics

- The text discusses the concept of boredom and suffering, highlighting that boredom is a form of suffering unique to humans, as animals do not experience it in the same way, and it is often a result of the human ability

to contemplate the future and the meaning of life.

- The author references various philosophers, including the Greeks and the Hindoos, who have different approaches to ethics, with the Greeks focusing on achieving a happy life and the Hindoos aiming to free and redeem individuals from life altogether, as stated in the Sankhya Karika.
- The text also explores the idea of a "realm of finality" and the concept of an infinite existence, exposed to no attack from without, and needing nothing to support it, which is discussed in the context of Platonic philosophy and the denial of the will to live.

William James, Nihilistic Depression, and the Emptiness of Life

- The author quotes [[William James]], who shares his personal experience of nihilistic depression and a horrifying fear of his own existence, triggered by the image of an epileptic patient, which made him realize the insecurity of life and the possibility of suffering.
- James' experience is used to illustrate the point that existence has no real value in itself, and that boredom is a feeling of the emptiness of life, which can be a direct proof of this concept, and the author also references Tolstoy, who quotes [[The Buddha | the Buddha]], Solomon, and Schopenhauer to support this idea.
- The text concludes by highlighting the different ways in which people cope with the reality of suffering and the meaninglessness of life, with Tolstoy identifying only four ways in which men of his class and society meet this situation, and the author implying that these ways may not be sufficient to address the deeper existential questions.

Healthy-Mindedness, the Sick Soul, and the Evil Facts of Reality

- The text discusses the concept of "healthy-mindedness" and its limitations, as well as the idea of a "sick soul" that is more aware of the evil and suffering in the world, with references to the thoughts of Tolstoy and the ideas of William James.
- Tolstoy's experiences with despair and suicidal thoughts are mentioned, and how he was drawn to the idea of a "thirst for God" as a way to escape his feelings of desperation, highlighting the limitations of a purely intellectual or rational approach to life.
- The text also critiques the idea of "healthy-mindedness" as a philosophical doctrine, arguing that it is inadequate because it refuses to account for the evil facts of reality, and that these evil facts may be a key to understanding the significance of life, with James suggesting that this approach can be overly optimistic and dismissive of the darker aspects of human experience.

Healthy-Mindedness, Christianity, and the Negation of Evil

- The concept of "healthy-mindedness" is further explored in relation to Christianity and the idea of a religion that focuses on the good and ignores or denies the evil aspects of the universe, with examples given of

individuals who embody this type of temperament, such as those who are content with the finite and shielded from morbid repining.

- The text also touches on the idea that even those who do not identify with the "healthy-minded" type may still find themselves agreeing with some of its principles, and that there can be a tension between this approach and the more pessimistic or aware approach of the "sick soul", with references to the thoughts of Martin Luther and the idea that evil is irrational and should not be pinned down or preserved in any final system of truth.
- The concept of evil is described as a negative existence, a lack of goodness, and an "alien unreality" that should be negated, with Augustine's perspective being that evil is simply the absence of good, and the Other world is beyond good and evil.

Pity, Pain, Fear, and World-Sickness

- The idea of pity, pain, and fear is introduced as a potential key to understanding the meaning of a situation, and a quote from Luther is mentioned, where he says he would give up his chance of Paradise rather than live forty years more.
- The text discusses the concept of "world-sickness," where the human being's sensitiveness is increased, and the good quality of successful moments is spoiled, with all natural goods perishing, including riches, fame, love, youth, health, and pleasure, leaving only dust and disappointment.
- The spectre of universal death and the all-encompassing blackness is highlighted as a fundamental issue that healthy-mindedness cannot adequately address, with the typical response of "get out into the open air" or "cheer up" being dismissed as a rational answer to the deeper troubles that lie beneath.
- The text argues that a life not correlated with death, a health not liable to illness, and a kind of good that will not perish are needed, with the current goods of nature being insufficient, and the fact that we can die and be ill is what perplexes us, making the present moment of living and being well irrelevant to that perplexity.
- The naturalistic look at life is criticized for ending in sadness, with old age having the last word, and the evil background being always present, even if healthy-mindedness tries to ignore and forget it, and the text concludes that the significance and value of any present fact depend on the remoter schemes and hopes with which it is related.

Pessimism, Naturalism, and the Cold Gloom of Reality (Journal314_20-33)

- The text from 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the concept of pessimism and the effects of naturalism on human perception, citing Heisman's quote that the glow and gilding of life vanish when considering the cold and gloom of the ultimate reality.
- According to the text, naturalism, influenced by recent cosmological speculations, portrays mankind as being in a desperate situation, similar to

people living on a frozen lake with no escape, awaiting the inevitable day when the ice will melt and they will be drowned.

- The text also explores the idea that extreme unhappiness can lead to a state where the goods of nature are entirely forgotten, and all sentiment of their existence vanishes from the mental field, requiring a pathological melancholy that forces the individual to ignore all good.
- The author notes that such sensitiveness and susceptibility to mental pain are rare in individuals with a normal nervous constitution, and are often associated with a neurotic constitution, which has its source in the animal and spiritual region of the subject's being.

Negativity, Deadness, and the Search for Metaphysical Solutions

- The text describes a state of negativity and deadness, where the world is stripped of all emotion and significance, and the individual is left with a sense of unreality and disconnection, as if living in another century.
- The author also mentions that in some cases, this state of melancholy can lead to a profound astonishment and a search for a metaphysical solution, as the individual struggles to reconcile the double-faced and unhomelike nature of the world.
- Furthermore, the text touches on the idea that in extreme cases of melancholia, the individual may experience hallucinations and delusions, resulting in a state of desperation and overwhelming horror, where the universe coagulates into a material of unending terror.
- The conception of evil is not just an intellectual perception, but a profound and overwhelming sensation that can render all other thoughts and consolations irrelevant, and it is in these moments of desperation that the true core of the religious problem emerges, which is the need for help and relief.

Complete Religions, Unification, and the Coexistence of Good and Evil

- The most complete religions are those that acknowledge and address the pessimistic elements of human experience, recognizing that natural good is insufficient and transient, and that it can even be an obstacle to achieving true spiritual good.
- The process of unification and inner unity, as experienced by individuals like [[Augustine of Hippo | Saint Augustine]] and Alline, can bring a sense of relief and happiness, and it may occur gradually or abruptly, through altered feelings, powers of action, intellectual insights, or mystical experiences.
- However, for some individuals, like Bunyan and Tolstoy, the experience of suffering and bitterness can be so profound that it cannot be entirely overcome, and their redemption is into a universe that acknowledges the coexistence of good and evil, with the sadness and despair being preserved as a minor ingredient in the heart of their faith.
- Tolstoy's perceptions of evil, in particular, remained unmodified, and he continued to critique the official values and institutions of his time,

while Bunyan's experience led him to renounce all worldly attachments and to trust in God through [[Jesus | Christ]], embracing the grave as his house and darkness as his bed.

Saintliness, Self-Surrender, and the Precept of Love

- The character of saintliness is marked by spiritual emotions being the habitual centre of personal energy, and it can manifest in different ways, including asceticism and self-surrender, which can sometimes turn into self-immolation, and it is possible to identify a composite photograph of universal saintliness that is common to all religions.
- The saintly person experiences a profound transformation, where they find pleasure in sacrifice and asceticism, demonstrating their loyalty to a higher power, and this transformation is characterized by a heightened sensitivity to inner inconsistency or discord, making mixture and confusion intolerable.
- The precept "Love your enemies" is not self-contradictory, but rather an extreme limit of magnanimity, and if radically followed, it would involve a significant breach with instinctive springs of action and the present world's arrangements, leading to a critical point where one is born into another kingdom of being.

Penance, Sacrifice, and Surrender to Providence

- The impulse to expiate and do penance is a spontaneous expression of self-despair and anxiety, and in the form of loving sacrifice, ascetic discipline of the severest sort may be the fruit of highly optimistic religious feeling, as seen in the examples of Hindu fakirs, Buddhist monks, Mohammedan dervishes, Jesuits, and Franciscans, who all idealize poverty as the loftiest individual state.
- The saintly life is characterized by the recurring note of surrendering to God's providence without reserve, taking no thought for the morrow, and selling all one's possessions to give to the poor, with the belief that only through ruthless and reckless sacrifice will higher safety arrive.

Taoism, Emptiness, and Non-Action

- The concept of [[Taoism]] is also explored, where the [[Tao]] that can be described is not the enduring and unchanging Tao, and the sage manages affairs without doing anything, keeping people without knowledge and without desire, and avoiding action, which leads to good order being universal, with the Tao being likened to the emptiness of a vessel, and the sages dealing with people without benevolence, just like heaven and earth deal with all things.
- The text also references the idea that when wealth and honours lead to arrogance, this brings its own evil, and that the saintly person must order all their mind's objects and occupations with reference to their spiritual excitement, with whatever is unspiritual being repugnant, as seen in the examples of Suso's mortifications and the idealization of poverty by various

religious groups.

Withdrawal into Obscurity and the Way of Heaven (Journal314_20-33)

- The text from 'Journal314_20-33' presents various philosophical ideas and reflections, including the concept that when one's work is done and their name is distinguished, it is best to withdraw into obscurity, as stated in the phrase "When the work is done, and one's name is becoming distinguished, to withdraw into obscurity is the way of Heaven."
- The importance of emptiness and the empty space is highlighted, as it is on the empty space that the use of things depends, such as the empty hollowness of vessels, the empty space within an apartment, and the empty space for the axle in a wheel.
- The text also warns against the dangers of excess and the pursuit of worldly desires, stating that the five hues of color, the five notes of music, and the five flavors can deprive one of their senses, and that the sage seeks to satisfy the craving of the belly, not the eyes, as expressed in the phrase "the sage seeks to satisfy (the craving of) the belly, and not the (insatiable longing of the) eyes."
- The idea that having a physical body makes one liable to great calamity is also presented, with the statement "What makes me liable to great calamity is my having the body (which I call myself); if I had not the body, what great calamity could come to me?"

The Tao: The Equable, the Inaudible, and the Subtle

- The text describes the [[Tao]] as something that cannot be seen, heard, or grasped, and is referred to as "the Equable," "the Inaudible," and "the Subtle," and that it is the Form of the Formless and the Semblance of the Invisible, with the phrase "We look at it, and we do not see it, and we name it 'the Equable.'"
- The importance of renouncing sageness, wisdom, benevolence, and righteousness is emphasized, as it is believed that this would be better for the people, and that it would lead to a more natural and harmonious state, as stated in the phrase "If we could renounce our sageness and discard our wisdom, it would be better for the people a hundredfold."
- The text also touches on the idea that learning and knowledge can be a source of trouble, and that simplicity and humility are to be valued, with the statement "When we renounce learning we have no troubles."

The Author, the Tao, and the Grandest Forms of Active Force

- The author describes themselves as being different from others, feeling listless and still, and having a mind like that of a stupid man, but values the nursing-mother, the Tao, and recognizes that the grandest forms of active force come from the Tao, as expressed in the phrase "The grandest forms of active force From Tao come, their only source."
- The concept of the [[Tao]] is described as profound, dark, and obscure, with all things enduring in their essences, and it is the Mother of all

things, giving them what they need and making them complete.

- The Tao is considered unchanging and has no name, with simplicity and a lack of desire being key to achieving a state of rest and stillness, allowing all things to go right as if of their own will.

The Sage, Non-Violence, and the Hidden Tao

- The sage, or wise person, is described as someone who becomes the Head of all Officers when employed, and in their greatest regulations, they employ no violent measures, instead putting away excessive effort, extravagance, and easy indulgence.

- The importance of calm and repose is emphasized, with victory by force of arms being considered undesirable, as it would involve delighting in the slaughter of men, which would prevent one from getting their will in the kingdom.

- The [[Tao]] is said to be hidden, but it is what imparts to all things what they need and makes them complete, and those who hear about it and earnestly carry it into practice are considered scholars of the highest class.

The Violent, Non-Action, and the Teaching Without Words

- The violent and strong are said not to die their natural death, and the advantage of doing nothing with a purpose is highlighted, with few people in the world attaining to the teaching without words and the advantage arising from non-action.

- The importance of contentment and purity is emphasized, with purity and stillness giving the correct law to all under heaven, and the sufficiency of contentment being an enduring and unchanging sufficiency.

- The text also warns against the dangers of ambition, discontent, and the desire to constantly be getting more, stating that these are the greatest guilt, calamity, and fault, and that one can understand all that takes place under the sky without going outside their door, and see the Tao of Heaven without looking out from their window.

Contentment, Purity, and the Dangers of Ambition

- The importance of contentment and purity is emphasized, with purity and stillness giving the correct law to all under heaven, and the sufficiency of contentment being an enduring and unchanging sufficiency.

- The text also warns against the dangers of ambition, discontent, and the desire to constantly be getting more, stating that these are the greatest guilt, calamity, and fault, and that one can understand all that takes place under the sky without going outside their door, and see the [[Tao]] of Heaven without looking out from their window.

- The sages are described as having gained knowledge without needing to travel, given names to things without seeing them, and accomplished their goals without a specific purpose, highlighting their unique understanding and approach to the world.

Learning, the Tao, and the Diminishment of Actions

- The text contrasts the approach of those who devote themselves to learning, seeking to increase their knowledge daily, with those who devote themselves to the Tao, seeking to diminish their actions and desires, ultimately arriving at a state of non-action, where they can accomplish everything without purposeful intent.
- The sage is characterized as having no fixed mind of their own, instead making the mind of the people their own, and being good and sincere to all, regardless of how they are treated, in order to bring out the goodness and sincerity in others.
- The [[Tao]] is revered as the origin of all things under the sky, and is considered the mother of all, with those who understand and embody its qualities being able to live a life free from peril and laborious exertion.

The Sage, Humility, and the Origin of All Things

- The sage is characterized as having no fixed mind of their own, instead making the mind of the people their own, and being good and sincere to all, regardless of how they are treated, in order to bring out the goodness and sincerity in others.
- The Tao is revered as the origin of all things under the sky, and is considered the mother of all, with those who understand and embody its qualities being able to live a life free from peril and laborious exertion.
- The text warns against the dangers of excessive desire, ambition, and action, citing the example of princes who prioritize wealth and power, and instead advocates for a simple and humble approach to life, exemplified by the infant who embodies the attributes of the Tao.

Excessive Desire, the Infant, and Mysterious Agreement

- The importance of humility and silence is emphasized, with those who truly understand the [[Tao]] being reluctant to speak about it, and instead choosing to keep their mouth closed and blend in with others, in a state of "Mysterious Agreement".
- The text also discusses the negative consequences of excessive legislation, prohibition, and action, citing the example of a kingdom where such approaches have led to poverty, disorder, and crime, and instead advocates for a approach of non-action and freedom from purpose, allowing the people to transform and correct themselves.

Excessive Legislation, Non-Action, and the Interplay of Happiness and Misery

- The interplay between happiness and misery is highlighted, with the suggestion that one is always accompanied by the other, and that attempts to correct or impose order can ultimately lead to distortion and evil.
- The text concludes by cautioning against the delusion of thinking that correction and legislation can solve all problems, and instead suggests that

a more nuanced and humble approach is needed, one that recognizes the complexity and interconnectedness of all things.

The Sage's Simplicity, Non-Desire, and Unlearning

- The sage is described as being straightforward and bright, but not dazzling or harmful to others, and is said to act without thinking of acting, conduct affairs without feeling trouble, and consider what is small as great.
- The sage does not desire what other men desire, does not prize things that are difficult to get, and learns what other men do not learn, instead turning back to what the multitude of men have passed by, and thus helps the natural development of all things.
- The words of the sage are easy to know and practise, but few people are able to do so because they do not understand the originating and all-comprehending principle and authoritative law behind them, and those who know the sage are few and therefore prize him highly.

Knowing and Not Knowing, and the Value of the Sage

- It is considered the highest attainment to know and yet think we do not know, while not knowing and yet thinking we do know is considered a disease, as noted by philosophers such as Socrates and Maya.
- The sage knows and loves himself, but does not parade his knowledge or set a value on himself, and avoids indulging in ordinary life, instead avoiding weariness by not acting thoughtlessly, and this is reflected in the idea that contemplating and meditating on death is important for Dharma practice, as noted in [[Buddhism]].

Self-Love, Thoughtless Action, and Contemplating Death

- The sage knows and loves himself, but does not parade his knowledge or set a value on himself, and avoids indulging in ordinary life, instead avoiding weariness by not acting thoughtlessly, and this is reflected in the idea that contemplating and meditating on death is important for Dharma practice, as noted in Buddhism.
- According to Buddhist teachings, contemplating death prevents laziness and attachment to the things of life, and [[The Buddha | the Buddha]] is described as coming forth to rescue all flesh from the bondage of folly and ignorance, with the [[Bodhisattva]] being deeply affected by the pain of age and the misery of decay.
- The text also quotes Pascal, who notes that if all men could learn to sit in their room, most bad things would be eliminated, highlighting the importance of self-reflection and introspection in achieving wisdom and avoiding harm to others.
- Ultimately, the sage and the Buddhist teachings emphasize the importance of living a simple and self-aware life, avoiding attachment to worldly desires and fears, and cultivating wisdom and compassion in order to achieve a state of inner peace and liberation.

The King, the Bodhisattva, and the Impermanence of Life (Journal314_20-33)

- The passage from 'Journal314_20-33' describes a king who, despite being aware of the suffering caused by sickness, lives a life of joy and ignorance, surrounded by worldly pleasures, and later grieves over the pain of sickness, dwelling in the seclusion of his palace.
- The king attempts to distract himself from his thoughts by observing and improving his gardens, selecting beautiful women to attend to him, and removing any offensive sights, but this distraction is short-lived as he is reminded of the inevitability of death and decay.
- The prince, who is later referred to as [[Bodhisattva]], is perplexed by the delusion of worldly men who, despite seeing the body brought to dust, continue to live carelessly, and he reflects on the impermanence of life, echoing the thoughts of philosophers such as Pascal, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Heidegger, and Kempus.

The Prince, the Women, and the Pursuit of Serious Thought

- The women in the king's palace attempt to arouse the prince's feelings with their beauty and charms, but he remains unaffected, collected, and firm, and instead is driven to serious thought, witnessing the strange conduct of the women and understanding their design to disconcert his mind.
- The Bodhisattva reflects on the ignorance and delusion that overshadows the minds of the women, who are unaware of the impermanence of youthful beauty and the inevitability of old age, disease, and death, and he considers it a great distress that they do not exert themselves to consider these realities and instead indulge in sport and laughter.

The Human Condition, Mortality, and the Search for True Happiness (Journal314_20-33)

- The passage from 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the human condition, highlighting the impermanence of things and the inevitability of old age, disease, and death, which fills the heart with sadness and heaviness, as noted by the author, who references Pascal.
- The author reflects on how the knowledge of mortality and the transience of human joys can rob them of satisfaction, and that yielding to the power of love despite this knowledge is akin to behaving like beasts, lacking in self-awareness and foresight.
- The text also touches on the idea that true happiness and peace can only be achieved by letting go of worldly desires and attachments, as exemplified by the prince who becomes disillusioned with the pleasures of the world and seeks a more profound and lasting sense of fulfillment.

The Prince's Journey and the Attainment of Samâdhi

- The prince's journey is marked by his rejection of the worldly pleasures offered by his father, the king, and his subsequent search for a more

meaningful and permanent form of happiness, which ultimately leads him to a state of perfect peace and enlightenment, described as Samâdhi.

- The author also introduces the figure of a Shâman, who is similarly troubled by the thought of old age, disease, and death, and is searching for a way to escape the cycle of suffering, seeking a happiness that is not subject to decay or impermanence.

- The passage concludes with the prince's encounter with various people in the city, all of whom are driven by their own desires and fears, highlighting the universal human experience of attachment and suffering, and the need for a deeper understanding and acceptance of the nature of reality.

The Prince's Request, the King's Advice, and the Allure of Worldly Duties

- The prince's heart was filled with joy upon hearing the words "separation and association," which led him to express his dread of age, disease, and death, and to respectfully request permission to become a hermit in search of "true deliverance."

- The prince's father advised him to suppress the thought of leaving home and instead undertake his worldly duties, find delight in getting an illustrious name, and then give up his home and family, but the prince besought his father to grant him life without end, no disease, no undesirable old age, and no decay of earthly possessions in order to give up the thought of leaving home.

- When his father refused to grant him these prayers, the prince again besought him to let him go and leave his home, comparing his life to dwelling in a burning house and emphasizing the need to seek an explanation for his doubts, even if it meant seeking it in an unrighteous way.

The Prince's Resolve, the Women's Temptations, and the Burning House

- The royal father, seeing his son's mind firmly fixed, commanded attendant women to provoke the prince's mind to pleasure, but the prince was unmoved and instead looked upon the women with a changed perspective, seeing them as uninviting and repulsive, and questioning their disposition and trustworthiness.

- The prince's father and others attempted to persuade him to stay, citing the need for him to feel pity for those who would be affected by his departure, including his loving mother who had cherished him kindly, and advising him that he could practise a hermit's duties in his home without needing to enter the forest wilds.

- The prince ultimately remained resolute in his decision, driven by his fear of birth, old age, disease, and death, and acknowledging that his disobedience and disregard for his father's kindness were motivated by his desire to escape the inevitable doom of death, which he believed would come to those who neglected right consideration about their present life.

The Hermit's Life, Sensual Pleasures, and the Evils of Existence

- The speaker of the text is reflecting on their decision to live a hermit's

life, away from the sensual pleasures and misery of the world, and is convinced that this choice is necessary to achieve wisdom and escape the evils of birth, old age, and death.

- The speaker cites their own experiences and the teachings of wise individuals, including Theresa of Avila and St. Farigno, to support their decision to renounce worldly desires and seek a life of quietness and rest.
- The text emphasizes the importance of self-denial, purity, and the rejection of covetousness and lustful desires, which are seen as the root causes of sorrow and misery, and instead advocates for a life of moderation, restraint, and spiritual pursuit.

Self-Denial, Purity, and the Rejection of Worldly Desires

- The speaker cites their own experiences and the teachings of wise individuals, including Theresa of Avila and St. Farigno, to support their decision to renounce worldly desires and seek a life of quietness and rest.
- The text emphasizes the importance of self-denial, purity, and the rejection of covetousness and lustful desires, which are seen as the root causes of sorrow and misery, and instead advocates for a life of moderation, restraint, and spiritual pursuit.
- The speaker argues that the wise person should not be attached to worldly pleasures or desires, and should instead seek to destroy the risings of desire and cultivate a sense of detachment and inner peace.
- The text also touches on the theme of impermanence, noting that everything in life is transient, including wealth, power, and even life itself, and that true peace and happiness can only be achieved by letting go of attachment to these things.

Impermanence, Deliverance, and the Path of Non-Violence

- The speaker expresses a desire to escape the cycle of birth, old age, and death, and to find a sure mode of deliverance, and believes that this can be achieved through a life of simplicity, humility, and spiritual discipline.
- The text critiques the idea of seeking religious merit through violent or harmful means, such as slaughter, and instead advocates for a path of non-violence, compassion, and moral conduct.
- Throughout the text, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living a simple, austere life, free from the distractions and temptations of the world, and of cultivating a deep sense of inner peace, wisdom, and spiritual awareness.

Emptiness, Self-Realization, and the Katha Upanishad (Journal314_20-33)

- The text from 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the concept of emptiness and the path to self-realization, citing various spiritual and philosophical sources, including Buddhist teachings and the Katha Upanishad, a Hindu scripture.
- According to the text, the state of emptiness is not just the absence of something, but rather a transcendent state that goes beyond all forms of

mutual relationship, subject and object, and birth and death, as described by [[D. T. Suzuki | Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki]].

- The Katha Upanishad is quoted, where [[Nachiketa]], a young seeker, is offered various worldly pleasures by the king of death, but instead chooses to ask about the secret of death and the possibility of an afterlife, demonstrating his preference for perennial joy over passing pleasure.
- The text highlights the choice between wisdom and ignorance, where the wise recognize the difference between abiding joy and fleeting pleasure, and strive for self-realization, while the ignorant are led astray by their senses and vain learning.

Wisdom, Ignorance, and the Transcendence of Duality

- The text highlights the choice between wisdom and ignorance, where the wise recognize the difference between abiding joy and fleeting pleasure, and strive for self-realization, while the ignorant are led astray by their senses and vain learning.
- The concept of emptiness is further elaborated as a state of absolute emptiness that transcends all forms of duality, and is described as a "zero full of infinite possibilities" and a "void of inexhaustible contents", as quoted from Cioran, emphasizing its role in making all things possible.
- The text also touches on the idea that true deliverance is achieved by transcending material limitations and bodily existence, and that this state is characterized by inward rest, peace, and the absence of the concept of "I", as described in the context of Buddhist teachings and the Katha Upanishad.

True Deliverance, Inward Rest, and the Absence of "I"

- The text also touches on the idea that true deliverance is achieved by transcending material limitations and bodily existence, and that this state is characterized by inward rest, peace, and the absence of the concept of "I", as described in the context of Buddhist teachings and the Katha Upanishad.
- The text discusses the importance of Self-realization and the rarity of individuals who make it their supreme goal in life, with the guidance of an illumined teacher being crucial in attaining this state.
- The speaker renounces earthly desires and treasures, recognizing their transience, and instead seeks eternal fulfillment through the instruction of a wise teacher, such as [[Nachiketa]], who has renounced worldly desires and powers.

Self-Realization, Earthly Desires, and the Guidance of an Illumined Teacher

- The text discusses the importance of Self-realization and the rarity of individuals who make it their supreme goal in life, with the guidance of an illumined teacher being crucial in attaining this state.
- The speaker renounces earthly desires and treasures, recognizing their

transience, and instead seeks eternal fulfillment through the instruction of a wise teacher, such as Nachiketa, who has renounced worldly desires and powers.

- The text references various philosophers, including Luther, [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Nietzsche, and mystics, highlighting the idea that enlightenment cannot be achieved through worldly works or rituals, but rather through a deeper understanding of the Self.

O M, the Godhead, and the Supreme Goal of Life

- The symbol "O M" is introduced as the highest symbol of the Godhead, representing the ultimate reality that brings complete fulfillment of all longings, and is considered the greatest support to all seekers.
- The text emphasizes that the Self cannot be known through scriptural study, intellectual understanding, or hearing discourses, but rather through direct experience and revelation, which is only possible for those who have disciplined their minds, controlled their senses, and practiced meditation.
- The importance of discrimination, a one-pointed mind, and a pure heart is stressed, as these qualities enable individuals to attain the supreme goal of life, which is to be united with the Lord of Love, [[Brahman]], the hidden Self in everyone.

Meditation, Wisdom, and the Path to Liberation

- Meditation is highlighted as a means to deepen one's understanding and experience of the Self, allowing individuals to go beyond the world of words and thoughts and into the realm of wisdom and superconsciousness.
- The text concludes by encouraging seekers to wake up, seek guidance from an illumined teacher, and embark on the challenging but ultimately liberating path of Self-realization, which leads to eternal freedom from the cycle of death and rebirth.

The Afterlife, Spiritual Liberation, and the Cycle of Rebirth (Journal314_20-33)

- The text from 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the concept of the afterlife and the attainment of spiritual liberation, citing that those who rely solely on good works and sacrifices are ultimately subject to the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, and are considered fools who are dwelling in darkness and ignorance.
- According to the text, true liberation can be achieved by practising penance and faith, and by acquiring freedom from all desires, as nothing eternal can be gained by what is not eternal, and it is recommended that one should approach a learned Guru to understand this concept.

Montaigne, Philosophy, and the Preparation for Death

- The text also quotes Montaigne, who states that the study of philosophy is a preparation for death, and that as one becomes less attached to the commodities of life, they will become less fearful of death, and that living

a long life does not shorten the time one will be dead.

- Montaigne also emphasizes the importance of disengaging oneself from worldly relations and accepting death as a natural part of life, and notes that those who teach men to die also teach them to live, and that it is impossible to disengage oneself from the thought of death.

Ecclesiastes, Vanity, and the Futility of Worldly Pursuits

- Additionally, the text quotes [[Ecclesiastes]], who states that all is vanity, and that there is nothing new under the sun, and that the pursuit of knowledge and wealth is ultimately futile, and that what has been done will be done again, and that true wisdom lies in recognizing the impermanence of all things.

- The quotes from Ecclesiastes also highlight the idea that the pursuit of pleasure and knowledge can ultimately lead to sorrow, and that true fulfillment cannot be achieved through material means, and that one should recognize the limitations and fleeting nature of human existence.

Vanity, the Fleeting Nature of Life, and the Rise of Science (Journal314_20-33)

- The section from the document 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the concept of vanity and the fleeting nature of human life, with quotes from various sources, including the Bible, highlighting the idea that all human endeavors are ultimately vain and that life is short and fragile.

- The quotes from the Bible emphasize the futility of human toil and the search for meaning in a seemingly meaningless world, with phrases such as "all was vanity and a striving after wind" and "all go to one place" underscoring the idea that human existence is fleeting and ultimately returns to dust.

- The section also includes quotes from [[Will Durant]], who notes that in the past, people could afford to be pessimistic about life on earth because they believed in an afterlife, but with the rise of science, this consolation is no longer available, and people are left to confront the reality of mortality and the impermanence of all things.

Durant, the Cycle of Destruction, and the Illusion of Progress

- Durant also discusses the cycle of construction and destruction throughout history, with civilizations rising and falling, and the scale of destruction increasing over time, highlighting the idea that human progress is an illusion and that we are ultimately doomed to repeat the same patterns of behavior.

- The section also touches on the idea that technological advancements and material wealth have not brought humanity the happiness and fulfillment that was expected, with Durant noting that "we taught people how to read, and they enrich the tabloids and motion pictures" and that "peace departs as riches come", suggesting that human nature is inherently flawed and that our desires and greed will always outweigh our capacity for wisdom and

compassion.

- Finally, the section quotes [[Aristotle]], who suggests that the idea of progress is a delusion, and that human affairs are ultimately changeless and still, with what we call progress being merely superficial change, a succession of fashions and new ways of doing old things, rather than any genuine advancement or improvement.

Aristotle, Superficial Change, and the Essence of Human Nature

- Finally, the section quotes Aristotle, who suggests that the idea of progress is a delusion, and that human affairs are ultimately changeless and still, with what we call progress being merely superficial change, a succession of fashions and new ways of doing old things, rather than any genuine advancement or improvement.

- The essence of human nature remains the same despite advancements in technology and civilization, with people still driven by crude, selfish, and contradictory purposes, as evident in the use of tools ranging from wooden ploughs and flint knives to machine guns and bombs.

- The concept of progress is called into question, as all history seems to be a futile circle where human discoveries and accumulations ultimately lead to decadence, degeneration, and death, with even the great civilizations of the past, such as Atlantis, disappearing and leaving behind only legends.

The Nihilistic Experience, Science, and the Biological Episode

- The passage highlights the nihilistic experience of the complete disappearance of everything, citing the example of various species of man, including Piltdown, Neanderthal, and Cro-magnon, who lived for thousands of years but left behind only a few remnants, and the fact that almost every idea and perception held by humans will be a delusion or prejudice.

- The idea that science and universal education would bring about happiness, truth, and freedom is also challenged, as the findings of science have instead revealed a picture of universal struggle and death, with biologists reporting that all life lives at the expense of other life and that the ability to kill is the ultimate test of survival.

- The example of the author's dog, Wolf, is used to illustrate the biological aspects of life, where even love and affection can be reduced to simple biological instincts, and the passage concludes by noting that when faith in a higher purpose or destiny begins to weaken, life becomes narrowed down to a mere biological episode, leading to a loss of belief in oneself and one's race, and a sense of skepticism and scorn towards great endeavors.

Faith, Hope, Doubt, and Despair (Journal314_20-33)

- The section from the document 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the themes of faith, hope, doubt, and despair, quoting Edwin Robinson, who states that a materialistic worldview leads to a belief in a futile and absurd existence.

- The text references various philosophers and thinkers, including Pseudo-Dionysius, who describes the divine as the cause of all things yet

transcending them, and [[Thomas Aquinas]], who expresses humility in the face of infused contemplation, saying "I can write no more" after experiencing profound insights.

- [[Aldous Huxley]] is quoted, discussing the concept of world denial and the shift in societal values over time, noting that what was once considered orthodox and comprehensible is now seen as madness, and highlighting the importance of contemplation in cultivating ethical values and avoiding harmful behaviors.

Huxley, World Denial, and the Benefits of Contemplation

- Aldous Huxley is quoted, discussing the concept of world denial and the shift in societal values over time, noting that what was once considered orthodox and comprehensible is now seen as madness, and highlighting the importance of contemplation in cultivating ethical values and avoiding harmful behaviors.

- Huxley also emphasizes the benefits of contemplation, stating that it can lead to a sense of satisfaction and contentment, allowing individuals to refrain from negative actions and instead become conduits for positive influences, and he notes that contemplatives are less likely to engage in destructive behaviors such as gambling, intolerance, or exploitation.

- The text also includes a personal anecdote from Huxley, where he describes his inner world as a "five-and-ten-cent ship" filled with trivial and superficial structures, symbolizing the limitations and pretensions of the human self, and he contrasts this with the idea of an inner world that is strange and unpredictable, yet a potential source of wonder and connection to the divine.

- Other thinkers mentioned in the text include Clifford Williams, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and Pascal, who are referenced in the context of contemplation, morality, and the human search for meaning and connection to a higher reality.

The Void, Objective Reality, and the Active-Contemplative

- The Taoists and Zen Buddhists, as well as philosophers like Cioran, Vivekananda, Tillich, and Suzuki, have explored the concept of looking beyond visions to the Void and then back to objective reality, which encompasses "the ten thousand things".

- In contrast to the quietist, who retreats from the world, the active-contemplative, such as the saint or the [[Bodhisattva]], embodies a balance between transcendental insight and practical charity, as described by Eckhart, where one is ready to descend from a state of spiritual elevation to perform acts of kindness, like bringing a cup of water to a sick brother.

Mescaline, Timeless Bliss, and the Problem of Reconciliation

- The use of mescaline, as described, opens up the way to contemplation, but one that is incompatible with action, leaving the user with the problem of reconciling timeless bliss with temporal duties, much like the quietist, and

this is evident in the user's feeling that, despite the revelation, something is wrong.

- The experience of mescaline use is characterized by a participation in the manifest glory of things, which leaves no room for ordinary human concerns, especially those involving persons, and this raises questions about the importance of human relationships and the ability to engage in practical actions.

God's Disposition, Disintegration, and the Higher Order

- The idea that "in life, man proposes, God disposes" suggests that human plans are subject to a higher power, and this is reflected in the notion that the whole may be disorganized, but each individual fragment is in order, representing a Higher Order, which prevails even in disintegration.
- The experience of disintegration, while potentially dangerous, may also have its advantages, as it allows for a more immediate perception of the ultimate order, unobscured by human fabrications, and this is evident in the user's feeling that the body can look after itself, even in a state of chaos.
- The mescaline experience is described as wonderful, almost terrifying, and comparable to the heavens of schizophrenia, but it is also noted that this paradise of cleansed perception is not sustainable, and the blissful intermissions eventually give way to horror, a phenomenon not experienced by all mescaline users, who may only encounter the heavenly aspects.

The Mescaline Experience, Beauty, and the Limitations of the Human Mind

- The user's fear of being overwhelmed and disintegrating under the pressure of reality is a significant aspect of the mescaline experience, as it highlights the limitations of the human mind in coping with intense beauty and significance, and the need to reconcile the desire for contemplation with the demands of practical action.

Religious Experience, the Mysterium Tremendum, and the Divine Light

- The literature of religious experience often describes the overwhelming fear and terror that individuals experience when they come face to face with the Mysterium tremendum, which is attributed to the incompatibility between human egotism and divine purity.
- According to theologians such as Boehme and William Law, the divine Light can be perceived as a burning, purgatorial fire by unregenerate souls, and a similar concept is found in The [[Bardo Thodol | Tibetan Book of the Dead]], where the departed soul shrinks from the Pure Light of the Void.

Schizophrenia, Reality, and the Downward Spiral of Fear

- The schizophrenic is described as a soul who is not only unregenerate but also desperately sick, unable to take refuge from inner and outer reality in the common sense world of useful notions and socially acceptable conventions.

- The schizophrenic's sickness is characterized by an inability to shut off the experience of reality, which is perceived as too intense and significant to be explained away, leading to interpretations of malevolence and desperate countermeasures.
- The author reflects on their own experience and notes that if one starts with fear and hate, it can lead to a self-validating downward spiral, and that controlling madness is not possible if one begins with these premises.

The Clear Light, Tibetan Rituals, and the Role of the Psychiatrist

- The author is asked about their ability to focus on the Clear Light, as described in The [[Bardo Thodol | Tibetan Book of the Dead]], and responds that it would be difficult to do so without guidance, highlighting the importance of the Tibetan ritual, where someone is present to guide the individual.
- The author draws a parallel between the Tibetan ritual and the role of a modern psychiatrist, suggesting that the latter could provide similar guidance and support to the insane, helping them to remain undistracted and focused on the Clear Light.
- The text discusses the idea that despite the terror, bewilderment, and confusion in the world, the ultimate Reality remains unshakably itself and is of the same substance as the inner light of even the most cruelly tormented mind, and that this fact should be constantly reminded to people, especially those in institutions, through various devices such as recorders and public address systems.

Artificial Paradises, Goethe, and the Limitations of Verbal Communication

- The author notes that humanity will likely never be able to dispense with Artificial Paradises, as people's lives are often painful, monotonous, poor, and limited, and they have an innate urge to escape and transcend themselves, quoting the author's own experience of returning to a state of being in one's right mind.
- The text also quotes Goethe, who suggests that people should talk less and draw more, and that communication through sketches and observation of nature can be more profound and meaningful than speech, highlighting the limitations and futility of verbal communication.
- The author criticizes the dominance of verbalism and rationalism in education, arguing that the non-verbal humanities, such as the study of nature and transcendental experience, are often ignored or dismissed as non-existent or unimportant, and that this neglect can lead to a lack of understanding and appreciation for the world.

A More Realistic Education and Transcendental Experience

- The author suggests that a more realistic and less exclusively verbal system of education would allow individuals to explore and experience the world of transcendental experience, and that this could be beneficial for personal growth and development, citing the example of [[Thomas Aquinas |

Aquinas]], who experienced Infused Contemplation and thereafter refused to return to his academic work.

- The text concludes by discussing the idea that certain mental events, which are normally excluded from consciousness because they possess no survival value, can enter into consciousness when the biological efficiency of the brain is lowered, allowing for a deeper understanding and appreciation of the world.

Visionary Sightseeing and the Mind's Antipodes

- The intrusion of biologically useless but aesthetically and spiritually valuable material into one's mind may occur due to illness, fatigue, fasting, or confinement in a place of darkness and complete silence, allowing individuals to visit the mind's antipodes and experience visionary sightseeing.

- Through self-inflicted punishment, such as fasting and restricted environments, individuals can transport themselves to a state of visionary experience, where they perceive self-luminous objects with praeter-natural brilliance and significance, often resembling gem-stones.

Gems, Visionary Illumination, and the Other World

- The passion for gems and precious stones can be attributed to their resemblance to the sources of visionary illumination, with individuals believing that acquiring such stones guarantees their preciousness and therapeutic and magical virtue, as described by philosophers like Socrates and [[Plato]].

- According to Socrates in the Phaedo, there exists an ideal world above and beyond the world of matter, where colors are purer and more brilliant, and precious stones in this world are but fragments of the stones above, making the precious stones in our world highly prized.

- The fascination with polished stones like marble and granite can be seen in the efforts spent in obtaining them, such as the transportation of pink granite from Aswan to Baalbek and Palmyra, which was a laborious task that existed beyond mere utility, but rather to proclaim their kinship with the Other World.

The Ideal World, Precious Stones, and the Significance of Polished Materials

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- Visionary experience is not always blissful, as it can also be terrible, with hell being a part of the experience, and the light in such experiences can be described as the "smoky light" of the [[Bardo Thodol | Tibetan Book of the Dead]] or the "darkness visible" of Milton, highlighting the intrinsic appalling significance of such experiences.
- The writings of philosophers like [[Plato]] and the descriptions of visionary experiences by individuals like Weir Mitchell and Ezekiel emphasize the idea that precious stones and polished materials hold a deeper significance that transcends their physical properties, and are instead connected to the psychological and theological Other World of visionary experience.

Le Pays D'Eclairement, Schizophrenia, and the Perception of the Infinite

- The concept of "le pays d'eclairement", or "the country of lit-upness", is discussed in the context of the autobiographical record of a young girl's passage through madness, where the world of the schizophrenic is characterized by forced visions and an intense electric glare without shadows.
- For Renee, the schizophrenic girl, the illumination is infernal, bringing fear and a nightmarish sense of unreality, and the perception of the infinite in a finite particular is a revelation of "the System", a vast cosmic mechanism that grinds out guilt and punishment, solitude and unreality.
- In contrast, healthy visionaries experience the perception of the infinite as a revelation of divine immanence, and the literature of religious experience often references the pains and terrors that occur when individuals come face to face with the Mysterium tremendum, which is attributed to the incompatibility between human egotism and divine purity.

Sanity, Negative Visionary Experience, and the Doctrine of Saving Faith

- Sanity is described as a matter of degree, and there are visionaries who see the world as Renee saw it, but are still able to live outside the asylum, experiencing a transfigured universe, but for the worse, with everything appearing sinister or disgusting.
- The text also notes that negative visionary experience can be induced by purely psychological means, such as fear and anger, which can plunge an individual into a hellish experience, and that the theological doctrine of saving faith has been developed to reconcile the rationality and morality of eschatologists with the brute facts of psychological experience.
- According to this doctrine, faith, or loving confidence, is what guarantees a blissful visionary experience, while negative emotions, such as fear, hatred, and malice, can lead to an appalling experience, highlighting the importance of confidence and love in shaping one's visionary experience, as seen in the example of the Pharisee, who, despite being virtuous, may still have negative emotions that lead to infernal visionary experiences.

The Nature of Mind, Visionary Experience, and the Moment of Death

- The nature of the mind is such that individuals who repent and have faith in a higher power are more likely to experience a blissful visionary experience, particularly at the moment of death, than those who are self-satisfied and consumed by anxiety and negative emotions.
- The state of mind during a visionary experience can greatly impact its quality, with prolonged experiences potentially becoming overwhelming or even horrific, as seen in some schizophrenic individuals or those who take mescaline, and this can lead to a transformation of heaven into hell or bliss into horror.
- According to the author, only a small minority of individuals are capable of immediately uniting with the divine Ground after death, while others may experience visionary bliss or horror, and the majority will end up in a world similar to that described by Swedenborg and mediums, from which they can potentially progress to higher states of being.

Mortification, Transcendental Experience, and the Perennial Philosophy

- The author suggests that mortification of the body, despite its potential drawbacks, can be a means of accessing a transcendental world of Being, Knowledge, and Bliss, which is why many spiritual aspirants have practiced bodily mortification throughout history.
- The author quotes various philosophers and theologians, including James McKenna, to emphasize the importance of personal experience and spiritual practice in understanding the ultimate Reality, and notes that few individuals, including philosophers and theologians, have made a genuine effort to explore the spiritual realm.
- The author references [[The Perennial Philosophy | the Perennial Philosophy]], which holds that the ultimate Reality can only be apprehended by those who have made themselves loving, pure in heart, and poor in spirit, and suggests that empirical theology, based on the experiences of ordinary people, is limited in its understanding of the divine.
- The author also notes that no saint or founder of a religion has ever been optimistic about the prospects of spiritual enlightenment, citing the phrase "Many are called, but few are chosen," and references the teachings of the [[Jesus | Christ]] of the [[Gospel | Gospels]], who emphasized the importance of private worship and the rejection of vain repetitions and sacrifices.

Historic Christianity, Spiritual Calculus, and the Divine Ground (Journal314_20-33)

- The development of historic Christianity was influenced by human factors, and its progression was not hindered by the fact that people in the past did not focus on problems that their descendants found interesting, as noted in the context of the document 'Journal314_20-33'.
- According to various quotes, certain thoughts and concepts, such as the intuitive knowledge of the Godhead or Quantum Theory, are only thinkable

within the framework of an appropriate language and system, and many of these concepts were ignored by predecessors, resulting in a lack of means for clear and fruitful thinking about them.

- In modern industrialized societies, only a few individuals are able to transcend the prevailing occupation with matter and analytical thought to experience the spiritual Ground of things, also referred to as [[Jñāna | Jnana]], which is the unitive knowledge of the divine Ground and the ultimate reason for human existence.
- The quotes from various sources, including Eckhart and "The Cloud of the Unknowing", suggest that achieving this unitive knowledge is extremely difficult, and even those who know the divine Ground most perfectly perceive its infinite incomprehensibility, with thinkers like Tolstoy, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and Tillich also exploring this idea.

Erroneous Beliefs, Ritualistic Legalism, and the Crisis of Every Moment

- The text also emphasizes that erroneous or inadequate beliefs can hinder progress towards this goal, and that ritualistic legalism, while improving conduct, does little to alter character or modify consciousness, as highlighted by the phrase "good to be born in a church, bad to die in one".
- Furthermore, the text notes that there is currently no Spiritual Calculus that can coherently describe the divine Ground and its manifestation in the world, and that we must be patient with the linguistic eccentricities of those who attempt to describe one order of experience in terms of a symbol-system relevant to another order.
- The quotes also suggest that crisis and spiritual training can be powerful catalysts for personal transformation, with the saint being one who recognizes that every moment of human life is a moment of crisis, requiring an all-important decision between the way that leads to death and spiritual darkness, and the way that leads towards light and life, as inspired by the thoughts of Eckhart, Tolstoy, Vivekananda, and Tillich.

Selflessness, Spiritual Training, and the Sacredness of Nature

- The concept of selflessness is explored in the context of spiritual and military training, with spiritual training aiming to make people selfless in every circumstance, while military training focuses on selflessness in specific situations and towards certain groups of people.
- The [[Gospel | Gospels]] provide insight into the spiritual "not-I" through the parables and discourses, which reveal the presence of the divine in Jesus, referred to as the [[Jesus | Christ]] and the eternal Logos, as discussed by authors such as Spong and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- The doctrine of God being present in the world emphasizes the sacredness of nature and the importance of humans being intelligent and docile collaborators with nature, rather than trying to dominate it, as highlighted by Vivekananda in Karma Yoga.

Progress, the Perennial Philosophy, and the Dullness of the World

- The idea of progress is questioned, with [[The Perennial Philosophy | the Perennial Philosophy]] suggesting that the reality of progress is uncertain and that individual men and women should focus on achieving unitive knowledge of the divine Ground, rather than being concerned with the progressiveness of their social environment, as discussed by authors such as Vivekananda and Seraphim.
- The world is described as being dull and unfulfilling for ordinary people, with brief moments of pleasure and intense suffering, and that true happiness and safety can only be achieved by abandoning the limitations of personal and emotional love and embracing the spiritual being of the Godhead.
- The Perennial Philosophy is seen as a means to preserve people from idolatrous worship of temporal things, such as church, state, or revolutionary ideologies, and to promote charity and unitive knowledge of the divine Ground.

Detachment, Holy Indifference, and Universal Charity

- The importance of detachment from the ego and personal attachments is emphasized, with the goal of achieving a "holy indifference" to temporal success or failure, and cultivating a love of God with the whole heart, mind, and strength, as discussed by authors such as Tillich, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and Spong.
- Ultimately, the elimination of self-will, self-interest, and self-centered thinking is necessary to achieve a deeper understanding of the divine and to cultivate universal charity towards all creatures, as highlighted by the concept of mortification and the teachings of Karma Yoga and Quietism.

Mortification, Self-Interest, and the Critical Philosophy

- The concept of mortification is a painful yet necessary aspect of spiritual experience, which can be obscured by self-interest and requires individuals to renounce exclusive family ties and worldly attachments.
- Those who pursue careers in the arts, philosophy, or science often choose a life of poverty and hard work, and similarly, the critical philosophy must be willing to mortify common sense in order to achieve true understanding.

Theological Formulas, Spiritual Experience, and the Atonement

- Theological statements and formulas have been taken too seriously, and it is believed that salvation can be achieved through assent to these formulas, rather than through genuine spiritual experience, with thinkers like [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and [[Jñāna | Jnana]] emphasizing the importance of unitive knowledge and rational intelligence.
- Most people are not concerned with consistency in thought or action, and even those with creative gifts, such as poets, can become idolaters if they worship beauty in art and nature without seeking a deeper understanding of the divine Ground.

- The orthodox doctrine of the Atonement is criticized for attributing discreditable characteristics to God, and the concept of "turning to God without turning from self" is seen as absurdly simple yet explanatory of the follies committed in the name of religion.
- The teachings of the [[Jesus | Christ]] of the [[Gospel | Gospels]] and [[The Buddha | the Buddha]] of the Pali scriptures emphasize the importance of private worship, the rejection of vain repetitions and rituals, and the pursuit of spiritual insight and enlightenment, which is often at odds with the practices of historic Christianity and other religious institutions.

Ceremonies, Repetitions, and the Pursuit of Complete Deliverance

- The founder of a religion is noted to have made use of ceremonies, repetitions, and sacramental rites, despite the potential for "vain repetition" to be used to justify selfish actions in pursuit of power and wealth.
- To achieve complete deliverance, one must accept suffering, convert from righteousness to total selflessness and God-centeredness, and cease to be focused solely on being a good citizen or following strict moral codes, as noted in the concept of the "straight and narrow" gate.

The Shift from Eternal to Temporal, Moral Idolatry, and the Education System

- The shift in Western society's attention from the eternal to the temporal order has resulted in significant increases in technical, governmental, and scientific efficiency, but may have also led to a lack of focus on spiritual growth and [[The Perennial Philosophy | the Perennial Philosophy]].
- Moralists can commit idolatry by worshiping their own ethical ideals rather than God, treating virtue as an end in itself rather than a means to achieve knowledge and love of God, which is necessary for true social effectiveness.
- The education system often disparages primitive forms of idolatry, but also ignores the importance of spirituality and the Perennial Philosophy, instead promoting human ideas and ideals as objects of admiration and worship.

Contemplatives, Idolatry, and the Importance of Self-Reflection

- In academic and educated circles, there are few true contemplatives, but many enthusiasts of political or social idolatry, highlighting the need for self-reflection and a focus on God rather than the ego.
- Self-reproach can be painful, but it can also serve as a reminder that the self is still intact, and that attention is not yet fixed on God, emphasizing the importance of self-knowledge, humility, and the love and knowledge of God.

Religious Systems, Imperfect Individuals, and the Provisional Nature of God

- The religious systems of the world have been built by imperfect individuals, resulting in a mix of good and dark aspects, and highlighting the need to seek God in a provisional and symbolic manner, rather than becoming attached to a particular form or dogma.
- Even the most saintly individuals can suffer from distractions, but can also make use of them to grow in self-knowledge and humility, ultimately leading to a deeper love and knowledge of God, as noted by philosophers such as [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who emphasized the importance of spiritual growth and self-awareness.

The Limitations of Science and the Philosophy of Meaninglessness

- The text discusses the limitations of the scientific picture of the world, which is a partial one that only considers elements that can be weighed, measured, or numbered, and ignores aesthetic and moral values, religious experiences, and intuitions of significance.
- According to the text, many men of science have come to realize the limitations of their field and the importance of considering other aspects of reality, but the masses are often convinced that the scientific picture is a complete representation of reality, leading to a worldview that is without meaning or value.
- The text criticizes the philosophy of meaninglessness, which carries to its logical conclusion the idea that life is without significance, values are illusory, and ideals are merely inventions of cunning priests and kings, and argues that this philosophy can only have evil and disastrous results.
- The text also discusses how the general acceptance of a doctrine that denies meaning and value to the world as a whole, while assigning them to certain arbitrarily selected parts of the totality, can lead to the deification of nations, classes, and other groups, and can result in the supply of "vital lies" to the masses to make them happy and well-behaved.
- Additionally, the text notes that some people, such as artists and men of science, can live contentedly with a philosophy of meaninglessness because their work provides them with a sense of meaning and value, but this is not the case for most people, and the text warns against the dangers of a worldview that denies meaning and value to the world as a whole.

Huxley, Positivism, and the Need for a Holistic Approach

- The text appears to be quoting from an essay by [[Aldous Huxley]], titled "Beliefs", which is printed at the end of his book "[[The Perennial Philosophy]]", and is critical of the influence of Positivism on modern thought and its corruption of the thought process and worldviews of many people.
- The author of the text seems to be arguing that the scientific picture of the world is incomplete and that a more holistic approach is needed to understand reality, and is warning against the dangers of a philosophy that denies meaning and value to the world, and instead assigns them to arbitrary parts of the totality.

Mental Illness, Talent, and the Mystical Experience

- The driving force of 'mental illness' is the lack of 'talent' or the inability to express one's thoughts, which can lead to a sense of meaninglessness and hinder a person's ability to move forward, as they are unable to fulfill their own happiness or illusions.
- Meditation and systematic training in recollection can make possible the mystical experience, which is a direct intuition of ultimate reality, and this concept is supported by various philosophers, including Nietzsche and Bertrand Russell, who have discussed the idea of transcending one's own limitations.
- The mystical experience is characterized by a direct intuition of an ultimate spiritual reality that is beyond the self and yet within it, and this experience can be achieved through techniques such as meditation and the cultivation of intellectual curiosity for its own sake.

Transcending Limitations, Dispassion, and the Non-Moral Mystic

- To transcend the limitations of human life, one must be a member of a community that provides protection and support, and also train themselves in the art of being dispassionate and disinterested, as exhibited by the mystic, who is able to transcend ordinary limitations more completely than others.
- The mystic's ability to transcend ordinary limitations is due to their disinterestedness, which allows them to pass beyond the boundaries of average human life, but this can also lead to a lack of moral content, as the ultimate reality of the world is not moral, and the mystic who unites themselves with this reality is uniting with a non-moral being.
- The concept of mysticism is also discussed in relation to the idea of "beyond good and evil," and the philosopher's idea of nihilism, which suggests that the ultimate reality of the world is not moral, and that the mystic's union with this reality is not a moral one.

Mysticism, Nihilism, and the Story of John Bunyan

- The concept of mysticism is also discussed in relation to the idea of "beyond good and evil," and the philosopher's idea of nihilism, which suggests that the ultimate reality of the world is not moral, and that the mystic's union with this reality is not a moral one.
- The text also references the story of [[John Bunyan]], who experienced a fierce temptation to sell and part with [[Jesus | Christ]], and ultimately felt a sense of guilt and despair, which lasted for two years, and this story serves as an example of the human struggle with moral and spiritual dilemmas.

Despair, the Spiritual State of the Wealthy, and the Transience of Life

- The passage begins with a quote that expresses a deep sense of despair and longing to escape one's own identity and circumstances, referencing the

works of Tolstoy, [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], and Cioran, who all explored themes of existential crisis and spiritual struggle.

- The text then transitions to a discussion of the spiritual state of the wealthy, citing a passage from "A Few Sighs From Hell" that suggests God has revealed the sad condition of rich men, who are often hardened by unbelief or presumption and seek worldly glory instead of spiritual salvation.
- The passage emphasizes that those who live according to their fleshly desires do not seriously consider death and the judgment that follows, and that both the wicked and the godly must eventually depart this life, citing the example of the beggar and the saints of the Lord, who must yield up their spirits and separate from their earthly attachments.
- The quote from [[Job (biblical figure) | Job]] 14:14 is mentioned, where Job expresses his willingness to wait for his appointed time to come, highlighting the importance of acknowledging and preparing for one's own mortality.
- The overall tone of the passage is one of solemn reflection on the human condition, encouraging readers to consider the transience of life and the importance of spiritual preparation for the judgment that is to come.

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Leopardi and the Philosophy of Disenchantment

- The section of the document 'Journal314_34-42' discusses various individuals, including Edgar Saltus, Timothy Leary, Peter Zappfe, [[Mitchell Heisman]], [[John Shelby Spong]], Herman Tønnessen, [[Huston Smith]], Lev Shesto, and [[A. W. Tozer]], but focuses primarily on Edgar Saltus and his [[Work (human activity) | work]] on the philosophy of disenchantment, particularly in relation to the Italian philosopher [[Giacomo Leopardi]].
- Edgar Saltus describes Leopardi's life as one of excessive study, which had ruined his health by the time he was twenty, leading him to seek solitude in neighboring forests and experience a state of emotional numbness, where he felt overwhelmed by the nothingness surrounding him and lacked the strength to form desires, even for death.
- Saltus notes that Leopardi's isolation, both self-imposed and forced upon

him, allowed him to observe the development of his thoughts, which ultimately led to his disillusionment with everyday life and contempt for those who lived more actively, as he became increasingly focused on studying the misery of human existence and the sinister mystery of life.

- Leopardi's approach to study changed over time, as he shifted from being repelled by the true and real to seeking them out, and he found pleasure in analyzing human suffering, recognizing that passion was the primary source of pleasure in study, and that once it was extinguished, only vain curiosity remained, which still held a certain charm.

- Saltus also discusses Leopardi's logic, which was centered on the idea that "I am, therefore I suffer," and that this suffering was a universal experience, not limited to himself, but notes that Leopardi's error lay in assuming that all cases of suffering were equally intense and that it might be possible to devise means to eliminate or lessen the evil.

- At the age of twenty-seven, Leopardi devoted himself to a task that he believed would be the sad ending of his miserable life, as described by Edgar Saltus in his work on the philosophy of disenchantment, which explores themes of existential despair, the human condition, and the search for meaning in a seemingly meaningless world.

- The individual's intention is to uncover the truth about the nature of existence, the purpose of creation, and the reason for human suffering, by digging to the root of nature and seeking the aim of the mysterious universe.

Modern Institutions and Human Misery

- According to Heisman, Leopardi's philosophy is destructive, aiming to undermine rather than edify, and it highlights that modern institutions, progress, and science have only aggravated human misery despite their apparent advantages.

- The individual demands to know why Nature created him without his permission and then left him to his own devices, echoing the sentiments of those who question the purpose of life and the existence of suffering.

Perspectives on Life and the Allure of Thought

- The Buddhist belief is mentioned, which involves a four-degree process of spiritual development, ultimately leading to [[Nirvana | Nirvâna]], a state of nothingness and the death of Death, where the individual suppresses all desires and loses their sense of identity.

- The perspectives on life from different belief systems are compared, with life being seen as a probation to the [[Christianity | Christian]], a burden to the Brahmin, a dream to the Buddhist, and a nightmare to the pessimist.

- The text also notes that the allurements and charms of the world are not attractive to the thinker, whether they be a philosopher or a comedian, and that true thoughts and ideas are the resultants of the obvious and the true, leaping into being in every intelligent mind.

- The warning that "in the world ye shall have tribulation" is cited, which

is a common theme across many creeds, and it is suggested that this impression is not derived from religious teaching or philosophy, but rather from personal experience and the realization that life is not as pleasant as one may have imagined.

- Finally, the text describes the individual who has begun to dislike the average and feels weariness and vexation of spirit in the presence of crowds, and how they are instinctive pessimists who need little instruction to learn that they have been made use of and cheated.

Exploring Pessimism

- The concept of pessimism is explored in depth, with various forms of pessimism being identified, including temperamental pessimism, sullen pessimism of despair, haphazard pessimism, accidental pessimism, and hypochondria, each with distinct characteristics and manifestations.
- According to the text, most people who experience pessimism are unaware of the philosophical significance attached to their suffering, and instead view their misfortunes as individual and unshared by the world at large, with philosophers such as [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Cioran, and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] being mentioned as having discussed the narrow path of pessimism.
- Advanced pessimism is described as having a ready answer to various objections, including the idea that there can be no morality, love, or contemplation in a state where the physical body and its sensations are absent, with this perspective being compared to the views of mystics and nihilists.
- The text also discusses the idea that pessimism strips away illusions and reveals the misery of life as inescapable, with the concept of nihilism being mentioned as sharing similar views, and the idea that each joy is an illusion, but pleasure can still be experienced, albeit in a limited and fleeting way.
- The modern pessimist is compared to a Buddhist who has abandoned traditional beliefs and now holds the cardinal tenet that "Life is evil", with the difference between the two creeds being considered not important, and the idea that happiness is an illusion being a central theme.
- The text concludes by noting that many people, despite their private beliefs, still wish to appear well in the eyes of others, and therefore hide their true feelings and positions, with this desire to appear well being described as the "shabby-genteel" and preventing many from avowing their true pessimistic views.

Societal Pressure and the Repression of Emotions

- The human tendency to hide misery and grief is prevalent, as people are often ashamed to acknowledge their emotional pain and instead try to appear serene and successful in the eyes of others, which can be attributed to the fear of being perceived as weak or vulnerable.
- The societal pressure to conform to norms of contentment and gaiety can

lead to the repression of true emotions, and those who do express their sorrow or ask for sympathy are often met with disdain or dismissed as frauds, highlighting the consequences of a society that values appearance over authenticity.

- The perception of life as an affliction or a calamity is often reserved for those who have experienced the harsh realities of existence, such as the loss of illusions and the struggle to survive, whereas younger individuals, like an eighteen-year-old girl, tend to view life as a festival full of promise and beauty, unaware of the disillusionment that may come with age.

Disturbances of the Modern Age

- The waning of religious belief, the demand for intense sensations, and the increasing number of people living in solitude are three distinct disturbances that characterize the moral atmosphere of the present century, according to the text, which also mentions the ideas of thinkers like Schopenhauer, Hartmann, and M. Renan as possible solutions to the problem of human suffering.

- The ideas proposed by these thinkers, including absolute chastity, universal denial of the will to live, and the discovery of a force capable of annihilating pain, are currently just theories, and the world is not yet ready for a supreme quietus, leaving the worth of life still open to question, as noted by Schopenhauer, who marks the transition from virtue to asceticism as a significant phenomenon in this context.

- The theory of ethics proposed by Schopenhauer starts with the principle of kindness of heart, but ultimately leads to the renunciation of all things and the attainment of universal deliverance, which is similar to the Hindu concept of [[Nirvana | Nirvâna]], or reabsorption in Brahma.

- According to Schopenhauer, once an individual's will has been crushed, the world with its suns and stellar systems becomes meaningless, and this idea is reflected in the Hindu and Buddhist philosophies, where life is often viewed as evil or a regrettable accident.

Schopenhauer's Philosophy and Way of Life

- The concept of pessimism, which is the idea that life is inherently bad or flawed, has its roots in various religions, including Hinduism, [[Buddhism]], and [[Christianity]], where the world is often described as a vale of tears or a place of suffering.

- Schopenhauer believed that perfect tranquility and happiness can only be achieved in solitude and absolute seclusion, and that the love of solitude is an acquired taste that must be developed over time.

- As a person, Schopenhauer was known for his introspective and independent nature, and he lived his life according to the rule of expecting nothing, desiring as little as possible, and learning as much as he could, which often led him to dismiss the majority of people and their opinions.

- Schopenhauer's philosophy and way of life were not intended to be popular or appealing to the masses, but rather to reflect his own understanding and

measure of the world, and he believed that no man can judge another except by the measure of his own understanding.

Schopenhauer on Pessimism, Nihilism, and Ethics

- The text discusses the concept of pessimism, particularly in relation to the philosopher Schopenhauer, who believed that life is a constant struggle and pain, and that true happiness is unobtainable, as evidenced by the suffering and misery that exists in the world, such as in hospitals, prisons, and factories where people [[Work (human activity) | work]] long hours in difficult conditions.
- Schopenhauer's character is described as a combination of contradictions, including being both audacious and timid, suspicious and kind-hearted, and blunt with stupidity while being courteous and charitable, highlighting the complexities of his personality.
- The text also explores the idea that pessimism is not the same as [[Nihilism | nihilism]], but rather an attitude towards the experiences of nihilism, and that Schopenhauer's philosophy is focused on the futility of seeking happiness in a world filled with suffering, as he states that "I am unworthy of my contemporaries, or they of me".
- The concept of ethics is also discussed, with Schopenhauer arguing that traditional notions of ethics, which focus on happiness or eternal salvation, are flawed, and that true morality can only be achieved by recognizing the suffering of others and acting with compassion, as exemplified by individuals who use their wealth to help the poor and recognize themselves in every being.
- The text references other philosophers, including Voltaire, who is quoted as saying that the world is far from being the best one possible, and that the existence of suffering and misery is proof of this, and also mentions Tolstoy, [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], and Cioran, who grappled with the idea of wanting to die yet feeling bad about it and fearing nothingness.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that Schopenhauer's philosophy offers a unique perspective on the human condition, one that emphasizes the importance of recognizing and addressing the suffering of others, and that true morality and ethics can only be achieved by transcending the individual's own desires and interests, as Schopenhauer believes that the veil of Mâyâ, or the veil of illusions, has become transparent for those who recognize themselves in every being.

Holiness, Renunciation, and Solitude

- The concept of achieving holiness and renunciation is discussed, where an individual must lift the veil of Mâyâ to make no distinction between themselves and others, and be willing to sacrifice themselves for the common good, as described by Schopenhauer, leading to a transition from virtue to asceticism.
- According to Schopenhauer's theory of ethics, this transition involves a change from loving others as oneself to having a horror of the world's

misery and denying one's own nature, ultimately leading to complete indifferentism and universal deliverance.

- The process of awakening and achieving this state is described as a moral [[Work (human activity) | work]], where one must recognize the true nature of the world and rise out of it through meditation, rather than physical action, as stated in the concept of non-movement, or KOGWY.
- The love of solitude is also discussed, where it is considered an acquired taste that develops with experience, reflection, and intellectual growth, and is never fully matured until one becomes convinced that society is disagreeable, as noted by Schopenhauer.
- The importance of solitude is highlighted, with quotes from Chamfort and others, emphasizing the need for individuals to learn to be alone, even in a crowd, and to carry a part of their solitude into society, as advised in Karma Yoga and by authors such as Kempis.

Acceptance, Individuality, and the Search for Meaning

- The concept of accepting each individual as they are, without judgment, is also discussed, where one must let each person work out their own nature and utilize their qualities and dispositions, as taught by [[Jesus]], Tolstoy, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and others, promoting a creed of charity and good-will to all men.
- The text also touches on the idea that individuals should not try to conform to societal norms, but rather be true to themselves, as stated by Timothy Leary, who notes that one may occasionally pretend to be like others, but ultimately, they are unique and should embrace their individuality.
- The text from 'Journal314_34-42' discusses the idea that individuals often feel like outsiders in their daily lives, yearning to have deeper and more meaningful conversations with others, and that everyone has a unique piece of the puzzle to share, emphasizing the importance of trusting one's instincts and taking chances on conversations with strangers.

Turning-On, Dropping-Back-In, and the Creation of a New Religion

- It highlights the concept of "turning-on" and the need to balance this state with "dropping-back-in" to everyday life, using the metaphor of a TV studio to describe the monotony of daily existence, and suggests that substances like marijuana and LSD can be used as tools to expand consciousness and reach new levels of awareness.
- The text also emphasizes the importance of creating one's own language and symbolism to describe personal experiences, particularly those related to psychedelic activities, and encourages individuals to select a mythic guide who has solved the death-rebirth riddle, such as [[Jesus | Christ]], Lao Tse, or [[Socrates]], to help navigate the process of personal growth and transformation.
- Additionally, it stresses the need for individuals to form their own new religion and devote energy to it, rather than waiting for a Messiah, and to

put the goals, roles, and rituals of this religion on paper to clarify the journey and distinguish it from the external, material world, which is seen as belonging to "Caesar".

- The text quotes Peter Zappfe's "The Last Messiah", which describes the moment when humanity awoke to its own existence and realized its nakedness and homelessness in the universe, and overall, the passage encourages readers to question authority, think for themselves, and cultivate a state of vulnerable, open-mindedness in order to truly understand themselves and the world around them.
- The text ultimately suggests that the spiritual life is detached from external, material possessions and that individuals must learn to let go of their ego games and emotions in order to reach a state of paradise, and that this process requires a willingness to embrace chaos, confusion, and vulnerability in order to inform oneself and find true meaning and purpose.

The Human Condition and Cosmic Panic

- The passage from 'Journal314_34-42' explores the human condition, delving into the complexities of the mind and the struggles of existence, where life's wonders and horrors unfold, and the individual is left in a state of relentless panic, as described in the concept of "cosmic panic".
- The text touches on the idea that the human mind is capable of discerning its own biologicocosmic terms, recognizing its place in the universe, and this realization can lead to a feeling of being a helpless captive, falling into nameless possibilities, which is a pivotal aspect of every human mind.
- It discusses the notion that depressive states can be a manifestation of the mind's struggle to cope with the strain of living, and that phenomena such as depression, fear of life, and refusal of nourishment are often misunderstood as pathological states, when in fact they may be messages from a deeper sense of life, highlighting the tension between the individual's ego and their highest potential.
- The passage also examines the role of isolation in everyday interaction, where a general code of mutual silence is used to protect individuals, particularly children, from the harsh realities of life, allowing them to retain their illusions until they can afford to lose them.
- Additionally, the text explores the human craving for material goods and power, suggesting that this desire is not driven by the direct pleasures of wealth, but rather by the opportunities for anchoring and distraction that it provides, allowing individuals to temporarily escape the complexities of existence.
- The author argues that the modern approach to saving suicidal individuals is based on a misapprehension of the nature of existence, and that in some cases, taking one's life can be seen as a natural death of spiritual causes, rather than a pathological event.
- The passage also discusses the concept of "yearning" or "transcendental tendency", where individuals are driven to seek connections, progression, and knowledge, as nothing finite can satisfy them for long, and this

phenomenon is a fundamental aspect of the human experience.

- Finally, the text touches on the idea that religious yearning is a fundamental aspect of the human soul, driven by a heartfelt awareness of what one is longing to escape, namely the earthly vale of tears and one's own inendurable condition, highlighting the complexities and depths of human existence.

Nihilism and the Absence of Spiritual Activity

- The discussion revolves around the concept of [[Nihilism | nihilism]], with the author suggesting that humans may not be considered truly human due to the absence of naturally based spiritual activity, leading to a reliance on distractions and a sense of meaninglessness.

- The text references the idea that humanity's reckless pursuit of triumph, driven by a delusion of being biologically fated for success, will not lead to any essential changes, and that the lack of inherent values and purpose in life can lead to a conclusion that freedom is equal to slavery, and that life is equal to death.

- Mitchell Heisman's experiment in nihilism is mentioned, where he questions the possibility of believing in disbelief, and argues that if there are no inherent values or purpose, then there is no sane way to choose between different ideologies or philosophies.

- The author explores the idea that if reason is incapable of deducing ultimate human ends, then all values and concepts, including freedom, kindness, and love, are equal to their opposites, and that the most important question is whether there is an important question to take seriously.

- The text also touches on the idea that living a philosophy of nihilism, reconciling meaninglessness with every thought and emotion, could lead to rational self-destruction, and that suicide could represent the pinnacle of a rational life realized, as suggested by Vivekananda's idea that a rationalist must be ready to follow reason to its farthest conclusion.

- Nihilism is described as the meeting point of science and philosophy, and is interpreted as a condition of unbelief reached through negation, rather than a positive expression of belief in disbelief, highlighting the difference between nihilism and skepticism.

- The author concludes that if no values are inherently valuable, then life has no inherent value, and that death could be posited as the highest value, serving as a test for all other secular values, and that willing death could be an attempt to live a nihilistic life.

An Experiment in Nihilism

- The author of the text, which is part of the document 'Journal314_34-42', is conducting an experiment in [[Nihilism | nihilism]], where they test the idea of life and death by seeking out truths that are most deadly and destructive to themselves, with the goal of understanding the meaninglessness of life.

- Through this experiment, the author aims to dispel all illusions and subjectivities, and to arrive at a state of rational negation of self-interest, which may lead to rational self-annihilation or self-destruction, by being honest to the point of absurdity and without being prejudiced by morals, aesthetics, faith, or hope.
- The author's methodology involves vivisecting their beliefs to death, which leads them to discover an evolutionary basis for the concept of [[God]], suggesting that monotheism may have originated from a skeptical, nihilistic, and materialistic objectivity that annihilated the biologically based subjectivity of the self.
- The author references Darwin's [[Work (human activity) | work]], "The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals", to explain that emotions and instincts are products of evolutionary adaptations, and therefore, they do not accord their emotions any ultimate meaning or significance, which is a key aspect of their nihilistic perspective.
- The experiment in nihilism is also a test of what the author really believes, and they conclude that if emotions are merely former genetic adaptations or illusions of an evolutionary inheritance, then there is no reason to assume that they are guides beyond their original adaptive functions.
- The author's journey through nihilism leads them to paradoxical conclusions, such as the idea that "God" may be technological nihilism, and that the Singularity does not refute nihilism, but rather, it may be a form of technological nihilism, similar to how a human being can be seen as a gene replicating machine.
- Ultimately, the author's experiment in [[Nihilism | nihilism]] is an attempt to understand the meaninglessness of life, and to find truth, even if it means diverting away from the normal path of life and human relationships, and embracing a materialistic view of the world, which may lead to rational self-destruction.

Materialism, Music, and the Limits of Objectivity

- The concept of self-consistent materialism leads to the interpretation of every subjective experience, including emotions such as fear, love, and inspiration, as physical matter, implying that humans can be viewed as emotion machines.
- According to this perspective, music, particularly German music like Wagner and [[Johann Sebastian Bach | Bach]], can be seen as a form of emotional technology that can control behavior intelligently, and art can be viewed as a form of technology that counteracts the tendency to materialize everything.
- The author finds that listening to Bach's music provides a holistic-mind order that counters their own material self-consistency and tendency towards self-decomposition, offering a sense of ground and meaning.
- The text also explores the idea that an active blind spot to certain kinds of truth and objectivity is a condition of biological human life, and that

liberals are not fully nihilistic because they believe in values corresponding to human rights and a religion of common emotions.

- The author references philosophers like [[Martin Heidegger]] and [[Friedrich Nietzsche]], suggesting that reason may be unable to determine values, and that the Western pretension to rationalism may be flawed.
- From a Darwinistic view, emotions are seen as biochemical-based illusions that evolved to propagate genes, and the concept of happiness is reduced to a particular configuration of biochemical reactions.
- The author rejects the idea that a scientific view of life leads to nausea, angst, and nihilistic despair, arguing that these emotions can also be interpreted as material reactions in the brain, and that the process of disillusionment can be disillusioned and de-aestheticized.
- The text concludes by suggesting that the closest state to total indifference is death, and that an observer who has no vested interests in life may be able to achieve a more objective view, but notes that most people will prioritize self-preservation over objectivity.

The Subjectivity of Objectivity

- The discussion revolves around the idea that prioritizing objectivity over self-preservation is a challenging task, and relatively few individuals, including scientists, are willing and able to address this issue in a serious and rational manner.
- The text highlights that scientists must be driven by factors outside of science itself, such as curiosity, wonder, or faith in science, in order to pursue their [[Work (human activity) | work]], as science cannot consistently justify its own existence.
- The attempt to eliminate all subjective bias is seen as a self-destructive endeavor, as the very existence of science relies on the subjective belief in the value of objectivity, and an objective "theory of all" would be unable to account for itself.
- The choice of subject to study is also seen as a subjective decision, with no fundamentally objective reason for choosing one field over another, and even the interpretation of data is influenced by personal biases and the imposition of order on chaos.
- The text concludes that objectivity is subjective in the sense that it is selective, and one must always determine what factors are dominant and what facts are valued, with the author acknowledging that their own work is subjective and influenced by personal biases.
- The author ultimately suggests that having no biases would be equivalent to being dead, and that biases are a necessary part of human existence, highlighting the complexities and challenges of pursuing objectivity in a subjective world.

A Non-Euclidean Logic and the Pursuit of Self-Destruction

- The author of the text discusses their personal philosophy, which involves embracing a "non-Euclidean" logic that prioritizes objectivity over the bias

of self-preservation, and this perspective is likely to appear "irrational" to the average Westerner who adheres to the traditional "Euclidean" rules of the liberal democratic system.

- The author's objective is to kill themselves, and they attempt to explain this through the Nietzschean distinction between truth and life, suggesting that the pursuit of truth does not necessarily correspond with life-affirming values, and this is also influenced by the ideas of Jean Amery, who spoke of the "logic of life" and the "logic of death".
- The author references Gödel's ideas, which suggest that it may be impossible to fully understand oneself, and this realization leads to the attempt to approach objectivity through the elimination of subjectivity and self-interest, resulting in a process of rational self-destruction.
- The author believes that the attempt to achieve self-consistent objectivity is correlated with the most thorough attempt at scientific objectivity, but this goal is impossible to achieve, and the attempt to approach it leads to a state of rational self-destruction, which is equivalent to suicide or death.
- The author is aware that their [[Work (human activity) | work]] is incompatible with their living, sociobiological existence, and this leads to a sense of desperation and [[Nihilism | nihilism]], as they struggle to reconcile the interests of truth and life, and this is reflected in their daily writings, which are affirmations of death and a systematic breakdown of the values that uphold their life.
- The author views their rational self-destruction as an experiment to test a tentative nihilism, and they believe that the literal act of killing themselves is a way to actualize the equality of the biological and the physical, by overcoming the biological boundaries that preserve biology above the larger physical environment, and this is a process that embodies the undoing of life, which is also a form of progress.

Renunciation and the Destruction of Values

- The author of the text is describing their personal experiment in nihilism, where they systematically destroy all values that uphold life, leading to a point where they have nowhere to stand, and this process is referred to as renunciation.
- The author's worldview is rooted in materialism and Darwinism, where they view themselves and others as physical material objects, and all emotions are seen as rooted in behavior that proved to be genetically adaptive for animal ancestors.
- The author makes a distinction between the desire to know and the will to know, where the desire to know is motivated by curiosity or pleasure, and the will to know is a confrontation with all aspects of life, including the least pleasurable and joyous truths, similar to the ideas of philosophers like [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]].
- The author's experiment involves interpreting all subjective experiences,

including emotions and intuitions, as physical material, which leads to a definition of disillusionment and a radical selfishness based on the assumption that no premise is fundamentally justified.

- As a result of this experiment, the author's emotions and beliefs are destroyed, leading to a loss of the cause of life and a desire to destroy themselves, as they believe that life is without ultimate meaning and is not fundamentally superior to death.

- The author engages in self-destructive behavior, including socially humiliating actions, and instead of trying to overcome their destructive tendencies, they give them free rein, while still maintaining some aspects of their life, such as paying rent and working out, in order to achieve a comprehensive self-negation.

- The author's psychological characteristics are shaped by their self-destructive behavior, which is rooted in their materialist and Darwinist worldview, and their desire to test the worth of life by willing death and self-destruction.

Nihilism and the Question of Therapy

- The central problem discussed in the text is [[Nihilism | nihilism]], which is the idea that life is meaningless, and the author questions whether this can be cured with therapy, suggesting that psychologists may be biased against nihilism due to their own non-objective views.

- The author references various thinkers, including Tillich and Becker, who distinguish between the concept of "mental illness" and the idea that nihilism is a correct understanding of the world, with some, like Zapffe, suggesting that happiness is an illusion and that nihilism is a more accurate perspective.

- The text also explores the idea that a consistent physicalism, which reduces all subjective experiences to physical matter, can lead to rational self-destruction or rational death, and that this worldview can be seen as a consequence of a naturalistic perspective, rather than a religious one.

- The author notes that their own formula for self-destruction is truth-seeking, and that they have concluded that unadulterated material objectivity is the source of the problem, leading to a sense of disintegration and an inability to put themselves back together.

- The text also references the idea that if life is truly meaningless, then all choices are equal, and there is no fundamental ground for choosing life over death, with the author suggesting that testing nihilism is a way to approach this question, even if it means considering the possibility of death, as noted by Amery.

- The author argues that every aspect of human experience, including words, thoughts, and emotions, ultimately comes back to the core problem of life's meaninglessness, and that the experiment in nihilism is to seek out and expose every illusion and myth, no matter the cost.

- The text also touches on the idea that human relationships are based on mythological worlds, and that people are often driven by instinct and

emotion, rather than reason, with the author noting that if reason cannot determine fundamental values, then it can be used to justify anything.

- Finally, the author references Friedrich Nietzsche's idea that [[Nihilism | nihilism]] is the ultimate logical conclusion of Western values and ideals, suggesting that this is a philosophical disaster area that the West inhabits.

Nihilism and Western Values

- The text discusses the concept of nihilism and its implications on Western values, suggesting that the ultimate logical conclusion of Western values is the rational self-destruction of the West, and that this idea may seem absurd, but it is not a justification for a negative, positive, or neutral attitude.

- John Shelby Spong's views on spirituality and [[God]] are presented, where he commits to the reality of [[Jesus]] as a God experience, but not to traditional explanations of that experience, and believes that God always transcends human explanations and that spiritual reality requires both enlightened minds and warm hearts.

- Spong emphasizes the need to separate the eternal experience from time-bound explanations and questions whether reality can be separated from creeds, doctrines, and dogmas, highlighting that modern people often struggle with the religious dimension of their lives and cling to artificial theism as a coping mechanism.

- The text also explores the concept of self-consciousness and awareness, suggesting that the emergence of these traits in humans led to a traumatic moment of fear and anxiety, as humans became aware of their own mortality and the meaninglessness of life, and that this awareness sets humans apart from other living creatures.

- Spong argues that human religious systems have never been primarily a search for truth, but rather a search for security, and that theism is a human definition of God that serves as a coping mechanism for the anxieties of human existence, and that the signs of the death of a theistic understanding of God are evident, but many people are afraid to acknowledge them due to the fear of embracing reality and facing the possibility of nothingness.

Beyond Theism and the Call of Jesus

- The section from the document 'Journal314_34-42' discusses the human experience and the concept of [[God]], highlighting the need to move beyond traditional theistic patterns and to recognize the human creation of words like "divine" to describe human experiences, as noted by thinkers like Tillich, symbolism, and Otto.

- The text also explores the idea that Jesus' message was not about escaping life's traumas or finding security, but about embracing insecurity and being fully human, which requires accepting the absence of peace of mind and not building protective fences around oneself.

- The call of [[Jesus]] is seen as a call to transcend the survival mentality that marks self-conscious human beings, and to lay down barriers such as tribe, language, and fear, in order to engage with the ultimate reality.
- The section also references Herman Tønnessen's [[Work (human activity) | work]], "Happiness is for the Pigs", which discusses how humans often avoid acknowledging their "cosmic situation" due to cognitive and empathetic "disintegrity", instead filling their lives with distractions and pastimes to maintain a sense of ontological security and integral selfhood.
- Tønnessen's analogy of the space-ship crew and passengers, who are blissfully unaware of their cosmic situation, highlights the human tendency to focus on mundane activities and social norms, rather than confronting the reality of their existence and the impermanence of things.
- The text ultimately suggests that this avoidance of reality can lead to a kind of existential crisis, as individuals are suddenly struck by the awareness of their own mortality and the fleeting nature of human life, as exemplified by the character in Tønnessen's analogy who is overcome with depression and a sense of the absurdity of human existence.

The Human Experience as a Flying Farce

- The passage describes the human experience as a "flying farce" and a "whirling coffin" that fills individuals with "ontological despair" and "existential frustration," leading them to question the meaning and purpose of life, as expressed by philosophers like [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]].
- The search for intellectual honesty and a desire for order and meaning in life can drive individuals to develop a deep antipathy for the world, prompting them to reject the idea that life has inherent value, and instead, view it as a "wild, banal, grotesque, and loathsome carnival in the world's graveyard."
- The use of ordinary language can lull people into a state of complacency, where they take life and death for granted, and fail to question the nature of existence, as noted by philosophers like [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who suggests that our situation is akin to falling from a great height, where any attempt to justify or find meaning in our brief existence is ultimately ludicrous.
- The concept of "value" is also explored, highlighting the distinction between an authentic life lived with awareness of its absurdity, and a fraudulent life lived in self-deception, with the latter being indistinguishable from the life of an unthinking animal.
- The passage also touches on the idea that certain insights and knowledge, such as the awareness of one's own mortality, cannot be taught, but rather must be experienced, as illustrated by the example of the Russian spy who, despite knowing his fate, is still profoundly affected by the pronouncement of his death sentence, demonstrating the difference between intellectual knowledge and experiential understanding.

Spiritual Experience and the Limits of Language

- The text discusses the idea that true understanding and insight cannot be taught in a conventional sense, and that a "Spiritual Experience" is necessary, as mentioned by Tozer, with references to Huxley, Houston Smith, and Nietzsche, and the use of psychedelics such as psilocybin.
- It criticizes the use of complex language by diagnostics, such as Heidegger's, to avoid confronting the reality of human existence, and notes that taking oneself too seriously can lead to a focus on poetry, as mentioned by Heisman.
- The text also explores the idea that individuals classified as mentally or emotionally sick may actually be more cognitively aware of the true nature of reality, citing concepts such as "existential frustration," "ontological despair," and "sub-clinical depression," as discussed by Tillich and Becker, and the concept of depressive realism.
- It highlights the human predicament, where individuals have high spiritual demands for justice, order, and meaning, but are also aware of their own mortality and the futility of life, leading to a sense of aversion against life, as discussed by Becker.
- The text warns against the exploitation of traditional ontological hebetants, such as [[Work (human activity) | work]], religion, and social norms, to suffocate individuals and prevent them from confronting the true nature of reality, and notes that a society unprepared for true leisure will degenerate, as stated by [[Aristotle]].
- It predicts that traditional forms of entertainment and distraction, such as professional sports, will no longer be sufficient to keep people sedated, and that individuals will seek more meaningful experiences and a sense of purpose, but may instead find satisfaction in illusions and evasions, such as the pursuit of "victory of the supreme good" or "eternal peace."
- The text also notes that people often focus their energy and awareness on concrete objects, such as the Company or the Fatherland, as a way to avoid confronting the reality of their own mortality and the fleeting nature of human existence, and that this can lead to a sense of disillusionment and a desire for a more solid and comforting metaphysical framework.

Zapffe's Pessimism and the Farcical Nature of Cures

- The true existentialist philosophers, such as Zapffe, would rather face the harsh reality of human existence than give up their pursuit of understanding the meaning of life, even if it leads to a pessimistic worldview.
- Zapffe would argue that his lifelong search for meaning has led him to the conclusion that life is ultimately based on fantasy and delusions, and that attempts to explain his pessimism through psychological or metaphysical means are irrelevant and naive.
- The biosophist, as represented by Zapffe, is aware of the various metaphysical systems that offer a sense of meaning and purpose, but rejects

them as intellectually dishonest and suffocating, instead opting for a more honest and direct experience of the human condition.

- The situation becomes farcical when amateur philosophers attempt to "cure" a lifelong philosopher like Zapffe of their pessimism, as if it were a disease that could be treated, rather than a deeply held conviction based on a thorough examination of human existence.
- A person who is struggling with the concept of death and annihilation is not abnormal in the classical sense, but rather is experiencing a profound and existential crisis that cannot be resolved through simple adjustments to their social environment.
- Many people avoid confronting the reality of their own mortality and the meaninglessness of life by distracting themselves with a busy and safe way of life, which pushes the intuitive certainty of death to the back of their consciousness, leaving only a rational knowledge of it.
- In contrast, existentialists like Zapffe believe that a life lived in utter awareness of human cosmic conditions is the only one worthy of living, and that every human being should be forced to confront their own fate and the absurdity of the world, even if it is unbearably agonizing.

The Provisional Nature of Knowledge and the Limits of Certainty

- Ultimately, human beings are thrown into an eternally changing universe, and therefore cannot be bound by rigid rules for language, thought, or action, and must be willing to revise and reject even their most deeply held convictions in the face of new insights and understanding.
- The philosopher [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] is referenced as an example of someone whose ideas may be subject to ridicule and shame at a later stage of human insight, highlighting the provisional nature of all human knowledge and understanding.

Revelations, Epiphanies, and the Terrifying Nature of Ecstasy

- [[Huston Smith]] discusses the concept of revelations and epiphanies, stating that they can be terrifying and often occur in times of darkness and despair, and that secular modes of thought may cause individuals to discount these experiences.
- Smith shares his personal experience of having a naturalistic worldview that collapsed when he was introduced to mysticism, which he found to be true and more ultimate, powerful, and significant than the reality presented by science and common sense.
- He describes the experience of being ushered into a new world as strange, weird, and terrifying, comparing it to Plato's Allegory of the Cave, where the reality of the world is revealed to be only a shadow of a more profound truth.
- Smith notes that drug experiences can induce religious experiences, but these are often characterized by fearful and/or beatific features, and that ecstasy is not fun, but rather a terrifying and awe-inspiring experience that seizes and shakes the soul.

- He concludes that while drugs can induce religious experiences, they are less likely to produce religious lives, and that the context of faith and discipline is necessary for chemicals to enhance the religious life, which is rarely met in Western civilization.
- Smith also discusses the idea that psychedelic religious experiences may have less faith-filled carryover than spontaneous experiences, and that conviction and the exercise of the will are necessary for the insights gained from these experiences to be carried over into everyday life.

Faith, Meaning, and the Modern Spiritual Journey

- The text also mentions Lev Shestov's thoughts on Nietzsche and Tolstoy, noting that while both lacked faith, Nietzsche was more honest about it, and that this lack of faith is not an occasion for scathing preachments, but rather a recognition of the human condition.
- The passage discusses the concept of faith and the search for meaning in a world where traditional religious beliefs are no longer accessible, referencing the ideas of Tolstoy, Nietzsche, and other notable figures to highlight the challenges of modern man's spiritual journey.
- The text critiques Tolstoy's proclamation that "good" and "brotherly love" are equivalent to [[God]], suggesting that this perspective may be a means of evading his own doubts and uncertainties, and instead emphasizes the importance of acknowledging the complexity and horror of the human situation.
- Nietzsche's ideas, as expressed through the character of Zarathustra, are presented as a formulation of a stage of development that modern man must undergo, which involves renouncing traditional beliefs and confronting the darkness and uncertainty of the human condition, as reflected in the works of authors such as Dante and Shakespeare.
- The conversation between Zarathustra and the pope is cited to illustrate Nietzsche's rejection of traditional religious conceptions of God, and the pope's response is seen as a commentary on the paradox of unbelief and piety, highlighting the tension between the desire for transcendence and the limitations of human understanding.
- The passage also references the idea that morality is a human construct, whereas God is not, and that this distinction is crucial in understanding the nature of guilt and responsibility, as well as the human search for meaning and purpose in a seemingly indifferent universe.
- Nietzsche's personal struggles and philosophical ideas are seen as a reflection of the modern human condition, characterized by a sense of helplessness and disorientation in a world that has lost its traditional spiritual moorings, and his concept of the "will to power" is presented as a response to this crisis, emphasizing the need for individual self-overcoming and transformation.
- The text concludes by emphasizing that Nietzsche's experience is not unique, but rather a manifestation of a broader cultural and philosophical shift, one that requires individuals to confront their own doubts and

uncertainties, and to find new ways of navigating the complexities of the human condition, as expressed in the words of Zarathustra, "You must be ready to be burned in your own flame; how could you be renewed, if you have not first been reduced to ashes."

Nietzsche's Courage and the Sacredness of Morality

- The concept of morality and its effects on individuals is a frequently occurring phenomenon, but it is often overlooked and not openly discussed due to the fear of condemnation, as noted in the context of Nietzsche's [[Work (human activity) | work]].
- Nietzsche's significance lies in his courage to openly express his thoughts on morality, which others may have only thought about in private, and his experiences with the theological instinct and its impact on his life, as described in "The Antichrist".
- In comparison to other notable figures like Tolstoy, who wrote "The Kreutzer Sonata" out of feelings of self-hatred, Nietzsche's experience with remorse and moral struggles is distinct, as evident in the palpitation of a tortured soul in his writings.
- The investigations of British philosophers and psychologists, who viewed morality as a utility-based concept, illustrate the deeply rooted belief in the sacredness of morality, which was so ingrained that even explanations of its origins did not diminish its prestige, as they raised utility to the position of ancestor of morality.
- Nietzsche is credited with being the first to raise the question of morality, as he declared that previous "science of morals" had omitted the problem of morality itself, and instead, philosophers had tried to provide a foundation for morality without questioning its underlying assumptions, as stated in "[Beyond Good and Evil]".
- Nietzsche's attitude towards morality was shaped by his personal experiences and the depths of his soul, rather than abstract considerations, and his secret, which can be expressed in a few words, is that the tortures of those who have devoted themselves to "good" can be just as severe as those who have served "evil", as hinted at by the phrase "the first born are sacrificed".
- The text highlights Nietzsche's unique perspective on morality, which was influenced by his painful experiences and his willingness to challenge conventional thinking, making him a significant figure in the discussion of morality, as evident in his works, including "The Antichrist" and "Beyond Good and Evil".

Nietzsche's Doctrine and the Rebellion Against "Good"

- The section from the document 'Journal314_34-42' discusses the philosophical ideas of [[Friedrich Nietzsche]], particularly his views on [[God]], morality, and the concept of "good", which are often misunderstood by ordinary people due to their superficial knowledge of his works.
- Nietzsche's doctrine is not a simple attack on religion or morality, but

rather a deeply personal and passionate exploration of the human condition, as evident from the passion in his tone, which should have excluded the possibility of such a simplistic interpretation.

- Unlike ordinary free-thinkers, Nietzsche did not compromise his beliefs or seek comfort in idols or absurd rules, but instead faced the horrors of his existence alone, without the support of science, religion, or the concept of "good", and this is what sets him apart from others.

- Nietzsche's rebellion against the "good" was not driven by a hard, insensible, or pitiless nature, but rather by his clear-sighted and inwardly honest approach to life, which led him to reject compassion and love as ineffective solutions to human suffering, as also noted by pessimists and 'religious' thinkers who advocate for total renunciation.

- The philosopher's goal was not to propagandize for love or compassion, but to find an answer to the questions they pose, and to move beyond these sentiments, as he believed that even the best and deepest love can be impotent and destructive, as stated in his `[[Work (human activity) | work]]` `[[Beyond Good and Evil]]`.

- Nietzsche's "immoralism" is often misunderstood, but it is actually a result of his realization that traditional moral values, such as love and pity, are insufficient to address human suffering, and his search for something beyond these values, which is in contrast to the views of Tolstoy, who seemed to be satisfied with the idea that "the good" is equivalent to fraternal love and God.

- The ideas of other thinkers, such as Tolstoy and Michelangelo, are also referenced in the section, highlighting the complexity and depth of Nietzsche's philosophical ideas, and the fact that his thoughts were not isolated, but rather part of a broader intellectual and philosophical discourse.

Nietzsche's Solitude and the Search for Something Beyond Compassion

- Nietzsche was forced to reject the help and concern of others and withdraw into solitude, where he awaited his Zarathustra, who would explain to him that there must be something above compassion in the world, and that the concept of "good" is necessary for many but useless for some, particularly when it is imposed as a moral gift.

- Nietzsche considered himself `[[Beyond Good and Evil | beyond good and evil]]` because he believed that morality, although necessary and useful for common life, was insufficient for individuals who sought a higher purpose, and he was not interested in the utilitarian considerations of whether moral rules are useful or harmful to society.

- Nietzsche's moral philosophy was not concerned with whether morality brings advantages to society, such as order and security, but rather with the fact that morality showed itself to be impotent in times of great need, and he sought in morality a divine or higher power that he did not find.

- Through his own experiences of suffering and humiliation, Nietzsche became aware of the cruelty and pitilessness of nature, and he questioned why

humans dare to call certain actions "unnatural" or "unlawful" when they are simply a manifestation of the same natural laws that govern the world.

- Nietzsche's collected works, except for the first volume, are dedicated to exploring the contrast between idealism and reality, which he called "looking into the depths of pessimism," and he ultimately denied idealism and affirmed the harsh realities of life, with all its horrors, misfortunes, and crimes.

- Nietzsche's philosophy was influenced by his own experiences of suffering and his search for a higher purpose, and he was forced to confront the fact that virtue and morality may be destined to serve a petty and useless cause, and that the concept of "good" may be insufficient to address the complexities and challenges of human existence.

Nietzsche's Beyond Good and Evil and the Importance of Suffering

- The text discusses the philosophical ideas of [[Friedrich Nietzsche]], particularly his concept of "[[Beyond Good and Evil | beyond good and evil]]," which suggests that both good and evil are necessary conditions of human existence and development, and that the distinction between them is not always clear-cut.

- Nietzsche's criticisms of [[Christianity]] are directed not against the gospel itself, but against certain commonplaces of Christian doctrine that obscure the meaning and light of truth, and he shares similar ideas and criticisms with Tolstoy.

- The text highlights the importance of suffering and discipline in Nietzsche's philosophy, quoting his works such as "[[Thus Spoke Zarathustra | Thus Spake Zarathustra]]" and "Beyond Good and Evil," which emphasize that suffering is necessary for human growth and development, and that it is through suffering that the soul is strengthened and refined.

- Nietzsche's own life is seen as an example of this philosophy, with his experiences of suffering and tragedy shaping his ideas and worldview, and his "immoralism" is viewed as a result of his profoundly unhappy life, which allowed him to see the truth and convey it to others.

- The text also touches on the idea that people often fear and despise suffering, and that they may not be willing to accept Nietzsche's philosophy, which requires a willingness to confront and embrace suffering in order to gain a deeper understanding of the world and human existence.

Saying "Yes" When Your Being Says "No"

- The individual has reached a point where they can no longer resist the demands being made on them, and instead, they find a sense of pride and charm in their ability to say "yes" when their entire being is saying "no", as they have become accustomed to the art of suppressing their true feelings.

- The text references the philosophical ideas of Nietzsche, who was sympathetic to the language of skepticism, which permeates a person's entire soul and unsettles their life forever, as expressed in the words of

Zarathustra, "The shore has disappeared from my sight, the waves of the infinite have engulfed me."

Kierkegaard, Despair, and the Power of Freedom

- Kierkegaard's existential philosophy is also discussed, where philosophy is not just an intellectual activity, but rather a response to despair and terror, which leads to a transformation in human thought and the discovery of new powers that reveal sources of truth that are often overlooked by others.
- The text also explores the idea that human beings have no power over the world or their own bodies, and that the only true power lies in the freedom to want or not want something, which is a "divine" gift that allows individuals to possess things in trust, rather than as property.
- The concept of autonomous ethics is introduced, which suggests that ethics has the power to declare what is worthwhile, important, or significant, and that this power is not subject to the will of the gods or any external authority, but rather is based on the individual's freedom to consider a thing valuable or worthless as they wish.
- The text references the philosophical ideas of [[Socrates]], [[Plato]], and [[Aristotle]], who realized that the world is ruled by necessity, and that no one has power over necessity, which led them to the truth that all thinking beings are equal before reason, and that ethics is born out of the same principles that produce necessity, namely *poros* and *penia*, or abundance and want.

Kierkegaard, Reason, and the Absurd

- The text discusses the idea that reason leads to [[Nihilism | nihilism]], and that there are no gods, only demons, as revealed by intellectual vision and speculation, with the example of Kierkegaard's statement that he appears gifted to others but feels fit for nothing in the depths of his soul.
- Kierkegaard's perception of himself is contrasted with the perception of others, who consider him a gifted man, highlighting the wall of misunderstanding between him and others, and the fact that he can only understand himself in a religious way, alone before [[God]].
- The text also explores Kierkegaard's identification with Job, who dared to express his suffering and anguish, and how this led [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] to abandon the philosopher Hegel and turn to Job, determining the characteristics that distinguish existential philosophy from speculative philosophy.
- Kierkegaard's basic question is posed, which is whose side the truth is on, the side of "everybody" and their cowardice, or the side of those who have dared to look madness and death in the eye, and how this question led him to renounce reason and rush towards the Absurd.
- The text explains that to reach the Absurd, it is necessary to suspend not only reason but also the ethical, as Kierkegaard notes in his journals, and that the "ethical" stands in the way of breaking through to the Absurd, and

that ethics is not interested in the "blessings of this world", as Kierkegaard himself states at the end of [[Repetition (Kierkegaard book) | Repetition]].

- The idea of the "suspension of the ethical" is central to understanding existential philosophy, and how it allows for a perspective [[Beyond Good and Evil | beyond good and evil]], where all actions are seen as the same, and the concept of Maya, or illusion, is relevant, highlighting the tension between the ethical and the Absurd.

Finitude, the Divine, and the Suspension of the Ethical

- The concept of finitude and its relationship with the divine is explored, where everything finite becomes insignificant for a person with a proper understanding of their relationship with [[God]], a notion that was also understood by wise men of pagan times who developed self-regulated ethics.
- The idea that worldly matters are of indifference to the spirit and that the essence of the "religious" is to scorn what is finite is discussed, raising questions about the significance of earthly events and the lives of individuals, such as Job and [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], who suffered greatly but ultimately were subject to the transience of life.
- Kierkegaard's philosophy is quoted, highlighting the paradox that the individual either stands in absolute relationship to the Absolute, making the ethical not supreme, or [[Abraham]] is lost, illustrating the concept of the "suspension of the ethical" and the Absurd Perspective.

Kierkegaard's Struggles, Isolation, and Fear of Nothingness

- Kierkegaard's personal struggles and feelings of isolation and despair are described, including his statement that "only horror that has turned to despair can develop a man's higher powers," and his acknowledgment of the fear of the power of necessity and the judgment of men.
- The distinction between earthly misfortunes and the eternal forces of nature is made, with the understanding that human suffering, no matter how great, does not give individuals a deciding voice in the grand scheme of things.
- Kierkegaard's fear of Nothingness is discussed, which he believed was not a personal trait, but rather a universal fear that he was able to expose and describe with clarity and vividness due to his unique circumstances, and his struggle with this fear is noted, including his [[Work (human activity) | work]] "The Concept of Dread".
- The theme of loneliness and the search for meaning in a seemingly indifferent world is woven throughout the discussion, with Kierkegaard's voice being described as "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," emphasizing his feelings of isolation and the difficulty of being heard in a world that often values conformity over individuality.

Despair as the Beginning of Philosophy

- The concept of despair is presented as a crucial aspect of philosophy,

with the idea that it is only through despair that one can truly touch on the mysteries of being and reach the limits of existence, as philosophers like Tillich, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Cioran, and Tolstoy have explored.

- Kierkegaard's philosophy is highlighted, particularly his notion that the beginning of philosophy is not wonder, but rather despair, which has the power to dispel the fear of Nothingness, a question that Tillich attempts to answer.

- The ethical is portrayed as being unable to answer the question of what force has taken away one's pride and honor, and it is continually obliged to confront the fear of Nothingness, which paralyzes the will, and it is this fear that [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] struggles with in his titanic struggle.

Kierkegaard's Hatred for the Ethical and the Impossibility of Faith

- Kierkegaard's [[Work (human activity) | work]] is characterized by a profound and irreconcilable hatred for the ethical, which he sees as demanding the most precious things in life, and his celebration of the ethical is actually an expression of this hatred, as seen in his writings and his references to the story of Job.

- The idea of faith is also explored, with Kierkegaard acknowledging that he is unable to make the movement of faith, which requires closing one's eyes and flinging oneself into the abyss of the Absurd, and he repeats this inability to make this movement, highlighting the impossibility of the paradoxical movement of faith for him.

- The text also touches on the idea that even when Kierkegaard returns to the ethical, he does so in a way that is potentially more dangerous to the ethical than when he leaves it, and his testimony for the ethical is more problematic than his testimony against it, showcasing his complex and nuanced relationship with the ethical.

Kierkegaard, the Knight of Faith, and the Limits of Human Will

- The discussion revolves around the ideas of [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], a philosopher who is considered to be closer to the truth than others like [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], with his concept of the Knight of Faith being a great myth that is not possible to reach, as noted by Becker.

- Kierkegaard's philosophy emphasizes the limitations of human will and the role of faith, as he questions the origin of the "I cannots" and "impossibles" that paralyze his will and drive him into resignation and inaction, suggesting that philosophy and rational thinking can take away a person's faith.

- The text also references the story of Job, who rejected the "deceitful consolations" of human wisdom and was not condemned by [[God]] for doing so, highlighting the idea that true faith requires renouncing the "ethical" and the consolations of human wisdom.

- Kierkegaard resolves to suspend the "ethical" and aim for something entirely different, as seen in the examples of Job, [[Abraham]], and the poor youth who fell in love with the king's daughter, who all renounce the "deceitful consolations" suggested by reason and [[Socrates]].

The Fundamental Law of Existence and the Powerlessness of Reason

- The fundamental law of existence is that everything finite passes, and eternity devours everything, taking away all that is precious to humans, including honor, pride, and loved ones, which is why [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] emphasizes the importance of not striving for finite happiness.
- In the depths of despair, thought itself will revive, and the concept of "understanding" is limited, like a stone that has crushed and flattened human consciousness, highlighting the need to renounce rational thinking and the support of the ethical.
- Kierkegaard's existential philosophy begins in despair, and he had to drink deeply from the bitter cup of powerlessness, feeling that his powerlessness made reality a shadow, and that all that is not of faith is sin, as he reminds us in the words of the Apostle.
- The text concludes by noting that as long as humans are guided by reason and bow before the ethical, they will be limited by the concepts of "nowhere" and "not obliged", emphasizing the need to move beyond these limitations and embrace faith.

Escaping Reason and Ethics

- The text discusses the concept of escaping from reason and ethics to truly understand the human condition, as proposed by philosophers such as [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Cioran, Tillich, and [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], who emphasize the importance of embracing the Absurd and moving beyond traditional notions of good and evil.
- According to Kierkegaard, the idea of finding a logical explanation for the origin of sin is nonsense, and instead, each individual must come to their own understanding of how sin entered the world, without relying on scientific explanations or external teachings.
- The text highlights the paradox of Kierkegaard's thought, as he praises the Absurd but also seeks knowledge and examination, even when it comes to spiritual matters, and laments his inability to make the final movement of faith.
- The concept of original sin and the Fall of the first man is explored, with Kierkegaard suggesting that fear of Nothingness is the underlying cause, and that this fear is the reality of freedom and the possibility of possibilities.
- The text also touches on the idea that the state of innocence is characterized by peace, serenity, and a lack of struggle, but also by a sense of Nothingness that arouses fear, and that the serpent's inspiration of fear in the first man led to a false and overwhelming fear that has

paralyzed the human will.

- The author of the text disagrees with Kierkegaard's attempts to amend [[Bible | the Bible]] and instead suggests that the state of innocence was free from fear because it was unaware of limited possibilities, and that the innocent man lived in the presence of [[God]], where all things are possible.
- Ultimately, the text presents a complex and nuanced exploration of the human condition, sin, and the nature of freedom, highlighting the tensions between reason, ethics, and the Absurd, and the need to move beyond traditional notions of good and evil to truly understand the human experience.

Nothingness, Innocence, and the Paradox of Kierkegaard's Thought

- The concept of Nothingness is discussed as a powerful force that can lull the human mind to sleep, making individuals prey to fear, even when there is no basis for it, and this Nothingness has somehow turned into Something with limitless power over man and existence.
- The idea of innocence and its relationship with fear of Nothingness is explored, with reference to Kierkegaard's assumption that innocence contains the source of horrors, and Jesus' statement that the first commandment is to recognize the Lord as one, which raises questions about Kierkegaard's perspective.
- The text critiques the reliance on reason and knowledge, which guarantees the rights of Nothingness and Necessity, and notes that [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] sought to overcome this by invoking the Absurd and craving Faith, as seen in his references to Job, [[Abraham]], and the story of the Fall.
- The fear of Nothingness is identified as a condition inherent in sin and knowledge, rather than in innocence and ignorance, and this is reflected in modern life's disillusionment with positivism and its attack on the [[Work (human activity) | work]] of mystics.
- Kierkegaard's views on mystics are discussed, including his disassociation from them and his criticism of their impetuosity, with the suggestion that even the most gifted mystics have already received their reward and have nothing more to expect.
- The text also touches on the idea that the mystical experience is not as powerful as the experience of Nothingness or Meaninglessness, and that some mystics, such as Underhill, may claim to have escaped these experiences, but this may be a distinct issue.

Kierkegaard, the Fall, and the Fear of Nothingness

- The author notes that [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] approached the mystery of the Fall with the "uncertainty of fear" and found it necessary to misinterpret the Biblical story, and that the fear of Nothingness remains a persistent theme in his work, despite his attempts to retain consistency by substituting the word "fear" with "terror" and proceeding to discuss the

real horrors of life.

- The concept of terror is accompanied by a moment of "sweetness" as observed by Kierkegaard, and it is distinct from the fear of Nothingness, which is pointless and causeless, making it incomprehensible to humans, as noted by Tillich.
- Tillich also explains that the Nothingness of fear is a complex of premonitions that have a vital mutual relationship with the ignorance of innocence, and this relationship is essential to understanding the nature of fear and Nothingness.

The Bible, Knowledge, and Existential Philosophy

- [[Bible | The Bible]] warns against the pursuit of knowledge, as stated in the story of Genesis, where [[God]] warns man that gaining knowledge will lead to death, and instead, faith leads to the tree of life and existential philosophy.
- [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] does not fully accept the Biblical story of the Fall of the first man, taking exception to the role of the serpent and the idea that knowledge of good and evil implies sin, and instead, he offers a corrected interpretation of the story.
- The concept of Nothingness is dynamic and takes on various forms, including Necessity, the "ethical", Eternity, Infinity, and love, which can lead to a retreat from existential philosophy to theoretical philosophy, as Kierkegaard fought against the latter.

Kierkegaard, Hegel, and the Ideal World

- Philosophers such as [[Socrates]], Kant, and Hegel would have appreciated Kierkegaard's ideas, with Hegel rejecting the miracles of the Gospels and considering them a "violation of the spirit", and instead, emphasizing the importance of love and charity.
- To escape the limitations of the finite world, one can follow Zeus' advice to Chryssip and enter the ideal world, where virtues like love and charity have intrinsic value and are independent of external events, allowing them to exist in a self-sufficient and self-satisfied state.
- However, in the face of extreme horrors, such as those experienced by Job, even love and charity must recognize their own insignificance and appeal to a higher principle, acknowledging that the ethical and its gifts are not supreme.
- The friends of Job are criticized for attempting to comfort him in their own human way, rather than acknowledging the need for a higher comforter, and it is argued that if the ethical is supreme, then Job is not only lost but also condemned, whereas if Job is justified, it means that there is a higher principle in the world that surpasses the ethical.

Kierkegaard's Severity and the True Nature of Christian Happiness

- Kierkegaard's edifying discourses are described as a continual hymn to horrors and suffering, emphasizing the severity of [[Christianity]], which

he believes is often misunderstood as being mild and gentle, and he argues that true Christian happiness is, in human estimation, more terrible than the most grievous misfortune.

- Kierkegaard's views on Christianity are compared to those of Nietzsche, with both thinkers emphasizing the importance of suffering and the need for individuals to embrace hardship, and [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] is quoted as saying that Christ's love was not sacrificial in the human sense, but rather made himself and his followers as unhappy as was humanly possible.

- Kierkegaard's interpretation of Christ's words is also examined, with him arguing that Christ's message is not one of comfort and rest, but rather one of increased unhappiness and suffering, as evidenced by his statement that "if you who are the unhappiest of the unhappy want to be helped in such a way that you will become even more unhappy, then go to Him: He will help you".

- The text also highlights Kierkegaard's emphasis on the idea that his severity is not of his own making, but rather comes from Christianity, and raises questions about the source of Nietzsche's similar emphasis on severity, wondering if it too comes from Christianity or some other force, and ultimately suggesting that both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche are driven by a desire to challenge conventional notions of comfort and happiness.

Christ, Kierkegaard, and the Importance of Sin

- The text discusses the philosophical ideas of [[Jesus | Christ]] and Kierkegaard, highlighting their emphasis on rising above the finite and embracing the concept of sin as a means to inspire and elevate humanity.

- Kierkegaard's thoughts are presented as being centered around the idea of sin and the importance of acknowledging and accepting it, rather than dismissing it or trying to silence the horrors of madness and death that it entails.

- The text also draws comparisons between [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] and other philosophers, such as [[Socrates]], Epictetus, and [[Baruch Spinoza | Spinoza]], noting that while they glorified virtue, they did not elaborate on the difficulties and sorrows that come with it, whereas Kierkegaard's writings are filled with expressions of sorrow and weeping.

- Kierkegaard's severity and emphasis on sorrow are portrayed as being rooted in his desire for people to imitate Christ and seek a life of righteousness, rather than one of joy or transitory pleasures.

- The concept of bliss is redefined as being unrelated to finite joys or sorrows, but rather as being connected to the idea of "good", which is composed of a different substance than what is typically valued by humans.

- The text also touches on the idea that true strength and courage can be found in the ability to confront and accept the terrible aspects of life, rather than trying to silence or dismiss them, as exemplified by Socrates' calm acceptance of his own death.

- Ultimately, the text presents Kierkegaard's philosophy as one that

emphasizes the importance of acknowledging and embracing the difficulties and sorrows of life, rather than trying to avoid or overcome them, and highlights the significance of this approach in achieving a deeper understanding of the human condition.

Kierkegaard, Pascal, and the Paradox of Bliss

- The writings of [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] are discussed in relation to the ideas of other philosophers, including [[Blaise Pascal | Pascal]] and [[Plato]], with the suggestion that Kierkegaard's views on existence and [[Christianity]] would have been met with disgust and indignation by some, due to his emphasis on the horrors of existence and the need to confront them directly.
- According to Kierkegaard, as explained through a hypothetical scenario, two believers who have lived vastly different lives, one in happiness and comfort, and the other in suffering and persecution, will attain the same bliss in the afterlife, which is seen as a "crying injustice" and a challenge to the idea of a just and fair reward for one's actions.
- Kierkegaard's philosophy is contrasted with that of the mystics, who seek earthly bliss and happiness, whereas Kierkegaard draws a line between himself and such thinkers, emphasizing the importance of acknowledging and accepting the hardships and sufferings of existence.
- The idea that Christian doctrine can inspire greater despair than earthly suffering is also explored, highlighting the complexity and depth of Kierkegaard's thoughts on faith and existence.
- Kierkegaard's views are further contextualized by referencing the ideas of Pascal, who discerned a "superbe diabolique" in the wisdom of certain spiritual descendants of [[Socrates]], and Plato, who explained that those who devote themselves to their desires rather than philosophy will never attain salvation.
- Overall, Kierkegaard's philosophy is characterized by its emphasis on the importance of confronting the harsh realities of existence, and the need to re-examine one's beliefs and values in light of the challenges and sufferings that life presents.

Meaninglessness, the Mystical Experience, and the Severity of Christianity

- The philosopher Tillich believed that the experience of Meaninglessness is more prominent than the Mystical experience, as it is a constant presence in our lives, whereas the Mystical experience is a rare occurrence, and this is due to the distinction between the finite and infinite, or earthly and otherworldly realms.
- [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], another influential thinker, admitted that he did not consider himself equal to the demands of [[Christianity]], and that the idea of being a Christian means being unhappy in this life and suffering, which he found to be a terrible and destructive concept that demands a superhuman effort.

- Kierkegaard's own philosophy was too severe for him to endure, and he believed that no one could truly bear the burden of his Christian ideology, which emphasizes the importance of suffering and the hopelessness that even reason and virtue cannot overcome.
- The concept of suffering, as described by Kierkegaard, refers not to ordinary hardships, but to the profound hopelessness and gloom that cannot be alleviated by reason or moral strength, and this idea is central to his philosophy.
- Kierkegaard was influenced by the works of Schopenhauer, a pessimistic philosopher, and although he disagreed with him, he was struck by the similarities between their ideas, which highlights the connection between pessimism and theistic thought.
- The core of Christianity, according to Kierkegaard, is not to live happily in this world, but to achieve a genuine relationship with eternity through suffering, and this idea is in stark contrast to the human desire to live a happy life.
- Ultimately, the concept of Nothingness is a powerful and terrifying force that holds humanity in its power, and this idea is a recurring theme in the philosophies of Kierkegaard and other thinkers.

The Omnipotent Force of Nothingness

- The concept of Nothingness is described as a powerful and omnipotent force that renders individuals powerless, with even the wise and learned being weaker and more defenseless against it than the foolish and ignorant.
- According to philosophers such as Søren [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], the human understanding and wisdom have revealed that there is nowhere to flee from Nothingness, and that everything will remain as it is forever due to its perishable and transitory nature.
- The passage quotes Kierkegaard's *The Thorn in the Flesh*, which describes a state of mind where an individual feels trapped and unable to move, with Nothingness being the power that has defeated them and chained their will.
- The idea that morality is the guardian of truth is mentioned, citing [[Plato]], and that if morality deserts its post, truth will meet with disaster, highlighting the importance of moral principles in guiding human understanding.
- The text also references Dostoevsky, who notes that men yield to impossibility, such as the laws of nature and mathematics, and that they are obliged to accept these truths, even if they go against their wishes, but deep down, humans hate coercive truth and sense that it conceals a sham and a delusion.
- The writings of philosophers such as Luther, [[Blaise Pascal | Pascal]], and Kierkegaard are mentioned as reminders of the Fall of the first man, and that there is no truth where coercion reigns, emphasizing the need for a deeper understanding of human existence and the nature of truth.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that humans are paralyzed by the fear of Nothingness and are unable to free themselves from its supernatural

enchantment and stupor, highlighting the complexities and mysteries of human existence.

Vanquishing the Supernatural and the Power of God

- The concept of vanquishing the supernatural requires supernatural intervention, and this idea is explored in the context of God's power and human existence, as discussed by philosophers such as [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], who believed that [[God]] is not bound by laws of contradiction or sufficient basis, and that human existence has become an illusion after tasting the tree of knowledge.
- The path to revelation is blocked by human reason and morality, which have become petrified and indifferent, leading to a fear of the freedom proclaimed in Scripture, and a preference for the limited certainty of Nothingness over the limitlessness of divine possibilities, as Kierkegaard noted in his struggles with original sin and the horrors of life.
- Kierkegaard's works and journals detail his desperate struggle with sin and the powerlessness of the human will, which is satisfied with rational thinking and morality, but ultimately leads to a realization of the terrible powerlessness of human existence, and the need for a more authentic and passionate faith.
- Historical [[Christianity]] has forgotten God and renounced Him, adapting itself to average human existence and being satisfied with possibilities, rather than embracing the true nature of God, as Kierkegaard believed, and this has led to a watering down of the concept of faith and the "movement of faith", which requires a rejection of eternal truths and unshakable principles of morality.
- The idea of faith is further explored by A.W. Tozer, who argues that the transaction of religious conversion has become mechanical and spiritless, allowing individuals to exercise faith without a significant impact on their moral life or ego, and that this has led to a lack of hunger and thirst for God, and a failure to crave further revelation of God to the soul, highlighting the need for a more authentic and passionate faith.

The Flawed Logic of Complacency and the Hunger for God

- The author argues that many Christians have been misled by a flawed logic that suggests once they have found [[God]], they no longer need to seek Him, which is contrary to the teachings of [[Bible | the Bible]] and the experiences of many saints, including Augustine, Rutherford, and Brainerd.
- Complacency is identified as a major obstacle to spiritual growth, and the author encourages a deep longing after God, which is often hindered by the complexity and shallowness of modern religious practices, including programs, methods, and organizations that prioritize activities over genuine spiritual experience.
- The author cites the Cloud of Unknowing and recommends stripping down everything, including theology, in prayer, and references the ideas of Tillich, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and others to highlight the

gap between the finite and infinite, and the importance of recognizing the ineffability of God.

The Displacement of God and the Enemy Within

- The author diagnoses the root of humanity's spiritual troubles as the displacement of God from the central shrine of the human heart, where "things" have taken over, and the resulting possessiveness and covetousness have led to a deep-seated disease that can only be cured by recognizing and rejecting the self-life, or the enemy within, which [[Jesus]] called "life" and "self".
- The author suggests that the way to deeper knowledge of [[God]] is through the lonely valleys of soul poverty and abnegation of all things, citing the example of [[Abraham]], who was willing to sacrifice his son, and referencing the idea that "whosoever will lose for my sake shall find", emphasizing the importance of rooting out all sense of possessing and becoming "poor in spirit" in order to truly find God.
- The author ultimately encourages readers to seek a genuine and profound experience of God, unencumbered by the distractions and complexities of modern life, and to cultivate a heart that is truly surrendered to God, as exemplified by the "blessed ones who possess the Kingdom" and have repudiated every external thing.

Spiritual Renunciation and the Presence of God

- The concept of spiritual renunciation is discussed, citing [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], who mentions the need to correct the perversion that exists in one's love, and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who talks about the importance of renunciation in Karma Yoga, where one must let go of their attachments to truly experience God.
- The story of Abraham is referenced, who had to sacrifice his son Isaac, illustrating the idea that God can take away everything that is dear to us, and yet, we can still possess nothing, which is the spiritual secret that can be learned through renunciation.
- The idea of longing after [[God]] is strong enough to prompt action, as stated by Vivekananda, who encourages individuals to go mad for God and insist that God accept their all, and this can be achieved by becoming specific and naming things and people by their names, which can shorten the time of travail.
- The importance of experiencing spiritual truths, rather than just learning them by rote, is emphasized, and it is noted that this can only be achieved by living through harsh and bitter experiences, like Abraham's, in order to know the blessedness that follows.
- The presence of God is highlighted as essential, and it is stated that the world is perishing for lack of the knowledge of God, and the Church is famishing for want of His Presence, which can be experienced by entering the Presence in spiritual experience.

The Veil of Self and the Deadly Work of the Cross

- The concept of self is discussed, citing Terence McKenna and Nietzsche, where self is seen as an opaque veil that hides the Face of God from us, and it can only be removed through spiritual experience, never by mere instruction, and this requires a [[Work (human activity) | work]] of God in destruction, where we must invite the cross to do its deadly work within us.
- The idea of the cross and death is explored, where it is stated that the rending of the veil is nothing pleasant, and to tear it away is to injure us, to hurt us and make us bleed, but it is necessary to set us free, and this is what the cross did to [[Jesus]], and it is what the cross would do to every man to set him free.

Chronic Unbelief and Inward Insensibility

- The issue of chronic unbelief is addressed, where it is stated that faith enables our spiritual sense to function, and where faith is defective, the result will be inward insensibility and numbness toward spiritual things, which is the condition of vast numbers of Christians today.
- The text discusses the importance of recognizing and responding to God's presence in our lives, with the idea that a spiritual kingdom lies within reach of our inner selves, waiting for us to acknowledge its reality, as stated by the author, and similarly noted by Stace in his book on Mysticism, and Tozer, who shares the same conclusions as a "mystic".

Spiritual Receptivity and the Decline of Christianity

- The author emphasizes the need to shift our interest from the seen to the unseen and to seek to be other-worldly if we truly want to follow [[God]], highlighting the paradox of pantheism, where God is both transcendent above all His works and immanent within them.
- The text also highlights the importance of spiritual receptivity, citing examples of various spiritual leaders throughout history, including Moses, Isaiah, Elijah, David, John, Paul, St. Francis, Luther, Finney, and Thomas a Kempis, who all shared a common vital quality of spiritual awareness and a lifelong habit of spiritual response, despite their differences in race, nationality, education, temperament, habit, and personal qualities.
- The author laments the current state of [[Christianity]], where the idea of cultivation and exercise of spiritual habits has been replaced by a desire for glamour and fast-flowing dramatic action, leading to shallow lives, hollow religious philosophies, and a preponderance of the element of fun in gospel meetings, and instead, advocates for a more profound and meaningful approach to spirituality.
- The text concludes by noting that no one person is responsible for the current state of affairs, and that all Christians have contributed to this sad state, either directly or indirectly, by accepting a poor average diet of spiritual nourishment and making the Word of Truth conform to their experience, rather than striving for a deeper and more meaningful connection with God, and that a universal Voice has been sounding, troubling men and

stirring their consciences, and that this Voice may be the undiscovered cause of the troubled conscience and the longing for immortality confessed by millions throughout history.

The Speaking Voice of God and the Importance of Stillness

- The concept of the speaking Voice of [[God]] is a fundamental fact, and how individuals react to it can be observed, with the believing person acknowledging the mysterious and wonderful nature of the cosmos that is too great for human understanding.
- Many people have experienced unexplainable events, such as feelings of loneliness, wonder, or awe, which may be attributed to the Presence of God in the world and His effort to communicate with mankind, and it is essential to consider the possibility that these experiences may arise from a divine source.
- The importance of stillness and silence is emphasized, as expressed in the phrase "Be still, and know that I am God," which suggests that strength and safety lie in quietness, and it is best to get alone with [[Bible | the Bible]] to draw near to God and hear Him speak to the heart.

God's Nature to Speak and the Secret of Inward Gazing

- A wrong conception of God and the Scriptures can lead to religious unbelief, as some people think of God as only vocal in a book and silent everywhere else, whereas in reality, God is not silent and has never been silent, and it is His nature to speak.
- Some individuals have discovered the secret of inwardly gazing upon [[God]], constantly practicing this habit, and even when they are engaged in earthly affairs, there is a secret communion going on within them, and their attention flies back to God as soon as they are released from necessary business.
- While ordinary means of grace, such as private prayer, Bible meditation, church attendance, service, and [[Work (human activity) | work]], are valuable, the inward habit of beholding God is essential, giving meaning to these activities, and enabling individuals to look at God while their outward eyes are seeing the world.

The Changed Relation to God and the Break with the World

- The flesh may resist the rigor of God's sentence, but a break with the world will be the direct outcome of a changed relation to God, as the world of fallen men does not honor God, despite millions claiming to follow Him, and a simple test will reveal how little He is truly honored among them.
- The average person's true position is exposed when they are forced to choose between God and other aspects of their life, such as money, personal ambition, or human love, and it is often found that God takes second place to these other things.

Be Thou Exalted and the Root of Unbelief

- The phrase "Be thou exalted" is a key to unlocking spiritual experience and is central to the life of [[God]] in the soul, allowing individuals to restore God to His rightful place and find their original habitat in Him.
- [[Jesus]] taught that the desire for honor among men can make belief impossible, and this desire can be the root cause of religious unbelief, leading people to prioritize their own self-interest over their relationship with God.

The World's Pride and the Burden of Self-Love

- The world is characterized by pride, arrogance, and a lack of virtues such as poverty of spirit, meekness, and mercy, which Jesus spoke about in the Sermon on the Mount, and this moral climate is perpetuated by culture, education, and literature.
- The burden borne by humanity is a deep and crushing one, consisting of the [[Work (human activity) | labor]] of self-love and the sins that arise from it, such as pride, greed, and malice, which are the sources of much human pain and suffering, and it is a burden that affects both the rich and the poor.
- Jesus' words offer a message of hope and redemption in a world filled with evil and suffering, and His teachings emphasize the importance of putting [[God]] first and seeking honor from Him alone, rather than from other people.

The Pursuit of Inward Peace and the Importance of Meekness

- The pursuit of inward peace is hindered when individuals prioritize their own honor and reputation, constantly seeking to protect themselves from criticism and negative opinions, which can lead to a burdensome and intolerable existence.
- [[Jesus]] offers an alternative approach, advocating for meekness as a means to achieve rest, where the meek person is unconcerned with the opinions of others and has developed a sense of humor about themselves, recognizing the inconsistency of being hurt by others' opinions when they have already acknowledged their own limitations.

The Struggle for Peace and the Division Between Sacred and Secular

- The struggle to find peace and balance stems from the fact that followers of Christ inhabit both the spiritual and natural worlds, requiring attention and care to the things of this world, which can lead to feelings of frustration and unease.
- To achieve true satisfaction and peace, the whole person, including the mind, will, and heart, must be committed to putting [[God]] above all else, recognizing that merely approving of this idea is not enough, and that a deliberate decision must be made to prioritize God's position in one's life.
- The division between sacred and secular activities can also contribute to feelings of unease and frustration, as individuals may view their ordinary tasks as inferior to their spiritual pursuits, leading to a sense of

discontent and a longing for a better day when they can leave their earthly concerns behind.

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Unamuno and the Tragic Sense of Life

- Miguel de Unamuno's work, "The Tragic Sense of Life", emphasizes that humans are affective or feeling animals, rather than just reasoning animals, and that direct experience of existence is necessary, not just futile reasoning through philosophical concepts.
- Unamuno argues that the value of a human soul is worth more than the universe, and that those who do not believe in the soul's conscious immortality tend to exaggerate the worth of their temporary earthly life, highlighting the contradiction between the heart's desire for unending life and the head's acknowledgement of the fleeting nature of earthly existence.
- He acknowledges that life is a tragedy and a perpetual struggle, full of contradictions, and that true philosophy must reconcile intellectual necessities with the necessities of the heart and the will, rather than just being a work of differentiated specialization or pseudo-philosophical erudition.
- Unamuno believes that all knowledge has an ultimate object, and that philosophy must refer to our whole destiny and our attitude in face of life and the universe, with the most tragic problem of philosophy being to reconcile these contradictions, which requires a deep and heartfelt understanding of our existence, rather than just a rational or cerebral one.
- He also emphasizes the importance of considering the "why" of our origin and the "wherefore" of our destiny, and that this consideration must involve the heart, not just the mind, in order to truly understand our place in the universe and the value of human existence, and that vague notions of survival through children, works, or universal consciousness are insufficient to truly address the human condition.

Intellect vs. Emotional Depth and the Human Condition

- The text discusses the idea that having great talent or intelligence does not necessarily translate to emotional or moral intelligence, with thinkers

like Cioran and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] suggesting that one can be a "smart person" in the world yet still be a "spiritual dunce".

- It criticizes individuals who are clever but lack emotional depth, saying they often dismiss the idea of exploring the unknowable or seeking a higher purpose, and instead focus on more pragmatic and naturalistic concerns, such as the origin of knowledge and the struggle for survival.
- The text also touches on the idea that humans have a fundamental lack or grief that they often try to ignore or hide, and that acknowledging and sharing this grief could be a powerful way to connect with others and find meaning, as suggested by thinkers like Tolstoy and Vivekananda.
- Additionally, the text explores the concept of consciousness as a "disease" that sets humans apart from other animals, and presents a naturalistic account of human origins, suggesting that humans may have evolved from diseased anthropoid monkeys.

The Nature of Knowledge, Philosophy, and the Search for Meaning

- The text also discusses the nature of knowledge and philosophy, arguing that philosophers are driven by a desire to live and find meaning, and that their philosophical pursuits are often motivated by a desire to resign themselves to life, seek finality, or distract themselves from their griefs.
- Furthermore, the text highlights the importance of personal consciousness in shaping our understanding of the world, suggesting that science and knowledge exist only in the minds of individuals who study and cultivate them, and that astronomy and mathematics have no reality beyond their existence as knowledge in human minds.
- The pursuit of knowledge is questioned in the face of the eventual end of personal consciousness on earth, prompting the inquiry into the purpose of accumulating knowledge if it ultimately ends in nothingness, as philosophers like Aristotle have noted the importance of leisure in a society.
- Human existence is characterized by a constant search for meaning, with individuals entertaining purposes in each moment of their life, directing their actions towards these purposes, and potentially changing them in the next moment, a concept echoed in the philosophies of Heidegger.
- The contemplation of the universe and the self can lead to a profound sense of tedium and vanity, ultimately resulting in universal love and pity for all things, a notion that resonates with the ideas of universal love, God, and Nirvana, as well as Heidegger's concept of anxiety.

Consciousness, Suffering, and the Self

- Consciousness is inherently tied to the awareness of death and suffering, which serves as a catalyst for the development of self-consciousness, a idea shared by philosophers such as [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Seraphim Rose, Cioran, and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who emphasize the importance of suffering in the acquisition of reflective consciousness.
- The experience of suffering is essential for individuals to turn upon themselves, acquire reflective consciousness, and become centered in

themselves, as it allows them to remember their existence and true selves, a concept that is also explored in Heidegger's discussion of alienation.

- Meditation on mortality, although potentially inducing anguish, can ultimately fortify individuals, and the consideration of one's own dissolution can lead to a deeper understanding of the impermanence of all things, as illustrated by the anecdote of the poor harvester who refused to let go of his earthly possessions even in the face of death.

The Human Desire for Transcendence and the Fear of Mortality

- The passage discusses the human desire to transcend mortality and understand the meaning of life, with the author referencing various philosophers, including [[Blaise Pascal | Pascal]] and Cioran, to explore the concept of immortality and the fear of death.
- The author notes that humans have a natural inclination to seek answers to fundamental questions about existence, such as where they come from and where they are going, and that this search for knowledge is driven by a desire to avoid utter death and find meaning in life.
- The passage also touches on the idea that humans often try to console themselves for their mortality by adopting different attitudes and seeking various forms of consolation, including art and philosophy, but that these efforts are often motivated by a desire for self-glory and recognition rather than a genuine pursuit of truth.
- The author quotes Pascal as saying that those who claim to be indifferent to questions of mortality and eternity are "monsters," and suggests that true philosophers are rare, as many are driven by a desire to distinguish themselves and outshine others rather than seeking substantial truth.
- The passage also references the concept of "art for art's sake," suggesting that even artists who claim to create for their own amusement are often motivated by a desire to leave behind a lasting legacy and achieve a form of immortality through their work.
- The author concludes that the human search for meaning and transcendence is a fundamental aspect of the human condition, and that it is driven by a deep-seated fear of mortality and a desire to find a way to overcome it, with the author referencing the philosopher Becker and his ideas about the human condition and the search for meaning.

Doubt, Rationalism, and the Role of Faith and Imagination

- The text discusses the concept of doubt, highlighting the difference between methodical or theoretical doubt, as seen in Descartes, and a more passionate doubt that arises from the conflict between reason and feeling, science and life, and logic and biotic experiences.
- This passionate doubt is rooted in the idea that science, by reducing personality to a complex in constant flux, destroys the foundation of spiritual and emotional life, leading to a sense of incertitude and the need for a new ethic, one that is based on the conflict itself and serves as the foundation of religion.

- The text also explores the consequences of rationalism, citing Heisman's idea that reason leads to contradictions and ultimate skepticism, which can ultimately lead to a faith similar to that of [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], where the opposite of sin is not virtue, but faith.
- The rise of positivism and rationalism is noted, as well as the subsequent return of vitalism and spiritualism, with pragmatism being an effort to restore faith in the human finality of the universe.
- The text quotes Kierkegaard, stating that true prayer is not about praying to the true God without sincerity, but about praying with passion and infinite yearning, even if it is to an idol, and that reason can be nihilist and annihilating when applied to the spiritual world.
- The importance of imagination is highlighted, as it is seen as giving life and completing or integrating reality, whereas reason alone can lead to nothingness and annihilation.
- The text also references Vivekananda's question about following reason to its logical conclusions, which leads to nihilism, and notes that even a righteous man may say that God does not exist in his head, but this is still considered a truth.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that the coexistence of reason and imagination, or the fusion of all and nothing within us, allows us to live in God, who is All, and that God lives in us, who without Him, are nothing.

The Complexity of Belief in God and the Nature of True Faith

- The concept of belief in God is complex, and those who claim to believe in Him but lack passion, anguish, or doubt in their hearts may only believe in the idea of God, rather than God Himself, as noted by philosophers like Tillich and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- True faith is not just a matter of knowledge, but rather a deep-seated desire for God to exist, and it is a response to the nihilism that reason can lead to, with faith being a part of reason that helps individuals cope with the uncertainty and despair that can come from it.
- The belief in God is often rooted in personal experiences and emotions, such as feeling God's affection, guidance, and providence, and it is not just an intellectual concept, but a living and breathing relationship that involves love, compassion, and suffering.
- The author believes that God is the love that arises from universal suffering and becomes consciousness, and that those who affirm their faith despite uncertainty are not lying, but rather, they are being honest about their own experiences and emotions.
- The consciousness of one's own suffering and misery can lead to a deeper understanding of the universal suffering and the eternal, and it is through this suffering that individuals can develop compassion for themselves and others, and ultimately, come to know God.

Spiritualizing Everything and the Nature of Religion

- The author emphasizes the importance of spiritualizing everything, giving

one's spirit to all men and things, and recognizing that consciousness, craving, and hunger for eternity and infinity are never satisfied, but rather, they are what drive humans to seek more and to seek God.

- The text also touches on the idea that religion is not just a set of beliefs or dogmas, but rather, it is a personal and emotional experience that involves a sense of connection to something greater than oneself, and it is related to the religious sense, which is a more general and universal feeling of awe, wonder, and reverence.
- The concept of religion is deeply personal and can only be truly understood through individual experience, as every man's definition of religion is based upon his own inward experience of it rather than upon his observation of it in others.

Mysticism and the Union with God

- [[Miguel de Molinos]], a Spanish mystic, believed that to attain the mystical science, one must abandon and be detached from five things: creatures, temporal things, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, oneself, and even God, in order to be lost in God and find oneself.
- The idea of eternal life and eternal union with God raises questions about the preservation of individual personality, and whether it is possible for a human soul to live and enjoy God eternally without losing itself, with some suggesting that eternal vision of God may be an eternal death, a swooning away of the personality.
- St. [[Teresa of Ávila | Teresa]] described the last state of prayer as a rapture, transport, flight, or ecstasy of the soul, where the soul is borne away without losing consciousness, and Miguel de Molinos described a similar state of internal and mystical silence, where the soul is absorbed in God and lost in Him.
- The concept of a beatific vision, a loving contemplation in which the soul is absorbed in God, can be seen as either an annihilation of self or a prolonged tedium, and some people may view the heaven of eternal glory as a place of eternal boredom, highlighting the complexity and paradox of the human desire for union with God.
- The text also explores the idea that the condition that makes our eternal union with God thinkable may also destroy our longing for it, and that the distinction between being absorbed by God and absorbing Him in ourselves may be meaningless, as it is all the same, whether it is the stream that is lost in the sea or the sea that is lost in the stream.

The Human Condition and the Search for Happiness in God

- The text from 'Journal314_43-46' explores the human condition, delving into the concept of consciousness, personal identity, and the search for happiness, with the underlying idea that true happiness can only be found in the presence of God.
- The discussion touches on the idea of seeking oneself, but also acknowledges the possibility of finding one's own nothingness, and the

potential for one's work to be lost in the end, leading to the question of why one should work at it, with the answer being that to accomplish one's work without thinking about oneself is to love God.

- The text also references the idea of an eternity of suffering, and the possibility of a God who is nourished by human suffering, citing philosophers such as Nietzsche and Cioran, who experienced their own happiness as worthless.

- The writings of [[Angela of Foligno]] are quoted, emphasizing the importance of embracing poverty in all aspects of life, including worldly things, friends, and delights, in order to inherit the kingdom of heaven, and warning that those who do not follow this path will be cursed and lamenting.

- The text also describes the poverty of [[Jesus | Christ]], who owned no possessions, accepted only what was necessary for his bodily needs, and desired to be poor in friends and worldly friendships, ultimately being rejected and persecuted by those around him.

- The personal experience of Angela of Foligno is shared, where she found consolation in the death of her family members, who she saw as a hindrance to her following the way of God, and prayed for their removal.

- The text concludes by referencing the writings of [[Thomas Keating]], who describes the human condition as being without the true source of happiness, which is the experience of the presence of God, and having lost the key to happiness, which is the contemplative dimension of life, a message similar to that of the Bagavagita and Ram Dass.

The Contemplative Journey and the Purification of the Unconscious

- The search for happiness is often misguided, as people look for it outside themselves, when in reality, it can only be found within, and this inner search requires a process of self-reflection and humility, as noted in the context of the psychedelic era, where people opened themselves to the unconscious without proper preparation.

- The contemplative journey is a process of purification of the unconscious, which involves letting go of the false self, and this journey is not a means to instant bliss, but rather a humbling experience that allows individuals to discover their true selves and find interior freedom through participation in the sufferings of [[Jesus | Christ]], as a symbol of God's love for everyone.

- In the future, religious leaders and spiritual teachers should focus on creating communion, harmony, and respect among people of different religions, rather than trying to convert others, and this can be achieved by promoting unconditional love and respect for all members of the human family, especially those in need.

- The false self is driven by desires for fame, power, wealth, and prestige, and it can lead to burnout and failure in social action, unless individuals undergo profound purification and become aware of the dynamics at work within themselves, which is a key aspect of the human condition that none of

us is initially responsible for, but we are called to be responsible for as adults.

- Contemplative prayer is a means to access the divine presence within, which is the source of true happiness, and regular practice of contemplative prayer can help individuals relativize the demands and desires of the world, and find peace and inner freedom, by awakening the presence of the word of God in us, as described in the [[Christianity | Christian]] tradition of listening to sacred scripture in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

- The process of spiritual growth and self-awareness is likened to a journey where one must let go of their selfish programs for happiness and cultural conditioning to truly find themselves and manifest the presence of God.

- According to the text, everybody is culturally conditioned to some degree, and even the greatest saints only reach a certain degree of freedom from cultural over-identification, which is challenged in Centering Prayer and requires facing the dark side of one's personality.

- The spiritual journey is not a career or a success story, but rather a series of humiliations of the false self that become more and more profound, making room for the Holy Spirit to come in and heal, and it requires submitting to the divine therapy and allowing God to address the deep levels of one's attachments to themselves and their programs for happiness.

- The text emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between one's true self and their emotions, thoughts, and roles, stating that "you are not angry; you just have angry feelings" and "you are not depressed; you have feelings of depression", and that one must cease to identify with the tyranny of their emotional programs for happiness and the limitations of their cultural conditioning.

- The spiritual conversion process involves a transition period that is dark, confusing, and confining, followed by a period of peace, enjoyment of a new inner freedom, and the wonder of new insights, which takes time and rarely happens suddenly, and it requires dropping whatever role or persona one identifies with, as it is not their true self.

- The text highlights the importance of submitting to the divine therapy and allowing the Spirit of God to address the deep levels of one's attachments to themselves and their programs for happiness, as this is essential for personal healing and for contributing to the greater good of humanity, especially in a global culture with increasing pluralism of religious beliefs.

- The concept of ego death is discussed, where the ultimate abandonment of one's role is not having a self as a fixed point of reference, but rather the freedom to manifest God through one's own uniqueness, as noted by Heisman and other mystics, including the idea that to be no one is to be everyone and to be nothing is to be everything.

- According to the text, this state can be achieved through spiritual discipline, as chosen by a monk, or by passing through great tragedy or physical and mental suffering, as God may lead some people through terrible anguish and pain to the same place of liberation from the false self.

Mysticism, Naturalism, and the Search for Reality

- Evelyn Underhill's work on [[Mysticism]] is referenced, explaining that a direct encounter with absolute truth is impossible for normal non-mystical consciousness, and that some people are tormented by the Unknowable and ache for first principles, demanding some background to the shadow show of things.
- The text also discusses the concept of Naturalism, which may be a counsel of prudence due to our ignorance of all that lies beyond, but it can never satisfy our hunger for reality, and that people live in different and mutually exclusive worlds, not only of thought but also of perception, as noted by the idea that artist and surgeon, [[Christianity | Christian]] and rationalist, pessimist and optimist, do actually and truly live in different worlds.
- The mind that seeks the Real is thrown back on itself, relying on images and concepts that owe more to the "seer" than to the "seen", but Reality must be real for all, existing "in itself" upon a plane of being unconditioned by the perceiving mind, in order to satisfy the mind's most vital instinct and sacred passion for truth, as discussed in the context of the instinct for the Absolute and the passion for truth.
- The concept of reality is relative and conventionalized, with the ordinary man perceiving facts and the Scientific Realist perceiving knowledge as symbols of an unknowable reality, and it is acknowledged that these symbols are at best approximate representations of the truth.
- The human instinct persistently seeks an unknown unity, an all-inclusive Absolute, which is perceived as the only possible satisfaction of the thirst for truth, and this is evident in the great moments of existence when individuals rise to spiritual freedom, feeling that love, patriotism, religion, altruism, and fame are more real than any factual reality.
- Religions, such as Christianity and [[Buddhism]], are steeped in idealism, emphasizing the importance of transcending the material world, and their scriptures often warn that materialists will be damned, highlighting the significance of idealistic conceptions of life.
- However, when idealists are asked how to attain communion with the described reality, their system breaks down, and it becomes apparent that their philosophy is more of a theoretical diagram than a practical guide, and some individuals may find that psychedelics could potentially help in this regard.
- The true intellectualist, who relies solely on reason and concedes nothing to instinct or emotion, is often forced to adopt a sceptical philosophy, as the horrors of nihilism can only be escaped by exercising faith in man's innate instinct for the Real, which is beyond reason and thought.
- Ultimately, the metaphysician must acknowledge that humans are forced to live, think, and die in an unknown and unknowable world, relying on faith in a supposed external order and the approximate truthfulness of the messages received from it, which is a fundamental aspect of human existence.

Living by Faith and the Illusion of Maya

- Ordinary men must live and move by faith, trusting in the laws of nature devised by the human mind, and accepting phenomena at their face value, which is an act of faith that is necessary for daily life, and certain facts, such as the uncertainty of life and the decay of the body, are often impossible for most men to realize, as they would act detrimentally to the life-force.
- The concept of Maya, as discussed by philosophers like Buddha and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], highlights the illusory nature of human perceptions, and the idea that humans are not content with their current state, as they are driven to create and strive for more, is a fundamental aspect of human existence, as noted by utilitarian philosophers who describe man as a tool-making animal.
- The human being is characterized as a vision-making animal, driven by dreams and ideals that cannot be explained by the theory of evolution based on physical perfection or intellectual supremacy, and is instead controlled by a higher and more vital reality.
- The theory of evolution must be rebuilt on a mental rather than a physical basis in order to include and explain the facts of artistic and spiritual experience, such as those related to religion, pain, and beauty, which possess a mysterious authority that exceeds feelings, arguments, or appearances.

The Problem of Suffering and the Path to a Higher Reality

- The experiences of sorrow, anxiety, and pain are mental and raise questions about why they hurt the self, and why evolution fosters the capacity for useless mental anguish and suffering as it ascends the ladder of life, which seems to invalidate the conception of the Absolute as Beautiful and Good.
- To overcome suffering, the self must either deliberately adjust to the world of sense or turn to a different world with which it is in tune, with the pessimist seeing little hope of escape and the optimist believing that pain and anguish can be life's guides on the path to a higher reality, where the self will be more at home.
- The optimist views pain and love as complementary forces that can help the self take flight towards the Absolute, and sees suffering as a "gymnastic of eternity" and a "terrible initiative caress of God", as expressed by A Kempis, who says "Gloriari in tribulatione non est grave amanti", highlighting the idea that suffering can be a transformative and redemptive experience.
- The individual who refuses to be deluded by the pleasures of the sense world and instead accepts pain, becoming an ascetic, is a puzzling type for the convinced naturalist, who can only regard them as diseased, highlighting the limitations of a materialistic philosophy in explaining such experiences.

- Pain is one of those universal experiences that is intractable from a materialistic perspective, yet it can lead to the emergence of heroes and saints, and is a factor that no honest seeker for truth can afford to neglect in their pursuit of knowledge.

The Mystical Path and the Theory of Knowledge

- The mystics, who are described as adventurers, have always declared their distrust in the sense-impressions of "normal men" and the careful logic of the intellect, instead affirming that there is another way to reach the actuality they seek, which is mediated by spiritual messages, religion, beauty, and pain.
- [[Mysticism]] postulates the existence of the Absolute and the possibility of knowing and attaining it, denying that knowledge is limited to sense impressions, intellection, or normal consciousness, and instead finding its basis in life and the existence of a discoverable "real" within the seeking subject.
- The mystics' theory of knowledge is that the spirit of man, essentially divine, is capable of immediate communion with God, the One Reality, and they speak the language of first-hand experience, which can be disconcerting to those accustomed to the neat dialectic of philosophical schools, as noted by philosophers like [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], who would agree that this definition of mysticism is actually a true description of philosophy.
- The world as seen by the mystics, described as "unimaginable, formless, dark with excess of bright," is no less real than the physicochemical universe expounded by demonstrators, and the mystics invite examination of their experiences and results, highlighting the importance of considering multiple perspectives in the pursuit of truth.

Mysticism and the Science of Ultimates

- The text from 'Journal314_43-46' discusses the concept of mysticism and its relationship with reality, highlighting that individual experiences and perceptions are subjective and may not be universally applicable, and therefore, one should not stigmatize others' experiences as impossible or invalid.
- According to the text, philosophy suggests that our understanding of the world is based on the reports of our sensory apparatus and traditional concepts, which are imperfect and may be illusions, whereas [[Mysticism | mysticism]] is considered the science of ultimates, dealing with self-evident Reality that cannot be reasoned about.
- The text quotes Aristotle, stating that the intellect alone is not sufficient to move or initiate the quest for Reality, and that the reasoning powers have little initiative, but rather, it is the act of perfect concentration and passionate focusing of the self that constitutes the state of recollection, a necessary prelude to pure contemplation.
- The state of recollection is described as a condition in which the mystic

enters into communion with Reality, and it is characterized by the discovery of something that is really inside, but appears to be outside, and this concept of recollection is a main theme in mystical thought.

- The text also references [[Plato]], who recognized contemplation as a consciousness that could apprehend the real world of Ideas, and it is described as a psychic gateway that allows the mystic to transition from one level of consciousness to another.

- The process of contemplation is valued for its ability to produce a state of transcendental sense, releasing the individual from the "lower servitude" of earthly environment and turning them towards the "higher servitude" of dependence on a higher Reality, and this is achieved through a life of discipline and intense activity, rather than idleness.

- The text cites the example of Mary and Martha, where Mary's choice to focus on the First Principles is considered the better part, as it allows for a deeper understanding and connection with Reality, and it is noted that the passivity aimed for by mystics is actually a state of intense activity, where the superficial self is stilled to liberate a deeper power.

- The text concludes by emphasizing that the mystic way must be a life and a discipline, and that under ordinary conditions, the superficial self is unaware of the attitude of the "Dweller in the Innermost" towards the external world, but that contemplation and transcendental feelings induced by experiences such as religion, art, or love can provide glimpses into this deeper reality.

Contemplation and the Transcendental Feeling

- The mystic can bring the ground of the soul, also known as the seat of "Transcendental Feeling," within the area of consciousness by deliberately ignoring the messages of the senses through contemplation, making it amenable to the activity of the will.

- A belief in the actuality of transcendent feelings is the foundation of the [[Christianity | Christian]] position and every other religion, justifying [[Mysticism | mysticism]], asceticism, and the self-renouncing life, and is based on the idea that there is a point at which human nature touches the Absolute.

- The "Theologia Germanica" develops a Platonic image, stating that the two eyes of the soul cannot work at the same time, and that to see into eternity with the right eye, the left eye must close itself and refrain from working, illustrating the need to let go of worldly concerns to achieve contemplation.

- Transcendental matters are typically beyond the margin of most people's consciousness because they have given up their whole consciousness to the occupation of the senses, but certain states such as recollection, contemplation, and ecstasy can allow the self to turn out the usual tenants and let submerged powers have their turn.

- The phenomenon of double or disintegrated personality may provide insight into the mechanical nature of the change that contemplation effects, where a

group of qualities are abstracted from the surface-consciousness to form a complete "character" or "personality" that is separate from the usual self.

- Indian mysticism is founded on asceticism and the deliberate practice of self-hypnotization, using techniques such as fixing the eyes on a near object or the rhythmic repetition of a mantra, to diminish the pull of the phenomenal world and place the mind at the disposal of the subconscious powers.

Mystical Techniques and the Lives of Contemplatives

- Various mystic cults, including the Greek initiates of Dionysus and the Gnostics, have used similar techniques, such as dancing and music, to achieve a state of contemplation and union with the divine.
- Some people have pathologized great contemplatives, such as [[Paul the Apostle | St. Paul]] and St. [[Teresa of Ávila | Teresa]], calling them epileptic or hysterical, but this ignores the fact that these individuals were often persons of robust intelligence and marked practical or intellectual ability, such as Plotinus, [[St. Bernard (dog breed) | St. Bernard]], and the two Ss. Catherine.
- The lives of notable figures such as [[John of the Cross]], Jàmi, Jalalu 'ddin, Kant, and Beethoven demonstrate that great discoverers and creators have often suffered from poor physical health, which could lead a classifier to mistakenly categorize them as hopeless hypochondriacs.
- The dominant idea in the mind of a mystic is the perception of the transcendent reality and presence of God, which is a rational concept that ousts all other ideas, whereas the mono-ideism of a hysteric patient is irrational.
- The human body is limited in its ability to support intense spiritual activities, and mystics often acknowledge that their bodily frame cannot support the demands of their spiritual pursuits, leading to what they term "mystical ill-health", as noted by Tauler.

Genius, Creativity, and the Deeper Self

- Geniuses, including poets, musicians, mathematicians, and inventors, seem to have a unique connection between their deep levels of being and their conscious awareness, with powers below the threshold of consciousness playing a major role in their creative work, as seen in the ideas of Plato's theory of recollection.
- The process of creation, whether in art, science, or religion, often involves a sudden uprush of intuitions or ideas that seem to come from beyond the individual's conscious control, and the execution of these ideas is often beyond the control of the superficial self.
- To access the deeper levels of consciousness and connect with the Cosmic Life, one must be quiet, receptive, and humble, allowing the subliminal mind to become a highly disciplined and skilled instrument of knowledge.
- The surface mind, concerned with natural existence and dominated by spatial conceptions, is unable to establish relations with the Absolute or

transcendental world, but the deeper self, which is usually kept below the threshold of consciousness, is the primary agent of [[Mysticism | mysticism]] and lives a substantial life in touch with the real or transcendental world.

- Certain processes, such as contemplation, can alter the state of consciousness and permit the emergence of this deeper self, making an individual more or less a mystic, depending on the extent to which this deeper self enters into their conscious life.

Mysticism vs. Magical Transcendentalism

- The concept of magical transcendentalism encompasses various forms of self-seeking activities, including the use of incantations, congregational prayer, and self-hypnotizing devices, all of which aim to exalt the will and obtain something previously unpossessed, distinguishing it from mysticism, which is a non-individualistic and heart-centered movement seeking to transcend individual limitations and surrender to ultimate Reality.

- Mysticism is often misconstrued as being related to transcendental philosophy, which is an academic and map-making endeavor, whereas mysticism is a practical and empirical pursuit that seeks personal experience and the abolition of individuality, as opposed to the acquisition of knowledge or personal gain.

- The mystic faces significant challenges in conveying their experiences to others due to the disparity between their unspeakable experiences and the limitations of language, as well as the gulf between their mind and the minds of their audience, requiring a bewitching and captivating approach to facilitate understanding.

- Music is uniquely positioned to evoke a response to the life-movement of the universe, sharing this power with great mystical literature, as exemplified by Beethoven's ability to hear the voice of Reality and translate it into his compositions, highlighting the capacity of music to convey the exultant passions and incomparable peace of the universe.

The Nature of Mysticism and the Mystic's Journey

- [[Mysticism]] is not an opinion, philosophy, or pursuit of occult knowledge, but rather an organic process that involves the perfect consummation of the Love of God, the achievement of the immortal heritage of man, and the establishment of a conscious relation with the Absolute, characterized by a movement of the mystic consciousness towards this consummation, which is not merely a sudden admission to an overwhelming vision of Truth.

- The mystic's journey is often marked by a paradoxical "quiet" of the contemplative, which is an outward stillness essential to inward work, and is driven by a mystic passion that can lead individuals out of their prison, with notable thinkers such as [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and Tillich, and concepts like symbolism and the finite/infinite gap, being relevant to the discussion of mysticism and its distinction from other

philosophical and spiritual pursuits.

- The pursuit of knowledge and philosophy can be helpful in navigating experiences, but it has its limitations and can never unlock the doors to true understanding, as stated in the context of the mystic's journey.
- The psychologist can reconcile various stages of contemplation and spiritual ascent described by different mystics, such as St. Teresa's "Degrees of Orison" and the Sufi's "Seven Stages", indicating that despite different landmarks, the road to spiritual enlightenment is one.
- True mysticism is never self-seeking, and the mystic does not pursue supernatural joys or personal rewards, but rather is driven by a passion for perfection and love, as emphasized by the statement that spiritual desires are useless unless they initiate a costly movement of the whole self towards the Real.
- The mystic life process requires a combination of an appropriate psychological make-up, extraordinary concentration, exalted moral emotion, and a nervous organization of the artistic type, as well as a willingness to surrender oneself and all things, as stated by Dionysius the Areopagite.
- The mystic serves without hope of reward, and attainment comes only by means of a sincere, spontaneous, and entire surrender of oneself and all things, leading to the annihilation of selfhood and the fulfilment of love, as seen in the examples of St. [[Teresa of Ávila | Teresa]], St. [[John of the Cross]], and Boehme.
- The mystics view the world as a place of illusion, where everything is transitory and finite, and they seek to detach themselves from the body and fold themselves about Divinity, as expressed in the statement that we have no continuing city in this world.

Mysticism and Religion

- The great mystics are often faithful sons of the great religions, and their experiences are interpreted within the context of their respective religious traditions, such as [[Christianity]], [[Islam]], Brahmanism, and [[Buddhism]], which can foster unearthly love and potentially become a nursery for mystics.
- The Sufis, Philo, the Kabbalists, and Plotinus were all able to adapt their respective religious beliefs to their mystical doctrines, demonstrating that mystical truth cannot be limited by a single religion, as it is a direct apprehension of the Divine Substance.
- Mystics often use the map of their community to describe their spiritual journey, but when this map is insufficient, they may create new ones, as seen in the examples of Boehme and Blake, which can be difficult to understand and may lead to them being regarded as madmen or heretics by the orthodox.

The Definition of God and the Christian Mystic

- A complete definition of God must account for three aspects, which provide objectives for the heart, intellect, and will, and offer material for the

Self's highest love, deepest thought, and supreme volition, as emphasized by mystics who have the largest conceptions of the Divine.

- The concept of separation from God is an error, yet it is a necessary step for one to reach out to God, and the [[Christianity | Christian]] atmosphere has often provided a fertile ground for individual mystics to develop their genius in a sane and fruitful way, with many great European contemplatives being Christians of a strong and personal type.

- The process of transcendence involves a disturbance of the self's equilibrium, shifting the field of consciousness to higher levels, and removing the centre of interest from the subject to an object, but it must not be confused with religious conversion, as seen in the example of Pascal's ecstatic revelation, which was a profound and personal experience that he kept as a perpetual memorial.

- The spiritual conversion of [[Blaise Pascal | Pascal]] was facilitated by an abrupt illumination, which marked the end of a long period of spiritual stress and indifference to his ordinary interests, as noted by Bremond, who observed that this process had begun eleven months earlier in a gentle and obliging manner.

The Escape from Illusion and the Awakening of the Self

- According to the text, the surface-consciousness creates a cave of illusion for each individual, and escaping this cave is the first step towards reality, as emphasized by Plato's prisoners, and this escape is necessary for the individual to discern the true character of their senses and instincts.

- The "natural" self, or the "old Adam" as referred to by [[Paul the Apostle | St. Paul]], is incapable of supersensual adventure and is centered on the material world, but upon awakening, it becomes aware of its finitude and aspires to the infinite, as seen in the lives of mystics who often undergo intense poverty and pain in their pursuit of true experience.

- The process of Purgation, which includes poverty and mortification, is a necessary step towards union with the Absolute, and is considered a privilege and a dreadful joy by true lovers of the Absolute, such as St. [[Teresa of Ávila | Teresa]], who exclaimed "Let me suffer or die!", and St. [[John of the Cross]], who stated "We must be filled with a burning fervour full of anguish".

Purgation and the Path to Union with the Absolute

- The greatest of the contemplative saints, including St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross, were aware of their own inadequateness and the need for perpetual purification, which involves getting rid of self-love and foolish interests, and is achieved through two aspects: the Negative aspect of stripping away superfluous and harmful things, and the Positive aspect of raising the remaining elements of character to their highest term through mortification and deliberate recourse to painful experiences.

- The text highlights the importance of purification as a perpetual process,

which is necessary for the self to approach the unitive state, and notes that even the greatest contemplative saints remained conscious of their unworthiness and the need for continued purification, as they alternated between moments of high rapture and bitter consciousness of their selfhood.

The Three Virtues of the Mystic: Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience

- The mystics of all ages and faiths agree on the importance of three virtues: Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, which involve self-stripping, purity of soul, and self-abandonment, respectively, in order to attain a complete detachment from finite things and achieve a union with God.
- Poverty, in the context of [[Mysticism | mysticism]], means an utter self-stripping and detachment from all finite things, including material and immaterial wealth, and is not just about outward destitution, but rather about giving up things that enchain the spirit and deflect it from its road to God.
- The concept of Purity, as described by mystics such as St. Francis, St. Mechthild of Magdeburg, Rolle, and Suso, involves turning away from all creatures and setting one's heart entirely on the Pure Good, which is God, and seeing all creatures as veils and vessels of the divine.
- The mystic's approach to natural things is often misunderstood, as they are not necessarily opposed to enjoying them, but rather, they see them as a means to an end, and their intense and innocent joy in natural things comes from seeing "all creatures in God and God in all creatures".
- The ancient paradox of Poverty suggests that true liberty and enjoyment can only be achieved by not possessing or desiring things, and that one must seek pleasure in nothing in order to have pleasure in everything.
- The true rule of poverty, as described by mystics and philosophers such as Al Ghazzali and Nietzsche, consists in giving up those things that enchain the spirit, divide its interests, and deflect it from its road to God, whether these things be riches, habits, religious observances, friends, interests, distastes, or desires.

The Practice of Poverty and Detachment

- The attainment of transcendental consciousness requires the ruthless abandonment of everything that is in the way, and each individual must discover and extirpate their own interests that nourish selfhood, in order to achieve a complete self-abandonment and detachment from all that is not God.
- The process of self-simplification requires the removal of distractions and attachments, as seen in the personal experiences of Al Ghazzali, [[Francis of Assisi | St. Francis of Assisi]], [[Angela of Foligno]], and Antoinette Bourignon, who all underwent significant renunciations to focus on their spiritual journeys.
- Angela of Foligno, for example, struggled to abandon all worldly attachments, but eventually found the courage to disguise herself as a hermit and give up all her possessions, including a penny that she had kept,

in order to fully devote herself to her spiritual path.

- Similarly, [[Teresa of Ávila | Teresa]], who was a mystical genius, had to give up her self-indulgence in talking to friends who visited her at the convent, as she realized that these interactions were distracting her from her contemplative life and preventing her from fully surrendering to the Absolute.

- The struggle between Teresa's desire for human connection and her desire for spiritual devotion was a major battle in her life, with her inward voices and deepest instincts urging her to give up her attachments to the world, but she felt incapable of making such a sacrifice for many years.

- Ultimately, Teresa and other mystics like Antoinette Bourignon had to make a choice between their attachment to the world and their devotion to God, with Antoinette giving up her last penny and Teresa giving up her passionate delight in human friendship in order to achieve a deeper level of spiritual consciousness and union with the divine.

Complete Concentration and the Pursuit of the Spiritual Life

- The examples of these mystics demonstrate that the pursuit of a high contemplative life requires complete concentration and the willingness to let go of all distractions and attachments, as genius and mystical genius alike cannot afford to dissipate their energies and must focus on their spiritual goals.

- The concept of prudence is seen as a distraction to the development of one's transcendental genius, as it can hinder the pursuit of a higher spiritual life, as observed in the case of Antoinette, who is contrasted with Teresa's generous and energetic nature.

- Many mystics, including [[Plato]], have found that the perfection of detachment can be achieved without drastic renunciation of external things, and instead, they use the beauties of Earth as steps to mount upwards towards a higher Beauty, as stated by Plato.

- The lives of mystics such as the [[Angela of Foligno | Blessed Angela of Foligno]], who viewed the deaths of her relatives as a relief from the impediments they posed to her spiritual journey, and St. Augustine, who said "Love, and do what you like," illustrate the complex and often contradictory nature of the mystical experience.

The Process of Transformation and the Role of Mortification

- The process of becoming a mystic is often marked by a stormy period of change, where the individual must battle between the inharmonious elements of the self, and this change is necessary for the production of a definite kind of efficiency, as the adjustment of human nature to the demands of its new life requires mortification and detachment.

- Mortification is not an end in itself, but rather a process directed towards the production of a definite kind of efficiency, and it is through this process that the self can be released from the pull of the lower nature and established on new levels of freedom and power, as stated in the text.

- The disciplines of mortification, although severe and seemingly unmeaning to outsiders, can help the self to overcome the self-regarding instincts that impel it to choose the more comfortable part, and to establish it on new levels of freedom and power, as the senses are dominated and the barriers of individuality are broken down.
- The mystics, including St. [[John of the Cross]], have a profound conviction that the journey to perfection is a painful process, and that no progress can be made without pain, as the law of the inner life asserts itself, and the path of the Eternal Wisdom follows the Way of the Cross, as pointed out by Christians who cite the Passion of [[Jesus | Christ]] as a proof of this law.
- The spiritual journey of a mystic involves enduring birth pangs in both the spiritual and material worlds, requiring adequate training that can be painful, as the mystics always welcome pain and sometimes even seek it out in various forms, including physical and emotional suffering.
- The process of Purgation is essential for the mystic to establish the ascendancy of the "interior man" or transcendental consciousness over the "sensitive nature", and it is a necessary step for individuals from various religious backgrounds, including Neoplatonists, Mahommedans, and [[Christianity | Christian]] ascetics.

The Purgative Way and the Illuminated Consciousness

- The Purgative Way is characterized by constant fluctuations between depression and delight, as seen in the example of Merswin, who experienced intense psychic instability and passed through the purgative and illuminated states in an intermittent style.
- The Illuminated Consciousness is a state of intense pleasure and deep certitude of the Personal Life omnipresent in the universe, which can be achieved through the mystic's journey, but it is not a continuous state and can be interrupted by periods of spiritual fatigue or "aridity" and the oncoming gloom of the Dark Night.
- The distinction between the Illuminative and the Unitive Life is that in Illumination, the individuality of the subject remains separate and intact, whereas in the Unitive Life, the individuality is transcended, and the mystic experiences a state of union with the Infinite.
- The mystics, including those like William Blake who were thought to be madmen for their experiences, are able to discriminate between true and false transcendental experiences and never doubt the validity of their experiences, even when they seem inconsistent with their theology.
- The journey of the mystic is a life-struggle to disentangle themselves from illusion and attain the Absolute, and it is important to remember that the different states of the mystic's journey are closely intertwined and not separate entities, despite being treated as such for the purposes of study.

The Dark Night and the State of Quiet

- The heightened apprehension of reality experienced by individuals can

increase their power to deal with the challenges of everyday life, as stated by [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who notes that a mind focused on a higher object of interest can perform its tasks more efficiently.

- The "Dark Night" is a period of spiritual transformation that can be a gateway to a higher state for great contemplatives, but may also pose dangers and pains for those with less heroic spirituality, as described by [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], who mentions the risk of suicide as a potential outcome.
- During this period, individuals may experience mental and moral disorder, characterized by evil thoughts, temptations, and a loss of grasp on both spiritual and worldly affairs, as exemplified by Lucie-Christine's account of her own experiences with spiritual darkness and temptation.
- The health and well-being of those passing through this phase can suffer, leading to feelings of isolation and abandonment, as well as a decline in their intellectual life, with Tauler emphasizing the importance of a "fathomless sinking in a fathomless nothingness" in order to truly follow a higher power.

Quiet, Quietism, and the Search for Interior Silence

- The state of "Quiet" is a condition of suspension of surface-consciousness, where the individual's personality remains, but their attention is withdrawn from the senses, leading to a sense of emptiness and passivity, but ultimately allowing them to become aware of a omnipresent and intangible presence within themselves, as described by the author, who notes that this experience can be similar to a psychedelic trip, such as one induced by psilocybin.
- The author reflects on the connections between mystics, saints, and psychedelic experiences, mentioning the works of McKenna and the feelings of remembrance and interior experience induced by cannabis, which is compared to a vague picture in consciousness rather than a full-blown experience.
- The author references Cioran, page 42 and 61, who discusses the idea that the soul has divided and scattered its powers in outward things, and that to work inwardly, the soul must call home all its powers and collect them from all divided things to one inward work, requiring a state of forgetting, not-knowing, stillness, and silence to hear the Word.
- The author also references Eckhart, who describes the soul as being of equal capacity with God in receiving, and that the soul is an abyss of receptivity, formed anew with God and in God, highlighting the idea of the soul's boundless capacity for receiving and its relationship with the divine.
- The text further explores the concept of "Quiet" and "Quietism", with St. [[Teresa of Ávila | Teresa]] and the "Pystle of Private Counsel" discussing the difference between a true and healthy mystic state of "Quiet" and its morbid perversion in "Quietism", emphasizing that true "Quiet" is a means, not an end, and is actively embraced, not passively endured.
- The author notes that the distinction between "Quiet" and "Quietism" may

be based on a false or misunderstood description of "Quietism", referencing the ideas of Cioran, Tillich, and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who emphasize the importance of striving for an understanding of God, and that the end goal is not laziness, but rather an attempt at the impossible, an understanding of the divine.

- The author also references Molinos' "Spiritual Guide", which discusses the importance of interior silence, and how it allows God to speak with the soul and communicate Himself to it, teaching it perfect and exalted wisdom, but notes that Molinos' teaching was often misunderstood as suggesting that doing nothing at all was a virtue, and that all deliberate spiritual activities were bad, which is not what Molinos intended.

- The concept of Nothingness, as described by Molinos, is one of plenitude, where the true contemplative seeks to breathe in the atmosphere of Love, rather than desiring extraordinary favors or visitations, and this state is characterized by a dynamic and purposive character, despite appearing to be passive.

- The mystic's journey is not about seeking happiness or pleasure, but rather it is hard work, and according to various thinkers such as Cioran, Tillich, and Vivekananda, the mystical state and the journey to it require participation, ardent charity, and a conquering of the invisible world, rather than a state of indifference.

- The Quietist position is often misunderstood as a state of indifference, but it is actually an unending spiritual crisis that involves a conquering of the invisible world and a recognition of the limited perception of finite beings, which necessarily leads to a failure of all human conceptions of the Divine.

The Mystical Experience and the Cravings of the Soul

- The mystical experience, as described by St. [[Teresa of Ávila | Teresa]], is a death to all things of this world and a fruition of God, characterized by a glorious folly and a heavenly madness, where the soul is fully occupied with God, and this experience can only be described symbolically, allusively, and obliquely, due to the spatial imagery inseparable from human thinking and expression.

- The mystic's journey is driven by three cravings: the craving to go out from the normal world in search of a lost home, the craving of heart for heart, and the craving for inward purity and perfection, which correspond to three ways of attacking the problem of the Absolute, and these cravings lead to a change from the state of ordinary men to a state of spiritual consciousness, where the mystic is in union with Divine Reality, with God, as described by thinkers such as [[Plato]] and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].

- The mystic's ultimate goal is to achieve a close, definite, and actual intimacy with the Absolute God, regardless of their theological creed, as expressed by various mystics such as the Sufi, the German contemplative, and the Italian saint.

- The seeker of the Real may objectify their quest in two ways: as an outgoing journey from the world of illusion to the real or transcendental world, or as an inward alteration, remaking, or regeneration, by which their personality is changed to enter into communion with the Fontal Being.
- These two aspects of the mystic's journey are obverse and reverse of one whole, representing the pair of opposites, Infinite and Finite, God and Self, which [[Mysticism | mysticism]] aims to carry up into a higher synthesis, as noted by authors such as Vivekananda, Jnana/Karma Yoga, and Tillich in their works, including "Jnana/Karma Yoga" and "Faith".

The Integration of Spiritual and Practical Life

- The spiritual life is not separate from the practical life, and most conflicts and difficulties arise from trying to deal with them separately, instead of realizing they are parts of one whole, as emphasized by the importance of recognizing the interconnectedness of all aspects of life.
- The spiritual life is produced by the steady attraction of the Divine and our humble and self-forgetful response to it, and it consists in being drawn to the place where God wants us to be, rather than the place we fancied for ourselves, highlighting the need for self-awareness and surrender.
- The presence and action of the great spiritual universe surrounding us often goes unnoticed, and our spiritual senses are not sufficiently alert, due to our focus on developing our correspondence with the visible world, as noted in the discussion on the importance of balancing the development of our spiritual and practical lives.
- It is essential to avoid both too much indefiniteness and abstraction, as well as hard and fast definitions, in order to truly understand and experience the spiritual life, and to recognize the importance of balance and awareness in our spiritual journey.

The Language of Spiritual Realities and the Importance of Prayer

- The language used to describe spiritual realities is often inadequate and inaccurate, as noted by saints such as St. [[John of the Cross]], who stated that any knowledge of God obtained in this life is confused, imperfect, and oblique, a concept also discussed by Tillich and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- The process of spiritual growth involves two key activities:
 - Mortification, which means killing the roots of self-love, including pride, possessiveness, anger, and greed, and transforming one's personal and professional life to be more consistent with one's dependence on a higher power.
 - Prayer is the act of turning to Reality and acknowledging one's dependence on the Eternal Spirit, which is a fundamental aspect of one's life towards God, driven by a longing for Him and a desire for perfection, beauty, and truth, as described by [[Karl Barth]] as an "incurable God-sickness".
- Humans are imperfect creatures with a deep-seated desire for beauty, truth, and goodness, which can only be fully realized in the Life of God,

and this longing is the seed from which grows the plant of prayer, which is a measureless adoration that surpasses intellectual analysis or description.

- The act of adoration is a powerful form of prayer that is often overlooked in favor of more practical petitions, but it is actually a prayer for extremely practical things, such as the cleansing and sanctification of one's character, home, and social contacts, and it requires a total concentration on the interests of God, which must be expressed in action.
- Ultimately, the pursuit of spiritual growth and perfection requires a willingness to take action and work towards the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven, rather than simply waiting for it to happen, and it involves a deep desire for the coming of perfection into life, as expressed in the desire for the perfection of God's symphony rather than one's own individual performance.

Living a Consistent Christian Life

- The text emphasizes the importance of Christians living consistently with their spiritual ideals, which would require significant personal cost, but would ultimately lead to a more meaningful and impactful life.
- The world is described as a place where something has gone wrong, with evidence of cruelty, greed, oppression, and suffering, and Christians are called to acknowledge this reality and feel a sense of obligation to do something about it.
- The awakening of a human being to their true situation involves three stages: the sudden disclosure of the Divine Splendour, which reveals the individual's own imperfection and leads to shame, penitence, and purification, and finally, a response of willingness to serve and cooperate with God.
- The spiritual life is characterized by action in the interests of the Perfect, which can take many forms, from self-offering to creative pursuits, and requires great courage, initiative, and endurance, as well as a calm acceptance of challenges and difficulties.
- The text also highlights the importance of the inner life of Christians, which is often marked by hard and painful experiences, but ultimately shares in the saving power of the Cross, and notes that the Church is a tool of God for saving the world, rather than a comfortable religious club.

The Qualities of Saints and the Mystery of Life

- In contrast to the self-made and self-acting soul, which is marked by fuss, feverishness, and anxiety, the saints are characterized by quiet and noble qualities, such as steadiness of spirit, and meet the challenges of their lives with calmness and dignity, as noted in the examples of the saints and the thoughts of theologians like Tillich.
- The lives of individuals are part of a great mystery related to God and known by God, and this understanding can bring a sense of peace and tranquility amidst the troubles of the world.
- Historical figures such as [[St. Bernard (dog breed) | St. Bernard]] and

St. Francis have demonstrated that renouncing worldly possessions and embracing poverty and hardship can lead to a greater wealth and more exquisite beauty, as their actions were guided by their devotion to the Spirit.

- The spiritual life requires a sense of timing and leisure, allowing individuals to achieve more than those who are enslaved by the rush and hurry of the world, and it is essential to remember that God is greater than one's heart and job.

The Knight of the Spirit and the Pursuit of a Higher Reality

- Even in the midst of a deep and peaceful communion with God, individuals may experience pain and tension as they strive towards a beauty and perfection that they cannot fully attain, as noted by Tillich.

- The concept of the Knight of the Spirit, as depicted in Dürer's drawing, represents the human nature that is treated and used as it ought to be, riding towards a higher reality while accompanied by the voices of Death and the Devil, which symbolize the discouragements and temptations that individuals face.

- The Knight of the Spirit, having overcome his own personal struggles and slain his special devil, remains focused on his contemplation of something beyond the worldly landscape, and by looking at what he loves rather than what he hates, he is able to safely navigate through the challenges and join the great army of God.

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Quotes from Influential Figures and Thomas Kempis on Loving and Serving God

- The section of the document 'Journal314_47-52' features quotes from various influential figures, including Thomas Kempis, [[Thérèse of Lisieux | Therese of Lisieux]], [[Ernest Becker]], [[Paul Tillich]], [[Swami Vivekananda]], and [[Martin Heidegger]], although only Thomas Kempis is directly quoted in this part.

- Thomas Kempis emphasizes the importance of loving and serving [[God]],

stating that all other knowledge and pursuits are vanity without the love and grace of God, and that true wisdom lies in casting the world behind and reaching for the heavenly kingdom.

- He also stresses the value of humility, encouraging individuals to recognize their own ignorance and limitations, and to avoid pride and self-elevation, instead striving to think kindly and highly of others, even when they sin or falter.
- Kempis warns against trusting every word or feeling, and instead advises cautious and patient discernment to determine what is truly of God, and he cautions against putting trust in men or created things, which can lead to disappointment and disillusionment.
- He advocates for loving all men, but not making close companions of all, and avoiding the tumult of worldly conversations and desires, which can lead to defilement and distraction from divine things.
- Kempis emphasizes the importance of mortifying worldly desires and clinging to God with one's whole heart, and he notes that true progress in religion involves inner growth and transformation, rather than just outward observances and forms.
- He also acknowledges the value of enduring contradictions and unfair judgments, when one is acting with good intentions, as a means of spiritual growth and refinement.

Emphasis on Humility, Self-Reflection, and Avoiding Judgment

- The provided text from 'Journal314_47-52' emphasizes the importance of humility, self-reflection, and patience in bearing with the faults and infirmities of others, as well as recognizing one's own shortcomings and need for correction.
- It highlights the need to avoid judging others and instead focus on examining and improving oneself, while also being mindful of the temptations and adversities that can arise in any situation, as noted by Vivekananda's philosophy of "believe nothing and disbelieve everything, finite/infinite gap".
- The text also references the lives of holy figures, such as the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and Virgins, who endured great tribulations and temptations, yet persevered in their devotion to [[God]] through strict lives of prayer, fasting, and contemplation, demonstrating the value of a simple and virtuous life.
- Additionally, the text advises being constantly engaged in productive activities, such as reading, writing, praying, or meditating, and avoiding idle conversation and novelties, in order to cultivate a deeper sense of spirituality and connection with God, as reflected in the principles of Karma [[Yoga]].
- The importance of community and mutual support is also emphasized, with the recognition that individuals are not sufficient on their own and need to bear with and help one another, as stated in the phrase "we may learn to bear one another's burdens, because none is without defect, none without a

burden".

- The text concludes by encouraging individuals to prioritize their spiritual growth and development, and to strive for a life of simplicity, virtue, and devotion, as exemplified by the holy fathers who dwelt in the desert and renounced worldly riches and dignities.

Living a Simple and Spiritual Life, Detachment from Worldly Things

- The text emphasizes the importance of living a simple and spiritual life, free from the distractions and temptations of the world, as [[Jesus]] taught his followers to go "apart from the multitude" to reach that which is hidden and spiritual.

- It is noted that a person who seeks to live a spiritual life must be mindful of their words and actions, and that it is better to be unknown and take heed to oneself than to neglect oneself and work wonders, as stated in the phrase "it is better to be unknown and take heed to oneself than to neglect oneself and work wonders".

- The text also warns against becoming entangled with the world and its fleeting joys, stating that "no man safely goeth abroad who loveth not to rest at home" and that "what canst thou see anywhere which can continue long under the sun", emphasizing the impermanence of worldly things.

- The idea that true happiness does not lie in the abundance of temporal things, but rather in a moderate portion, is also presented, with the statement that "the happiness of man lieth not in the abundance of temporal things but a moderate portion sufficeth him".

- The text critiques those who are consumed by worldly desires, stating that "oh foolish and faithless of heart, who lie buried so deep in worldly things, that they relish nothing save the things of the flesh", and encourages readers to focus on the things that are above, as the saints of [[God]] and loyal friends of Christ have done.

- The importance of being prepared for death and the afterlife is also emphasized, with the warning that "very quickly will there be an end of thee here; take heed therefore how it will be with thee in another world", and the encouragement to "always be thou prepared, and so live that death may never find thee unprepared".

- The text ultimately encourages readers to adopt a mindset of selflessness, renouncement, and non-movement, letting go of worldly attachments and desires, and instead focusing on spiritual growth and preparation for the afterlife.

Virtuous Life, Preparation for Death, and Trust in God

- The section from the document 'Journal314_47-52' emphasizes the importance of living a virtuous life and being prepared for death, as many people die suddenly and unexpectedly, and it is crucial to trust in God rather than in worldly relationships or material possessions.

- The quotes from various spiritual leaders, including Maya, Tolstoy, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and [[Blaise Pascal | Pascal]], stress

the need to focus on one's salvation and to prioritize the things of [[God]], rather than being anxious about worldly concerns or seeking comfort in earthly things.

- The Start of the Second Book of [[The Imitation of Christ]] is referenced, with quotes highlighting the importance of turning to God and forsaking the worldly life, learning to despise outward things and focus on inward spiritual growth, and recognizing that true peace and liberty come from humble suffering and selflessness.

- The text also warns against placing too much trust in mortal men, even if they are useful or dear, and advises against becoming overly attached to earthly things, as they are fleeting and can defile the heart, and instead encourages the reader to seek inward joy and contemplation of heavenly things.

- The importance of selflessness and renunciation is emphasized, with the suggestion to live a life of willingness to give one's life for others, as exemplified by the concept of Karma [[Yoga]], and to prioritize the will of God and the benefit of one's neighbor above all else.

- The text concludes by cautioning against blaming others for small faults while ignoring one's own greater faults, and advises the reader to remain free from temporal cares and to value nothing above God Himself or the things of God, recognizing that all consolation from creatures is ultimately vain.

Humility, Detachment, and Seeking Jesus

- The text from 'Journal314_47-52' emphasizes the importance of humility and detachment from worldly desires, stating that [[God]] alone is eternal and incomprehensible, and that the love of created things is deceiving and unstable, whereas the love of [[Jesus]] is faithful and lasting.

- It highlights the need to put away every created thing and seek Jesus, who would freely take up His abode with those who do so, and to consider all people, whether friends or enemies, as dear for His sake and in Him.

- The text also discusses the concept of spiritual comfort and the importance of receiving it with gratitude and humility, recognizing that it is a gift from God, and warns against becoming lifted up or presumptuous when comfort is given, and against despairing when it is taken away.

- It quotes various spiritual leaders and saints, including [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], to emphasize the importance of stripping oneself of selfish thoughts and desires, and of embracing a life of humility, mortification, and detachment from worldly comforts.

- The text emphasizes the need to take up the cross and follow the way of the Holy Cross, which is the path to true inward peace, and notes that the whole life of Christ was a cross and martyrdom, and that those who advance in the spirit will often find heavier crosses to bear.

- It concludes by stating that it is not in the nature of man to bear the cross or love the cross, but that one ought to lead the life of a dying man, despising self and desiring to be despised, and bearing all adversities and

losses with humility and patience.

Spiritual Growth, Detachment, and Humility

- The section from the document 'Journal314_47-52' emphasizes the importance of spiritual growth and detachment from worldly desires, as stated in the quotes, including the phrase "the more a man dieth to himself, the more he beginneth to live towards [[God]]."
- The text highlights the need to prioritize eternal truth and please God above all things, while continually disliking one's own vileness and fearing one's own faults and sins, as mentioned in the quote "Fear, denounce, flee nothing so much as thine own faults and sins."
- It is noted that not everyone is called to renounce the world and take up a religious life, but contempt of all worldly things and avoidance of worthless pleasures can lead to blessings and consolation, as stated in the phrase "contempt of all worldly things and in the avoidance of all worthless pleasures shall be thy blessing."
- The text also emphasizes the importance of humility, as seen in the quote "Be zealous against thyself, nor suffer pride to live within thee," and the need to resign oneself to God's will, as stated in the phrase "Therefore, whatsoever seemeth to thee desirable, thou must always desire and seek after it with the fear of God and humility of heart."

Reflections on Life, Patience, and Trust in God

- The section includes references to the ideas of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and Karma [[Yoga]], as well as the human psychological principle that pushes one to the Infinite, which is related to the concept of the "grasp" referred to by Tillich.
- The text also includes quotes that reflect on the nature of life, including the statement "Oh what a life is this, where tribulations and miseries cease not," and the question "How can the life of man be loved, seeing that it hath so many bitter things, that it is subjected to so many calamities and miseries."
- The section concludes with a reflection on the importance of patience and trust in [[God]], as seen in the quote "My Son, I came down from heaven for thy salvation; I took upon Me thy miseries not of necessity, but drawn by love that thou mightest learn patience and mightest bear temporal miseries without murmuring."

Worldly Desires vs. Spiritual Priorities

- The world is often criticized for being deceitful and vain, yet people find it difficult to give up due to the strong influence of the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which can lead to a love of the world, but ultimately result in hatred and weariness.
- It is emphasized that one should prioritize their relationship with God above all else, including health, beauty, glory, honor, power, dignity, knowledge, skill, riches, arts, joy, exultation, fame, praise, sweetness,

consolation, hope, promise, merit, desire, gifts, and rewards.

- Individuals are advised to focus on their own spiritual journey and not worry about what others think, as they will be held accountable for themselves, and it is prudent to keep silence in evil times and turn inwardly to God.
- The text highlights the importance of mortification and turning away from worldly desires, as anything that is not [[God]] is considered nothing, and it is essential to strive for a deep understanding and connection with God, rather than just accumulating knowledge.
- It is noted that many people desire contemplation but fail to practice the necessary disciplines, and instead, get caught up in external symbols and signs, and that true wisdom can only be achieved by those who are truly learned in spirit and stand above the changing circumstances of life.
- The wise and truly learned individual is able to remain steadfast and unshaken, fixing their desire on God, despite the manifold changes of the world, and recognizing that God is the source of all things, and that those who follow God through contempt of worldly things and mortification of the flesh are truly wise.
- The text also warns against the vanity of the world and the dangers of being carnally minded, and encourages individuals to trust in God and not be afraid of the opinions or actions of others, as they are fleeting and insignificant in comparison to God's power and wisdom.

Spiritual Growth through Self-Denial and Detachment

- The section from the document 'Journal314_47-52' contains a collection of spiritual and philosophical quotes and passages, including those from unknown authors, as well as references to notable figures such as [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] and [[Thérèse of Lisieux | Therese of Lisieux]], that emphasize the importance of self-denial, humility, and detachment from worldly things in order to achieve spiritual growth and closeness to [[God]].
- The passages suggest that true progress and happiness can only be achieved by looking inward and recognizing one's own flaws and weaknesses, rather than focusing on external things or seeking validation from others, and that this process of self-reflection and introspection is essential for spiritual development.
- The quotes also touch on the idea that spiritual growth requires a willingness to let go of attachments to worldly things and to be open to criticism and reproach, with one passage stating that "the whole world is to be counted as nought" and that one should "seek to be alone with God before all outward things".
- Therese of Lisieux is quoted in the section, sharing her personal struggles with feelings of darkness and uncertainty, as well as her experiences with spiritual growth and development, including her realization that "the sole happiness of earth consists in lying hidden, and remaining in total ignorance of created things".

- The section also references the works of St. John of the Cross, which had a significant impact on Therese of Lisieux's spiritual development, particularly during her younger years, and notes that while she once found solace in the works of various spiritual authors, she now finds that they "leave me cold and dry" and that she can only respond to spiritual guidance through personal experience and introspection.
- Overall, the section presents a nuanced and multifaceted exploration of the human experience, highlighting the complexities and challenges of spiritual growth, and offering insights and guidance for those seeking to deepen their relationship with God and cultivate a greater sense of inner peace and understanding.

Solace in Scriptures, Spiritual Struggle, and the Night of the Soul

- The author finds solace in the Holy Scriptures and the Imitation, particularly the [[Gospel | Gospels]], which provide guidance and comfort during times of prayer and help them discover new meanings and insights.
- The author acknowledges that each soul is unique and must differ from one another to receive special honor from Divine Perfection, and they have experienced a period of darkness and spiritual struggle, which they describe as the "Night of the Soul".
- During this period, the author felt overwhelmed with darkness and doubt, and the thought of Heaven, which had previously brought them comfort, became a source of conflict and torture, making them feel incapable of anything good and questioning their faith.
- The author references various philosophers and thinkers, including [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Cioran, Ligotti, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and Otto, and notes that there are no words to fully explain the depths of their emotional and spiritual struggles.
- The author uses a metaphor of being born in a land of thick fogs and never seeing the beauties of nature or a single ray of sunshine to describe their feelings of disconnection and longing for a more beautiful and spiritual realm.
- Despite their struggles, the author holds onto the hope of a better life to come, but is tormented by the mocking voice of the unbeliever, which tells them that death will bring only a darker night of utter nothingness.
- The author confesses that their poems and writings may seem to convey a sense of joy and consolation, but in reality, they are singing of what they wish to believe, and that even the occasional ray of sunshine only makes the darkness seem thicker and more overwhelming.
- The author questions the idea that it is more perfect to separate oneself from home and friends, and notes that even in the religious life, theologians refer to it as a form of martyrdom, where the struggles and sacrifices of each individual are a martyrdom to all.

Love, Charity, and Spiritual Growth in Community

- The heart that is given to [[God]] does not lose its natural affection,

but instead, this affection grows stronger and becomes purer and more spiritual, as seen in the love the author has for their Mother and sisters.

- The author acknowledges that they have a naturally sensitive heart, which can be a cause of much suffering, but they find comfort in the love they receive from their Mother and the Sisters, and they dream of being in a convent where they can taste the bitterness of exile and find joy in suffering.

- The author reflects on how [[Jesus]] loved His Apostles, not for their natural qualities, but despite their imperfections, and they realize that they do not love their Sisters in the same way, understanding that true charity consists in bearing all neighbors' defects and being edified by their smallest virtues.

- The author notes that it is easy to give when asked pleasantly, but when asked discourteously, it can be difficult to show charity, and they recognize that when they show charity to others, it is Jesus acting in them, and the more closely they are united to Him, the more dearly they love their Sisters.

- To increase their love for their Sisters, the author makes an effort to look for their virtues and good motives, rather than focusing on their defects, and they recall a personal experience where they were misunderstood by their Community, which taught them to be indulgent towards others and to reflect on their own imperfections.

- The author emphasizes the importance of loving and praying for those who may not seem to care for them, as Jesus teaches, and they recognize that even in the Carmel, where there are no enemies, they may still have natural likes and dislikes, but they strive to love and pray for all their Sisters, regardless of their behavior.

Charity in Action and the Importance of Humility

- The author, Soeur Therese, discusses the importance of proving one's love through actions, not just feelings, and notes that it is not enough to simply love those who love us, but rather to show charity to all, even those who may not deserve it.

- Soeur Therese reflects on her own struggles with charity, particularly in her interactions with a holy nun in her community who annoyed her, and how she made a conscious effort to do good deeds for this sister and to pray for her, despite her natural antipathy.

- The author also shares an anecdote about an incident where she was accused of making noise while performing her duty as sacristan, and how she resisted the temptation to defend herself and instead chose to flee the situation, recognizing that justifying herself would lead to a loss of peace of mind.

- Soeur Therese acknowledges that she is far from perfection and that her past actions and thoughts are often imperfect, but she has come to accept and even glory in her weaknesses, recognizing that they are an opportunity for growth and improvement.

- The author's approach to charity and self-mastery is influenced by

spiritual teachings, including the Imitation, which advises leaving others to their own way of thinking rather than engaging in contentious discourse, and the idea of seeing [[Jesus]] hidden in the depths of every soul, as expressed by [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].

- Throughout the text, Soeur Therese emphasizes the importance of grace and the need for humility, recognizing that without the help of grace, it would be impossible to understand and put into practice the Divine precepts that run contrary to our natural inclinations.

Self-Denial, Humility, and Trust in God's Goodness

- The section from the document 'Journal314_47-52' contains a collection of quotes and reflections from various individuals, including Therese, Vivekananda, and Cioran, that emphasize the importance of self-denial, humility, and trust in God's goodness.

- The quotes highlight the need to recognize one's own nothingness and to seek guidance from [[God]], rather than relying on one's own strength or ideas, as expressed in the statement "Marie, though you are nothing, do not forget that Jesus is All."

- The text also touches on the theme of suffering, with Therese noting that she does not pity saints who suffer, but rather those who do not know how to profit from their suffering, and that saints have the strength to bear their sufferings and give glory to God.

- The importance of detachment from self and the practice of self-denial is also emphasized, as seen in the advice to approach recreation with the intention of entertaining others and practising complete detachment from self, rather than seeking relaxation or personal enjoyment.

- The value of self-denial is further highlighted in the statement that it is more valuable than writing pious books or composing sublime poetry, and that it is a key aspect of "remaining little" and recognizing one's dependence on God's goodness.

- The concept of "remaining little" is also explored, with Therese explaining that it means recognizing one's nothingness, awaiting everything from God's goodness, and avoiding worry over faults or spiritual riches, and that it is a state of being that allows one to receive guidance and support from God.

Becker's Denial of Death and the Cultural Hero-System

- The concept of narcissism, as discussed by [[Ernest Becker]] in "The Denial of Death", is what drives individuals to take risks, such as going to war, because they do not truly believe they will die, but rather feel sorry for those around them who may die.

- According to Becker, people disguise their struggle with mortality by accumulating wealth, material possessions, and social status, which serves as a way to reflect their sense of heroic worth and mask the ache of cosmic specialness that throbs beneath the surface.

- The cultural hero-system, whether magical, religious, or secular, is a

mythical system in which people serve to earn a feeling of primary value, cosmic specialness, and ultimate usefulness to creation, by creating things that reflect human value, such as buildings, families, or artistic expressions.

- Becker notes that everything humans do is, in a sense, religious and heroic, yet also in danger of being fictitious and fallible, as people are driven by a blind desire for self-esteem and glory, which can lead to a crisis of society and organized religion.
- The crisis of society and religion is also reflected in the attraction to new ideologies, such as the New Atheists, as traditional religious systems are no longer seen as valid hero systems, and the youth, in particular, are scornful of them.
- Becker references the ideas of various thinkers, including [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Tolstoy, Tillich, and Montaigne, to highlight the human condition, where individuals are torn between their awareness of their own uniqueness and the reality of their mortality, which is a terrifying dilemma to live with.
- The knowledge of death is a uniquely human experience, as animals are spared the reflective and conceptual awareness of their own mortality, and instead live and die thoughtlessly, whereas humans are forced to confront and live with the awareness of their own death.
- Becker also discusses the concept of the divided self, where humans are split between their awareness of their own uniqueness and their physical body, which is subject to decay and death, and this paradox is at the heart of the human condition, making it a complex and challenging existence to navigate.

The Human Condition, Existential Dualism, and the Burden of Self-Awareness

- The human condition is characterized by an impossible situation, where individuals are aware of their own mortality and the fleeting nature of their existence, which can be overwhelming and potentially drive them to madness if fully apprehended.
- According to the text, babies are occasionally born with gills and tails, but this is often hushed up, as it forces people to confront the reality of their own existence and the fact that they are creatures clawing and gasping for breath in an incomprehensible universe, as reflected in Pascal's statement that "Men are so necessarily mad that not to be mad would amount to another form of madness".
- The existential dualism between humanity's symbolic self, which gives them a sense of infinite worth, and their physical body, which is fragile and ephemeral, creates an excruciating dilemma, leading people to engage in social games, psychological tricks, and personal preoccupations that serve as a form of denial and madness, as noted by Huxley, who wondered how people reconcile the two.
- The text suggests that the costs of pretending not to be mad, and the toll

that this pretense takes on individuals and society, is a major contributor to the evil that men have wreaked upon themselves and their world, rather than their animal heredity or instincts, as noted by [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who discussed the finite/infinite gap and the tendency for people to worship idols.

- The concept of the "mysterium tremendum et fascinosum" is introduced, which refers to the feeling of overwhelming awe, wonder, and fear in the face of creation, and the miracle of existence, as discussed by Otto, who talked about the terror of the world and the beauty and majesty of creation.
- Repression is seen as a necessary mechanism that allows humans to live decisively in an overwhelmingly miraculous and incomprehensible world, by making it possible to ignore or deny the full weight of their existential situation, and to focus on their daily lives and goals, rather than being paralyzed by the terror and wonder of existence.
- The text concludes by highlighting the burden that humans bear, with their expanded inner self, curiosity, fears, and hopes, which makes their existence even more complex and incomprehensible, and notes that even their own body and inner landscape are foreign to them, making their existence a miracle and a mystery that is closer to them, but also more strange and incomprehensible.

Defenses Against Despair and the Importance of Facing Reality

- The human condition is characterized as a fundamental predicament, where individuals are simultaneously aware of their own mortality and fragility, yet strive to feel a sense of self-worth, power, and control over their lives, as noted by philosophers such as Carlyle, who referred to life as a "hall of doom".
- People often build defenses to avoid the despair and anxiety that comes with this awareness, which can include distractions like all-absorbing activities, passions, or dedications that provide a sense of security and serenity, as discussed by thinkers like [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]], [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Scheler, and Tillich.
- These defenses, however, can also prevent individuals from truly understanding themselves and their place in the world, leading to a life that is never really theirs, and this concept is echoed by philosophers like Rank, who acknowledged that anxiety is an inherent part of the human condition.
- The idea of "being born again" is also explored, suggesting that it means being subjected to the terrifying paradox of the human condition, where one must confront their own mortality and limitations, and this idea is supported by the works of Tillich and Kierkegaard, who emphasize the importance of acknowledging and accepting this reality.
- The text also touches on the idea that neurosis is a complicated technique for avoiding misery, but ultimately, reality is the source of this misery, and this concept is related to the idea that character is a neurotic defense against despair, as noted by Tillich, who says that neurosis is avoiding

nonbeing by avoiding being.

- Furthermore, the text highlights the importance of acknowledging and accepting the human condition, rather than trying to escape or avoid it, and this is supported by the ideas of various philosophers and thinkers, including Ligotti, who is mentioned as having a similar perspective.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that true self-awareness and understanding can only be achieved by shedding the armor of character and confronting the full reality of the human condition, which is a terrifying and anxiety-provoking prospect, but one that is necessary for true growth and understanding, as noted by philosophers like Rank, who admitted that anxiety could not be fully overcome therapeutically.

Anxiety, Consciousness, and the Limits of Human Experience

- The concept of an anxiety-free existence is considered an ideal, but not a reality for humans, as philosophers like Vivekananda and [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] have noted, with the latter's "Knight of Faith" being an impossibility within the human condition.
- According to the text, the idea of "enjoying one's full humanness," as suggested by Maslow, is problematic because it implies that individuals can find joy in a state of being that is inherently characterized by fear, trembling, and despair, as they confront the harsh realities of life without the protective shield of illusions.
- The average person is not equipped to handle a full consciousness of the absurdity and terror of life, having developed a character that allows them to ignore these facts and thrive on blindness, as noted by philosophers like Sartre, who calls man a "useless passion" due to his delusions about his true condition.
- The text suggests that true enlightenment or a nihilistic experience can be devastating and terrifying, making it impossible for individuals to continue living thoughtlessly, and instead, placing them at the mercy of the cosmos, as noted by thinkers like Rank and Ligotti, who highlight the difficulty of facing reality head-on.
- The text also discusses the concept of [[Schizophrenia | schizophrenia]], citing Searles' view that it is a result of the inability to shut out terror, and a desperate attempt to live with it, ultimately representing a failure in humanization, which means a failure to confidently deny the harsh realities of human existence, as noted by the author.
- The idea that a person's character is a defense against despair, and an attempt to avoid insanity, is a recurring theme in the text, highlighting the human struggle to cope with the overwhelmingness of life, finitude, and the dread of death, as discussed by various philosophers and thinkers, including Searles and Kierkegaard.
- The creativity of individuals on the schizophrenic end of the human continuum is rooted in their inability to accept the standardized cultural denials of the real nature of experience, which allows them to be supremely creative in an almost extra-human sense, but also leads them to live on the

brink of madness.

- According to the text, the human condition is characterized by the deepest need to be free of the anxiety of death and annihilation, but it is life itself that awakens this anxiety, causing people to shrink from being fully alive, and the idea of being wholly unrepressed and living in full bodily and psychic expansiveness can only mean to be reborn into madness.
- The text references Marcia Lee Anderson's scientific formula, which suggests that stripped of subtle complications, such as character defenses like repression, denial, and misperception of reality, one would regard the sun with fear, highlighting the terror of the world and the human condition.
- The myth of the Fall of Adam and Eve is mentioned as a representation of the human condition, where man emerged from instinctive thoughtless action and gained consciousness of his individuality and part-divinity in creation, but also became aware of the terror of the world and his own death and decay.
- The final terror of self-consciousness is the knowledge of one's own death, which is unique to humans in the animal kingdom, and this is reflected in the Garden of Eden myth and modern psychology, which suggests that death is man's peculiar and greatest anxiety.

Depression, Philistinism, and the Fear of Independence

- The text also references Kierkegaard's concept of "philistinism," which refers to triviality and the daily routines of society, and how people often accept to live a trivial life due to the danger of a full horizon of experience, and instead opt for a certain dull security.
- The depressed person is described as being afraid of being themselves, exerting their own individuality, and insisting on their own meanings and conditions for living, which leads to a state of stagnation and a lack of understanding of their situation, and they often resort to unconscious tactics like seeing themselves as immensely worthless and guilty to make sense of their situation.
- Ultimately, the depressed person avoids independence and more life because it threatens them with destruction and death, and instead holds on to people who enslave them in a network of crushing obligations, belittling interaction, and relies on them for shelter, strength, and protection against the world, rather than drawing strength from within themselves to face up to life.
- The individual described in the text embeds himself in others and accepts a life of necessity, which eventually becomes trivial and loses its meaning, leading to a state of slavery and a fear of moving out of it.
- This situation is compared to the torture of depressive psychosis, where one remains steeped in their failure and tries to justify it, and to philistinism, or "normal neurosis," where people live safely within social rules by keeping their personal intensity low and avoiding being pulled off balance by experience.

Introversion, Individuality, and the Challenges of Self-Discovery

- The concept of the "introvert" is introduced, as described by [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], referring to a type of person who tries to cultivate their individuality and uniqueness, and is concerned with what it means to be a person, often enjoying solitude and reflection to nurse ideas about their secret self.
- However, life often sucks people into standardized activities, causing them to cover up their inner secrets and forget them, leading to a life of playing a standardized hero-game, rather than working on their inner being and expressing their uniqueness.
- Kierkegaard's "introvert" is not necessarily someone who keeps their inner quest fully alive or conscious, but rather someone who is dimly aware of the problem of being something different from the world, and holds themselves apart from it, but not completely, due to a position of compromise and weakness.
- The consequences of attempting to live as an "introvert" can be difficult to maintain, as it requires posing the problem of what it means to be a person, and may lead to trouble, as described by Kierkegaard, where one may be content to toy with the idea of who they might really be, but struggle to maintain this position with equanimity.

Impotence, Character, and the Anxiety of Existence

- The concept of introversion is described as a form of impotence that can lead to feelings of dependency and a desire to break free from the constraints of family and job, which can sometimes result in extreme measures such as suicide or reckless behavior, as noted in the context of Journal314_47-52.
- According to [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], being a "normal cultural man" is equivalent to being sick, whether one is aware of it or not, and that in order to transcend oneself, one must be willing to break down the very things that are needed to survive, much like the character of Lear who must throw off all his "cultural lendings" and stand naked in the storm of life.
- The idea of being trapped in one's character is also explored, where one can pretend to be somebody and feel that the world is manageable, but this is ultimately a prison that is painstakingly built to deny one's creatureliness, which is the true source of terror and anxiety.
- Kierkegaard's torment is said to have stemmed from his awareness of the world as it really is, and the anxiety that results from being a self-conscious animal, aware of one's own mortality and the fact that one is food for worms, is a fundamental aspect of the human condition.
- However, the flood of anxiety is not the end for man, but rather a "school" that provides the ultimate education and maturity, as it reveals the truth of one's situation and allows for the possibility of growth and change, and as Kierkegaard notes, anxiety is a better teacher than reality because it cannot be lied about or twisted.

- The "school" of anxiety is a process of unlearning repression and facing up to one's natural impotence and death, as Luther urged, to "taste" death with the lips of one's living body, and it is only by doing so that one can truly know emotionally that they are a creature who will die, and this is a crucial step in the process of education and self-discovery, as discussed in the context of Journal314_47-52.

Kierkegaard on the Self, Anxiety, and Faith

- According to [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], the self must be broken in order to become a self, which involves facing the anxiety of the terror of existence and destroying the self to achieve self-transcendence and relate to powers beyond itself.
- This process of self-destruction allows the self to question its finitude and see beyond it, ultimately leading to infinitude, absolute transcendence, and the Ultimate Power of Creation that made finite creatures.
- Kierkegaard believes that one goes through this process to arrive at faith, which is the understanding that one's existence has meaning in an ultimate sense because it exists within an eternal and infinite scheme of things brought about and maintained by a creative force.
- Anxiety is seen as the possibility of freedom because it demolishes all finite aims, and the person who is educated by possibility is educated in accordance with their infinity, ultimately leading to faith.
- The breakdown of the cultural self, or Nihilism, allows the private, invisible, inner self to yearn for ultimate significance and attain cosmic significance by affirming its connection with the invisible mystery at the heart of creation.

Freud, Tolstoy, and the Human Need for Meaning

- In contrast to [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Freud did not need to rework his vision of man to focus on the terrified, death-avoiding animal, despite acknowledging the idea of death and the real terror of the external world.
- The text also touches on the idea that admitting an idea to consciousness does not necessarily mean experiencing it vitally, and that there can be a partial rationalization of even the deepest anxiety, such as the terror of death.
- Additionally, the text mentions the concept of hypnosis as a mysterious phenomenon, and quotes Tolstoy, highlighting the human need for an invisible dimension that justifies the visible one.
- The text also explores the idea of renouncing worldly desires, including sex, in order to achieve self-perpetuation as a spiritual being, and questions whether this is necessary or if love can be a form of [[God | god]].
- Finally, the text notes that the child stands at the crossroads of human dualism, highlighting the complexities and contradictions of human existence.

The Search for Fulfillment and the Limitations of Human Relationships

- The discovery of a fallible body leads to a deeper inquiry into the meaning of life, as individuals seek to understand the limitations and mysteries of their physical existence, with questions about sex being a gateway to exploring the ultimate mystery of life and the human dilemma.
- The search for fulfillment and transcendence is a fundamental human drive, but the sexual partner or any human relationship cannot provide a complete and lasting solution to this dilemma, as they represent both a kind of fulfillment and a negation of one's distinctive personality.
- According to philosophers like Tillich, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and others, the pursuit of absolute power, mystery, and majesty is inherent in human nature, but when narrowed down to the physical world, it leads to feelings of emptiness, anguish, and inferiority, as individuals struggle to find spirituality and meaning in a world marked by human shortcomings and pettiness.
- The ideas of [[Otto Rank]], [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]], and [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] emphasize that human relationships and physical love are insufficient to provide an absolute sense of fulfillment and transcendence, and that true freedom and individuality can only be achieved by transcending human relationships and seeking a connection with a higher power or the absolute beyond.
- People often settle for a "beyond" that is nearest to them, such as parents, leaders, or cultural definitions of heroism, which provides a sense of fulfillment but also limits and enslaves them, and it is only through full renunciation and surrender to a higher power that individuals can achieve true absolution and transcendence, a task that requires great strength and courage, particularly from those with strong personalities and large egos.
- The concept of "beyond" is crucial in understanding human behavior, as individuals seek to expand and find meaning in their lives, and the type of "beyond" they choose determines the level of individuation and fulfillment they achieve, with the ultimate goal being to find a connection with the absolute beyond and achieve a sense of cosmic heroism that transcends human relationships.

Rank on the Highest Beyond and the Importance of Renunciation

- The section discusses the idea that even a genius like Newton, who was a scientific world-shaker, carried the Bible with him, highlighting the importance of spirituality in one's life, and the challenge of balancing passion and creativity with the pursuit of salvation.
- According to Rank, a psychoanalyst, one should strive for the highest beyond of religion and cultivate the passivity of renunciation to the highest powers, rather than stopping at near or self-created beyonds, in order to achieve full development and true fulfillment.
- Rank's ideas are compared to those of [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]],

who believed that one should not limit themselves to earthly or self-created beyonds, but rather reach for the highest beyond of religion, and that surrender to [[God]] is not masochistic, but rather the highest idealization man can achieve.

- The concept of Agape love-expansion is mentioned as the achievement of the truly creative type, and it is stated that only by surrendering to the bigness of nature on the highest level can man conquer death and achieve true heroic validation of one's life.

- Rank concludes that man is a "theological being," not a biological one, and that this conclusion is supported by the work of theologians such as Tillich, Kierkegaard, and [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]], and that it is surprising that a psychoanalyst would come to the same conclusions.

- The section also discusses how some scientists may react with skepticism or even disdain to Rank's ideas, perceiving them as a weakness or a betrayal of the principles of psychoanalysis, but it is argued that Rank's conclusions are based on the logic of his historical and psychoanalytic understanding of man.

- Finally, the concept of neurosis is discussed, with Rank identifying three interdependent aspects: the universal trouble of living with the truth of existence, the private and individualized reaction to life, and the idea that everyone pays a vital ransom to the truth of life.

- The work of Rank highlights that neurosis is, to a large extent, a historical phenomenon, as traditional ideologies that once disguised and absorbed it have fallen away, and modern ideologies are too thin to contain it, which is why concepts like "Nihiltheism" may be seen as a potential answer or support to dying or dead theologies and philosophies.

Neurosis, Repression, and the Refusal of Reality

- According to Freudian psychology, repression is a normal self-protection mechanism and a creative self-restriction that serves as a substitute for instinct, allowing individuals to cope with the overwhelming problems of life, such as the meaning of existence, death, and the universe.

- Most people avoid dealing with these existential problems by focusing on the small, immediate issues of their daily lives, as mapped out by their society, and by "tranquilizing themselves with the trivial", which is a form of neurosis that allows them to lead normal lives by refusing to confront the reality of their existence.

- The essence of normality can be seen as the refusal of reality, and neurosis can be understood as the miscarriage of clumsy lies about reality, which is a universal phenomenon that affects everyone, although it is only labeled as neurosis when it begins to cause visible problems for the individual or those around them.

- The examples of people who engage in repetitive behaviors, such as washing their hands multiple times or using a specific amount of toilet tissue, illustrate how individuals earn their safety in the face of the reality of creatureliness, and how these behaviors can be seen as a form of repression,

driven by the fear of life and death, which is a fundamental aspect of the human experience.

- The work of [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] is also referenced, particularly his concept of the "immediate" men and the "Philistines" who avoid dealing with existential problems by focusing on trivial matters, and how this avoidance is a form of neurosis that allows them to maintain a sense of normality and avoid the terror of creature existence.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that neurosis represents a creative power gone astray and confused, as individuals attempt to cope with the overwhelming nature of conscious existence, and that this creative dynamic is also present in the phenomenon of transference, where individuals fuse their fears and anxieties onto a transference-object, as noted by Rank.

Neurosis, Creativity, and the Symbolic World

- The text discusses the concept of neurosis and its relationship to the human experience, highlighting that individuals who have difficulty narrowing down their experiences and fetishizing certain aspects of life may be considered neurotic, as they take in too much of the world and struggle to live in a normal society.
- According to the text, people with neurotic tendencies, such as those with [[Schizophrenia | schizophrenia]], often have trouble relating to others and developing necessary interpersonal skills, which can lead to feelings of isolation and anxiety, causing them to shrink back from experience and struggle to live biologically, instead living symbolically through the use of symbols.
- The text also explores the idea that everyone is neurotic to some extent, as they all hold back from life in certain ways and rely on their symbolic worldview to arrange things, with cultural morality serving as a means to cope with this neurosis, and that the artist is the most neurotic because they take the world as a totality and make a largely symbolic problem out of it.
- The text suggests that individuals may need to seek help when they experience symptoms such as guilt and futility due to an unlived life, and that the difference between the artist and the neurotic lies in their ability to objectify their problems and create something meaningful, with the artist being able to spew out their experiences and chew them over in an objectified way, as seen in the examples of Strindberg and Goethe's Faust.
- The text concludes that objective creativity is the only answer to the problem of life, allowing individuals to take in the world, make a total problem out of it, and then give out a fashioned, human answer to that problem, with the quality and power of the reaction being the key difference between the artist and the neurotic, as noted by the comparison between an illiterate schizophrenic and a culture hero like Strindberg.

Heroism, Creativity, and the Illusion of Character

- The individual needs to be a hero and earn immortality through their

unique qualities, but this can only be achieved through fantasy, as they cannot create a perfect work that speaks on their behalf, leading to a vicious circle of unreality and self-doubt, where one cannot justify their own heroism without external validation.

- Creative work is often driven by a compulsion that is similar to a clinical obsession, and what is considered a creative gift is actually a social license to be obsessed, while cultural routines and daily work activities serve as a distraction from the desperation and madness that would otherwise arise from the human condition, as seen in the eagerness with which workers return to their jobs after vacation.

- It is difficult to categorize personality types, as there are many blends and combinations that defy precise classification, and even the average person, who may appear to be well-adjusted, has likely erected a wall of repressions to hide the problem of life and death, and it is often these "normal, average men" who have caused destruction and chaos throughout history in an attempt to forget themselves, as noted by authors like Ligotti and [[Blaise Pascal | Pascal]], who suggest that a more nihilistic and pessimistic approach to life, such as simply sitting in one's room, may be a more peaceful and less destructive path.

- The concept of human character is actually a lie about the nature of reality, as the *causa-sui* project, which is the attempt to be invulnerable and important, is a pretense that hides the possibility that human life may be meaningless and insignificant in the grand scheme of evolution, and that the [[God | Creator]] may not care about the destiny of humanity or individual men, much like the fate of the dinosaurs or the Tasmanians.

Vanity, Meaning, and the Neurotic's Struggle with Reality

- The concept of vanity and the search for meaning in life are central themes, as expressed in the Bible through the voice of Ecclesiastes, highlighting the idea that all is vanity, and this notion is echoed in the human experience of feeling disconnected from the truth.

- The neurotic individual is particularly sensitive to the disparity between cultural illusions and natural reality, struggling to maintain a balance between the two, and as a result, they perceive themselves as unreal and reality as unbearable, leading to feelings of guilt, inferiority, and helplessness, as they are unable to deceive themselves about their own flaws and the flaws of the world.

- According to [[Otto Rank]], illusions are necessary for human survival, and the neurotic symptom can be seen as a communication about the truth that the illusion of invulnerability is a lie, and this idea is further emphasized by the fact that people often turn to substances or other forms of escapism to avoid the despair of reality.

- The need for illusion is not a cynical concept, but rather a necessary aspect of human existence, as people require a "second" world of humanly created meaning to live, dramatize, and nourish themselves, and this is evident in the way that cultural illusions serve as a heroic dimension that

gives life meaning and purpose.

- The failure of traditional immortality ideologies to provide a sense of security and confidence in personal heroism is a characteristic of modern life, and this has led to a crisis of meaning, as people are no longer able to find solace in the dominant immortality ideology, and instead, they are forced to confront the reality of their own mortality and the impermanence of human existence.

The Need for Illusion and the Crisis of Meaning in Modern Life

- The idea that life is only possible with illusions is a profound insight into the human condition, and it highlights the importance of creative play and self-deception in maintaining a sense of purpose and meaning, as expressed by Anais Nin's statement that "the caricature aspect of life appears whenever the drunkenness of illusion wears off", and this notion is further supported by the fact that people often engage in activities that allow them to temporarily escape the harsh realities of life.
- The concept of neurosis has become a widespread problem in modern times due to the lack of convincing dramas of heroic apotheosis of man, as observed by Pinel during the French Revolution, where individuals found a sense of purpose and heroic identity in the revolutionary movement.
- Modern man can no longer find heroism in everyday life, as people in traditional societies once did through their daily duties, and instead, has become complacent with nihilism, which has led to a sense of disillusionment and disconnection from absolute transcendence.
- The eclipse of the sacred dimension has resulted in modern man being thrown back on his own resources, leading to a focus on the self and personal relationships, which are insufficient substitutes for absolute transcendence, as noted by the idea that lovers and families can trap and disillusion us.

The Shift from Soul to Self and the Limitations of Psychology

- The development of modern thought, particularly in the 19th century, led to a shift from the concept of the soul to the concept of the self, with scientists seeking to reclaim the inner life of man from the Church and make it subject to the laws of causality, ultimately leading to the work of Freud and the study of the self as a social product.
- However, as Rank noted, this scientific victory raised more problems than it solved, as it failed to explain the inner forces of evolution that have led to the development of self-consciousness, which is still referred to as the soul, and the mystery of the meaning of organismic awareness and the inner dynamism of nature.
- The limitations of psychology in addressing personal unhappiness are highlighted, as it narrows the cause down to the individual themselves, rather than considering the universal and general causes, such as the natural world and the person's relationship to it as a symbolic animal, which is necessary to understand one's place in the world and find a sense

of purpose and meaning.

- The text discusses the limitations of psychology in explaining human unhappiness, suggesting that it becomes a fraud when it attempts to provide a full explanation, as it fails to consider the historical and communal aspects of individual unhappiness, a concept also explored by philosophers like Zapffe.
- According to the text, psychology has limited its understanding of human unhappiness to the personal life-history of the individual, whereas thinkers like Rank and [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] have concluded that psychology must give way to a broader worldview, akin to theology, in order to provide a meaningful framework for understanding human character and the search for heroic apotheosis.
- The text highlights the idea that sin and neurosis are two ways of talking about the same thing, namely the complete isolation of the individual, his disharmony with nature, and his hyperindividualism, as discussed by Rank and Kierkegaard, who both reached the same conclusion after exhaustive psychological quests.

Sin, Neurosis, and the Search for Heroic Apotheosis

- The individual's attempt to create his own world from within himself, as seen in sin and neurosis, is doomed to failure, as man cannot justify his own heroism and must live with agonizing doubts if he remains in touch with the larger reality, a concept that is also related to the idea of the "nightmare of existence" discussed by Zapffe.
- The text also explores the idea that the sinner or neurotic is hyperconscious of their creatureliness, miserableness, and unworthiness, and is thrown back on their true perceptions of the human condition, which can lead to a deeper understanding of the human condition, as discussed by thinkers like Tillich, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and Cioran.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that modern man needs a "thou" to turn to for spiritual and moral dependence, and that the therapist has replaced [[God]] in this role, but that this replacement is not a sufficient solution to the problem of human unhappiness, and that a more comprehensive worldview is needed to address the human search for meaning and heroic apotheosis.

Neurosis as Sin and the Need for a Collective Ideology

- The text discusses the concept of neurosis and its relation to the human condition, highlighting that the more an individual separates and inflates themselves, the more anxious they become, alternating between extremes of self-importance and self-deprecation.
- The author notes that the historical difference between the classical sinner and the modern neurotic lies in the lack of a symbolic world-view or God-ideology that would provide meaning to their unworthiness, leaving the neurotic with a sense of nothingness that qualifies them only for miserable extinction.
- According to Otto Rank's conclusion, neurosis is not a disease, but rather

a sin, and the only cure is a world-view or collective ideology that allows the individual to accept their place as a creature, with the symbolism of God being a potential cure.

- The text also explores the idea that modern man is plagued by hyperconsciousness and separateness, and that the only way to overcome this is through a balance of reflection and action, as excessive reflection can drive one mad, while excessive action without reflection can make one a brute.
- The author criticizes those who reject the existentialist courage of despair as a morbid longing for negativity, arguing that it is actually a courageous acceptance of the negative, and that the creative expression of decay can be a meaningful attempt to reveal the meaninglessness of one's situation.
- The text concludes that the modern neurotic must find a way to welcome a living illusion, or a collective ideology, in order to be "cured", but notes that this is a difficult task, as traditional world-views are no longer readily available, and religion has become a highly personal matter that can be seen as neurotic or a private fantasy.
- The author ultimately suggests that neurosis is the modern tragedy of man, as individuals are left to create their own meaning and purpose in life, without the guidance of traditional world-views or collective ideologies, leaving them feeling like orphans in a world without a clear sense of direction.

The Modern Mind, Faith, and the Rejection of Mystery

- The modern individual is unable to take the "lonely leap into faith" as prescribed by [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], due to the lack of external rituals and customs that once provided a sense of transcendental support for one's life, making faith seem fantastic and unattainable.
- The characteristic of the modern mind is the rejection of mystery, naive belief, and simple-minded hope, instead emphasizing the visible, clear, cause-and-effect relation, and the logical, which can lead to a sense of mental and physical paralysis in individuals who are unable to find meaning or purpose in life.
- The neurotic individual is characterized by their complete certainty about their situation in relation to reality, having no doubts and being convinced of the meaninglessness and purposelessness of life, which is exemplified by their awareness of their own mortality and the impermanence of all things.
- G. K. Chesterton is noted for keeping alive the spirit of Kierkegaard and naive [[Christianity]] in modern thought, highlighting that the modern mind's emphasis on logic and reason can be a trait of madness, and that the ability to be careless, disregard appearances, and relax is a key aspect of sanity that is often lacking in neurotic individuals.
- Faith requires individuals to expand themselves trustingly into the nonlogical and fantastic, which is difficult for modern individuals who are constricted into themselves and lack a collective drama or shared illusion

to make fantasy seem real, and this spiritual expansion is necessary for finding meaning and purpose in life.

The Science of Mental Health and the Role of Illusion

- The question of human life is what level of illusion one lives on, and the science of mental health must consider what is the "best" illusion under which to live, or what is the most legitimate foolishness, in order to promote life-enhancing illusions that address human basic conditions and needs.
- Religion provides a solution to the problem of transference by expanding awe and terror to the cosmos, and removes the problem of self-justification from objects near at hand, offering a way to find meaning and purpose in life beyond individual mortal concerns.
- The pursuit of independent values and self-justification is facilitated by religion, as it allows individuals to lean on a higher power, specifically [[God]], who does not oppose them, but rather provides the necessary support for personal growth and development, as noted by the quote from Cioran, "the only illusion worth pursuing".
- Religion offers hope by introducing the concept of the unknown and the unknowable, which transcends the limitations and frustrations of earthly life, and provides a sense of limitless possibility and multidimensionality, making the human condition more bearable, and as stated, "relieves the absurdity of earthly life".

Individuation, Depression, and the Burden of Heroic Expectations

- The process of individuation, as discussed by Adler, can be a terrifying experience, as it involves being alone and losing the support and delegated power of others, which is why many people rely on a "life-lie" to cope with the demands of daily life, and even prominent figures like Freud and Jung can be overwhelmed by simple tasks, highlighting the magnitude of the task for the average person.
- The failure to live up to one's own potential and the inability to convincingly perform heroic actions can lead to [[Depression (mood) | depression]] and feelings of guilt, as the individual is no longer able to hide their failure to be their own hero, and as Boss notes, these guilt feelings are existential, representing the failure to fulfill one's own potential and live one's own life.
- The depressed person often exaggerates their guilt as a way to unblock their dilemma and garner sympathy and support from others, as pointed out by Adler, and this can be seen in their self-accusations of worthlessness and their desire to be pitied and taken care of by those around them, which can be a limiting factor in their relationships and a hindrance to their personal freedom.

Schizophrenia, Anxiety, and the Nature of Creativity

- The schizophrenic individual is characterized by an overwhelming burden of

anxiety and fear, which is almost as constant as their daily breath, and this is due to their realistic perception of the human condition, as described by [[William James]] and [[Otto Rank]], who used the term "neurotic" to describe someone who sees things as they are and is overwhelmed by the fragility of human existence.

- According to [[Alfred Adler]], the schizophrenic person is crippled by the fear of life and its demands, and has a low self-evaluation, mistrusting not only themselves but also the knowledge and ability of others, which leads them to fabricate a fantastic ideational system for their own salvation.
- The human experience is split into two modes, the symbolic self and the physical body, and in some people, including schizophrenics, these two modes can be quite distinct and unintegrated, leading to a hypersensitive individual reacting to their body as something strange and untrustworthy.
- [[Schizophrenia]] can also reveal the nature of creativity, as the individual who is physically unprogrammed in the cultural causa-sui project must invent their own, and the creative person becomes a mediator of natural terror and an indicator of a new way to triumph over it, as seen in art, literature, and religion, with examples including shamans and Shakespeare.
- However, if the schizophrenic individual is not creative, they can be a completely inverted and pathetic failure, as seen in mental hospitals, and an impoverished and powerless person, even if they perceive truth, has no gift to offer to their fellows or themselves, and is totally crippled by life-and-death fears.

Schizophrenia, Symbolic Experience, and the Struggle for Heroism

- The schizophrenic person is not programmed neurally into automatic response to social meanings, and cannot marshal an ego response or directive control of their experiences, leading them to use their symbolic inner experiences as an experiential anchor, and becoming controlled by them instead of reshaping and using them, as described by theorists such as Rank and Adler.
- The concept of heroism is explored in the context of mental illness, where individuals with schizophrenia or [[Depression (mood) | depression]] may struggle to find inner glory and instead fabricate a sense of heroism in a clumsy and inverted way, leading to intense and all-absorbing psychotic transferences.
- Perversions can be seen as "private religions" that attempt to transcend the human condition and achieve satisfaction, with perverts often believing their approach is superior and life-enhancing, similar to true believers who trumpet their own path to eternal glory, as noted by philosophers such as Tillich, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Tolstoy, and Cioran.
- The problem of mental illness is framed as a matter of not knowing what kind of heroics one is practicing, or being unable to broaden one's heroics from their crippling narrowness, which can be attributed to weakness and stupidity, rather than a lack of resources or a strong ego.

Perversity, Relativism, and the Search for Meaning

- All living organisms are inherently limited and condemned to perversity, being mere fragments of a larger totality that they cannot fully understand or cope with, and therefore must ask what kind of perversity is fitting for humans, as philosophized by Epictetus.
- The issue of relativism and nihilism is raised, where individuals may be puzzled or disheartened by the fact that each person has a different version of what life ought to be, and may struggle to find a moral framework, as highlighted by the absurd perspective and the problem of not being able to determine who is right.
- The quotes from Freud highlight his pessimistic view of human nature, where he found most people to be "trash" and departing from high ethical ideals, and his own limitations in yielding emotionally to superordinate power or conceptually to the transcendental dimension, being confined to the visible world.

The Knight of Faith and the Ideal of Mental Health

- The concept of the "knight of faith" is introduced, who accepts whatever happens in the visible dimension without complaint, lives their life as a duty, and faces death without a qualm, embodying a sense of acceptance and duty in the face of uncertainty and mortality.
- The concept of the "knight of faith" is discussed, which represents an ideal of mental health characterized by openness, generosity, and courage, allowing individuals to touch others' lives and enrich them without causing them to shrink back in fear or being coerced.
- This ideal is considered beautiful and challenging, but ultimately unattainable for most people, including prominent thinkers like [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Tillich, and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who acknowledged the experience of meaninglessness and nihilism as a stronger and more true experience that cannot be overcome by human effort alone.
- The idea of the knight of faith is compared to the concept of selflessness, which is also considered impossible to achieve, as the experience of meaninglessness and the finite/infinite gap between human limitations and the infinite cannot be bridged by human effort, and faith is ultimately a matter of grace.
- The text also critiques the ideas of Kierkegaard and Freud, suggesting that they both have shortcomings, with Kierkegaard erring on the side of the invisible and Freud on the side of the visible, and that their ideas, although influential, are not without flaws and limitations.
- The author concludes that true sainthood is a matter of grace, not human effort, and that the most one can achieve is a certain relaxedness and openness to experience, which depends on individual talent and the presence of a driving force or "daimonis", and that even the greatest thinkers and achievers are not immune to the limitations and burdens of human existence.

The Pursuit of Ideals and the Limits of Human Fulfillment

- The text ultimately suggests that the pursuit of ideals like the knight of faith or sainthood is a creative illusion that can inspire and guide individuals, but that true fulfillment and transcendence are not within human reach, and that the best one can strive for is a sense of openness and relaxedness in the face of life's challenges and uncertainties.
- The problem of being a human being and finding one's place in the world is a complex and ambiguous issue that cannot be satisfactorily advised on by others, as noted by [[William James]], and it requires individuals to find their own way to balance their passion and autonomy with their reliance on a higher power.
- The search for meaning and purpose in life can lead individuals to create something, such as art or science, but this can only provide a temporary illusion of meaning, as seen in the example of Robin Williams, and ultimately, it is not enough to give life lasting significance.

Eastern Mysticism, the Courage to Confront Meaninglessness, and the Divided Self

- The philosopher [[Paul Tillich]] argued that Eastern mysticism is not suitable for Western individuals because it evades the courage to confront and absorb the meaninglessness of life, and instead, it can be a form of manic defense and denial of one's creatureliness, lacking the element of skepticism that is necessary for a more radical and authentic experience.
- The difficulty of living with the tension between the visible and invisible worlds, as noted by James, can lead to a divided self and double-mindedness, where individuals are pulled in different directions and struggle to find a sense of unity and purpose.
- The human condition, as described by Andre Malraux, is marked by a painful paradox, where individuals spend their lives developing and growing, only to ultimately face death and oblivion, and this realization can lead to a sense of agonizing uniqueness and desperation.
- Ultimately, the therapeutic enterprise is called into question, as it may not be able to provide sufficient comfort and joy to individuals who are fully awakened to the desperate situation of human existence, and it may even be seen as inadequate in addressing the normality of neurosis and the inevitability of stumbling through life.

The Dangers of Self-Knowledge and the Limits of Therapy

- The concept of self-knowledge can be devastating for some individuals, as it can reveal the harsh realities of life, and some therapists fail to warn their patients about the potential dangers of total liberation, which can lead to feelings of terror and dread.
- The idea that therapy can provide a sense of liberation and joy is often accompanied by a lack of acknowledgment of the potential risks involved, and therapists like Freud have been honest about the fact that curing neuroses can simply reveal the normal miseries of life.

- Many therapies rely on metaphysical concepts and promises of mystical contact or connection to a higher power to provide support and hope to individuals who are struggling with the realities of their existence, as seen in the ideas of Wilhelm Reich and Carl Jung, who both reached for metaphysical solutions to the human condition.
- The search for hope and meaning is a fundamental aspect of human nature, and even great thinkers like Reich and Jung have been unable to rest content with the idea of the tragic nature of human existence, instead seeking out more optimistic and hopeful solutions, such as Reich's concept of Orgone or Jung's interest in the I Ching.

The Limits of Human Nature and the Myth of New Being

- The human condition is inherently limited, and there is no way to transcend these limits or change the psychological structural conditions that make humanity possible, as noted by philosophers like Freud, who recognized the impossibility of truly overcoming human nature.
- The idea of a "New Being" or a new type of person who can emerge and overcome the limitations of human nature is a notion that has been repeated throughout history, but it is ultimately a fanciful idea, as seen in the concepts of [[Paul Tillich]], who believed in the emergence of a new type of person who would be more in harmony with nature, but also recognized the limitations and illusions of this idea.
- The concept of the "knight of faith" or achieving complete selflessness is considered a myth, an ideal that can be worked towards but not fully realized, as humans can only cope with the terror of existence through repressions, distractions, and diversions.
- According to Tillich, a creative myth, such as the concept of New Being, should be used as a call to the highest and most difficult effort, rather than a means to simple joy, and should be bold and generative in order to be truly effective.

Tillich's New Being, Courage, and the Problem of Meaninglessness

- Tillich's idea of the New Being emphasizes the importance of having the "courage to be" oneself, to face the eternal contradictions of the real world, and to absorb the maximum amount of nonbeing into one's own being, which is a truly cosmic heroism.
- The problem of meaninglessness is a fundamental issue that poses itself in the form of nonbeing, and requires the boldest creative myths to help men see the reality of their condition and to urge them on to face the anxiety of meaninglessness.
- The pursuit of New Being, however, will only bring into play new and sharper paradoxes, new tensions, and more painful disharmonies, as reality is remorseless and gods do not walk upon the earth, and men who become noble repositories of great gulfs of nonbeing will have even less peace.
- The idea of therapeutic megalomania, which suggests that analyzing one's psychological complexes or making love with tenderness can solve the

problems of the world, is considered foolish, and it is Freud's somber pessimism that keeps him contemporary, as men are doomed to live in an overwhelmingly tragic and demonic world.

- Taking life seriously means acknowledging the terror of creation, the grotesque, and the rumble of panic underneath everything, and living in the lived truth of this reality, rather than trying to escape or deny it, which is why mysticism is not a stopping point, but a guide that does not overpower the experience of meaninglessness and nihilism.

Faith as Ultimate Concern and the Justification of Actions

- Paul Tillich's concept of faith is defined as the state of being ultimately concerned, and genuine faith requires total surrender to the subject of ultimate concern, which is an ideal that may seem impossible to reach, but must still be strived towards, as seen in the examples of martyrs and suicides who ultimately surrender to their beliefs.

- The concept of ultimate concern is discussed in relation to various value structures, including Islam, and how it can lead to the justification of actions such as terrorism when a particular ideology is given ultimate importance.

- The idea of faith is explored, with references to philosophers such as Otto, who describes faith as an act that transcends both rational and non-rational elements of human being, and Tillich, who states that faith is the passion for the infinite and that there is no faith without a content toward which it is directed.

- The distinction between true faith and idolatrous faith is highlighted, with true faith being concerned with the truly ultimate, while idolatrous faith elevates preliminary, finite realities to the rank of ultimacy, leading to existential disappointment and a sense of meaninglessness.

Transcendence, the Infinite, and the Search for Meaning

- The concept of transcendence is also discussed, with references to the idea of ecstasy, or standing outside of oneself, and the use of entheogens such as shrooms and cannabis to experience a sense of connection to something bigger than oneself.

- The idea that human experiences and concerns are finite and conditional is emphasized, and that humans are driven towards faith by their awareness of the infinite, as described by philosophers such as Zapffe and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].

- The importance of recognizing the difference between the ultimate and the preliminary, finite realities is stressed, with Tillich noting that a critical principle is at work in human religious consciousness to distinguish between what is truly ultimate and what is only preliminary or transitory.

- The text also touches on the idea that all speaking about divine matters that is not done in the state of ultimate concern is meaningless, and that philosophy and abstractness can be seen as a decently accurate symbol for

speaking or thinking about [[God]].

- The concept of existential disappointment is explored, with the idea that idolatrous faith will eventually lead to a sense of disappointment and meaninglessness, as noted by philosophers such as [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]] and [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], and that even those who do not recognize this disappointment are still stuck in the human condition, which is characterized by a sense of disconnection and doubt.

The Holy, the Infinite, and the Human Heart

- The concept of the holy is described as the awareness of the presence of the divine, which is a mysterious and powerful force that can be both attractive and repulsive to those who encounter it, as noted by philosophers such as Tillich.
- The human heart seeks the infinite because it is where the finite wants to rest, and in the infinite, it sees its own fulfillment, which is a profound expression of man's relation to the holy, as experienced by the author in a mushroom trip where they felt a sense of humility and oneness with something truly Other.
- The holy has been identified with moral perfection, but originally, it meant what is apart from the ordinary realm of things and experiences, and it transcends this realm, making it mysterious and unapproachable, with philosophers like Nietzsche and Tillich discussing its complexities.
- The holy can appear as both creative and destructive, and it has been called the "entirely other", which is a concept that goes beyond the alternative of good and evil, and is both divine and demonic, as noted by Tillich, who would have been aware of Nietzsche's concept of "Beyond".

The Changing Concept of the Holy and the Nature of Faith

- The concept of the holy has changed over time, and it has become identified with justice and truth, but in doing so, it has lost its meaning as the "separated", the "transcending", and the "fascinating and terrifying", and has become the morally good and the logically true, which is a point also discussed by philosophers like Heisman.
- Faith is an act of a finite being who is grasped by and turned to the infinite, and it includes an element of immediate awareness which gives certainty, but also an element of uncertainty, which cannot be removed and must be accepted with courage, as noted by the author and supported by the ideas of Tillich and other philosophers.
- The author emphasizes that the experience of the holy is not a philosophical argument, but a call for experience, and that it is a real and profound experience that cannot be logic-chopped, and that the danger of faith is idolatry, but faith can also heal and destroy, as noted by the author and supported by the ideas of Heisman and other philosophers.

Courage, the Risk of Faith, and the Finite/Infinite Distinction

- The concept of courage is closely tied to faith, as it involves the daring

self-affirmation of one's own being in spite of the power of "nonbeing" that is inherent in everything finite, as noted in the discussion of courage as an element of faith.

- The risk of faith is that what is considered a matter of ultimate concern may ultimately prove to be a matter of preliminary and transitory concern, leading to a breakdown in the meaning of one's life, as seen in the example of national claims.
- The reaction of despair in people who have experienced the breakdown of their national claims is an irrefutable proof of the idolatrous character of their national concern, highlighting the importance of distinguishing between ultimate and non-ultimate concerns.
- The finite/infinite distinction is crucial in understanding the nature of faith and doubt, as it recognizes that concrete elements of religion must be symbolic and that a [[God | god]] may disappear, but divinity remains, as stated in the discussion of the finite/infinite distinction.

Faith, Doubt, and the Importance of Skepticism

- Faith can be understood in two ways: as belief that something is true, in which case doubt is incompatible with the act of faith, or as being ultimately concerned, in which case doubt is a necessary element, as noted in the distinction between these two understandings of faith.
- Skeptical doubt is an attitude towards all beliefs of man, from sense experiences to religious creeds, and is more an attitude than an assertion, as it would conflict with itself if it were to be made into an assertion, as seen in the discussion of the self-refuting nature of skepticism.
- The self-refuting nature of skepticism is highlighted by the fact that even the assertion that there is no possible truth for man would be judged by the skeptical principle and could not stand as an assertion, as noted in the critique of skepticism.
- Genuine skeptical doubt does not use the form of an assertion, but rather is an attitude of actually rejecting any certainty, which can lead to despair, cynicism, or indifference, but ultimately breaks down, as seen in the discussion of the dynamics of skeptical doubt.
- The despair about truth shown by the skeptic demonstrates that truth is still their infinite passion, and the cynical superiority over every concrete truth shows that truth is still taken seriously, as noted in the discussion of the relationship between skepticism and truth.
- Faith and doubt are intertwined, with existential doubt being a necessary element of faith, as it involves the doubt of one who is ultimately concerned about a concrete content, and is distinct from methodological and skeptical doubt, as seen in the discussion of the relationship between faith and doubt.

Anxiety, Doubt, and the Awareness of Finitude

- The concept of anxiety is closely tied to the awareness of one's finitude, and while it may not be a permanent experience, it is always present as an

underlying structure of finite life, making its appearance under special conditions possible, as noted by philosophers such as [[Paul Tillich]].

- Serious doubt is not a rejection of faith, but rather a confirmation of it, indicating the seriousness of one's concern and its unconditional character, which is a perspective shared by many Christians and other religious groups who experience anxiety, guilt, and despair about what they call a "loss of faith".

- The relationship between faith and creedal statements is complex, and according to Tillich, creedal expressions of the ultimate concern of a community must include their own criticism, acknowledging that they are not ultimate, but rather pointing to the ultimate which is beyond all of them, a concept he refers to as the "Protestant principle", which is also reflected in the views of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].

- Faith is not a low degree of knowledge, but rather a response to the infinite, which is beyond all finite things, and is experienced through symbols that are created to interact with this experience, but are only symbols, as the finite/infinite distinction is unbridgeable, a idea that is central to Tillich's philosophy.

Ultimate Concern, Atheism, and the Symbolism of Faith

- The ultimate concern is not in conflict with empirical or transitory issues, and even those who rally against it, such as atheists, are affirming a sense of "rightness" and "truth" that shows some form of concern or ultimacy, and needs to recognize the symbolism of faith, as Tillich argues that we are all striving towards the same infinite.

- The use of symbols, such as the name of [[God]], can easily become an abuse or blasphemy, as God transcends his own name, and whatever is said about that which concerns us ultimately has a symbolic meaning, a point that Tillich emphasizes in his discussion of symbolism.

- The question of whether a particular symbol of faith "exists" is meaningless, as existence refers to something within the whole of reality, and the question is rather which of the numerous symbols of faith is most adequate to the meaning of faith, a question that is at the heart of Tillich's philosophy, and is also relevant to the ideas of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].

Faith, Symbols, and the Inadequacy of the Finite

- The discussion revolves around the concept of faith and its relationship with symbols, highlighting that the qualities attributed to the ultimate reality are derived from finite experiences and applied symbolically to that which is beyond finitude and infinity, as noted in the context of 'Journal314_47-52'.

- The text emphasizes that holy things are not holy in themselves, but rather point beyond themselves to the source of all holiness, which is of ultimate concern, and that those who live in an unbroken mythological world resist any attempt to introduce uncertainty by making conscious the symbolic

character of their beliefs.

- Literalism is criticized for depriving [[God]] of his ultimacy and majesty by drawing him down to the level of the finite and conditional, and for disregarding the symbolic character of symbols, which can lead to idolatry when faith takes its symbolism literally.
- The importance of recognizing the symbolic character of faith's symbols is stressed, as it allows faith to give God the honor due to him, and the text also touches on the idea that faith is inadequate if one's whole existence is determined by something that is less than ultimate.

Entheogens, the Infinite Tension of Faith, and the Relativity of Life

- The concept of entheogens is mentioned as something that can grasp the mind with terrifying and fascinating power, breaking into ordinary reality and driving it beyond itself in an ecstatic way, and the text also references the courage needed to face one's own relativity and the greatness and danger that comes with it.
- The idea of the infinite tension between the absoluteness of faith's claim and the relativity of its life is discussed, highlighting the divided-self and double-mindedness that can result from this tension, and the text notes that faith experiences the content of its ultimate concern through various mediums, such as sacraments, which can produce awe, fascination, and adoration.
- The text also references the thoughts of various individuals, including [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and James, in discussing the correlation between the subject and the author of faith, and the idea that there is no criterion by which faith can be judged from outside the correlation of faith, although the faithful can ask themselves whether the medium through which they experience ultimate concern expresses real ultimacy.
- Ultimately, the discussion highlights the importance of recognizing the inadequacy of the finite and the need to distinguish between the sacred object and the ultimate reality, as the human mind often forgets this inadequacy and identifies the sacred object with the ultimate itself, losing sight of its character as a bearer of the holy that points beyond itself.

Mysticism, Sacramental Faith, and the Ultimate Reality

- The act of faith is no longer directed towards the ultimate self, but rather towards symbols that represent the ultimate, such as the tree, the book, the building, or the person, as noted by Vivekananda in the context of symbolism.
- Mystics identify the ultimate with the ground or substance of everything, and their interest in mystical faith is not to reject concrete, sacramental ways of faith, but to go beyond them, recognizing that mysticism is not irrational.
- The true content of faith in an ultimate concern cannot be identified with a piece of reality or expressed in terms of a rational system, but is rather a matter of ecstatic experience that can only be spoken of in a language

that denies the possibility of speaking about it, as described in the concept of negative theology.

- In order to experience the ultimate, one must empty themselves of all finite contents of their ordinary life, surrender all preliminary concerns, and transcend the division of existence through meditation, contemplation, and ecstasy, as advocated by [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and achievable through means such as entheogens, suffering, or renunciation.

The Mystic's Awareness of the Infinite and the Presence of the Ultimate

- The mystic is aware of the infinite distance between the infinite and the finite, and accepts a life of preliminary stages of union with the infinite, interrupted only rarely by the final ecstasy, and recognizes that the ultimate shall always be present and remembered even in the smallest activities of ordinary life.

- The question of faith is not about specific religious figures such as Moses, [[Jesus]], or Mohammed, but rather about who expresses one's ultimate concern most adequately, and the conflict between religions is a conflict between expressions of ultimate concern, as noted by Vivekananda.

Humanist Faith, the Revolutionary Movement, and the Power of Belief

- The humanist faith of the moral type, which emphasizes moral demands rather than rituals or ascetic practices, has been taken over by the revolutionary movement of the proletarian masses and is visible in everyday life, giving tremendous power to both good and evil, and is distinct from the mystical type of faith, as seen in the works of philosophers such as Nietzsche, [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Tolstoy, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and Cioran.

- Faith, as described in the New Testament, is the state of being grasped by the divine Spirit, and a faith that destroys reason destroys itself and the humanity of man, as reason is necessary to distinguish ultimate and preliminary concerns, understand the unconditional commands of the ethical imperative, and be aware of the presence of the holy.

- Man's reason is finite and moves within finite relations when dealing with the universe and himself, and all cultural activities have this character of finitude, making them not matters of ultimate concern, but rather man experiences a belonging to the infinite, which is neither a part of himself nor something in his power.

The Finite and Infinite in Human Reason and Ultimate Concern

- The concept of ultimate concern is crucial, as it must grasp an individual and is a matter of infinite concern, with human reason being driven beyond its finite limits to experience the presence of the ultimate, the holy, as noted by philosophers such as Mckenna and Tillich.

- Human beings are finite, yet aware of their potential infinity, and this awareness appears as their ultimate concern, which can be fulfilled through experiences that transcend the limits of finitude, such as those induced by

mushrooms or cannabis, as mentioned in the context of personal experimentation and exploration.

Estrangement, Self-Negation, and the Pursuit of Spiritual Growth

- The state of estrangement from one's true nature is a fundamental aspect of the human condition, and the criterion of the truth of faith is that it implies an element of self-negation, acknowledging the lack of ultimacy in any symbol or representation of the ultimate, as discussed in the context of various sects of religion and philosophical perspectives, including those of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and Karma [[Yoga]].
- Faith is not possible without participation in the object of one's ultimate concern, and every act of faith presupposes participation in that toward which it is directed, with the mystical type of faith emphasizing this aspect the most strongly, and highlighting the importance of turning inward, contemplation, meditation, and solitude in the pursuit of spiritual growth and understanding.

Participation, Separation, and the Interplay of Faith and Doubt

- The human situation, with its finitude and estrangement, prevents participation in the ultimate without both separation and the promise of faith, and there is no faith without separation, as noted by Tillich, who emphasizes the finite/infinite distinction that is unbridgeable, and the importance of acknowledging this distinction in the pursuit of spiritual growth and understanding.
- The experience of meaninglessness is a prominent aspect of the human condition, and it transcends the mystical experience, with doubt being an inherent part of faith, as it follows from the element of separation, and faith being certain due to the element of participation, as discussed in the context of the interplay between faith and doubt.
- Ultimately, neither faith nor doubt can be eliminated from human existence, as the life of faith is a fundamental aspect of the human condition, and the danger of traditional attitudes and education is that they may prevent faith from breaking through to a state of living faith, as noted in the context of the importance of personal experience and experimentation in the pursuit of spiritual growth and understanding.

The Pursuit of Ultimate Concern and the Dangers of Idolatry

- The pursuit of ultimate concern can lead to a powerful life of faith, but it can also result in emptiness, cynicism, and idolatrous forms of ultimate concern if individuals become hesitant to communicate symbols and wait for independent questions about the meaning of life to arise, as noted by philosophers such as [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and Tillich.
- Ultimate concern is experienced in intense emotions, including passion, anxiety, despair, and ecstasy, and it is characterized by infinite passion, as emphasized by Vivekananda, who speaks of the thief left in the room with gold and the boy who has his head held under water, going 'mad' for [[God]],

a concept also testified to by Plato and Cioran.

- The ultimate concern gives depth, direction, and unity to all other concerns and to the whole personality, and it is only possible because of the infinite distance between the infinite and the finite, which makes the courage of faith possible, as discussed in the context of the sickness unto death and the omnipresent doubt and despair in the finite world.

Mystical and Ethical Love, Idolatrous Faith, and the Use of Symbols

- The body can participate in both vital ecstasy and asceticism leading to spiritual ecstasy, and ultimate concern is passionate concern that unites individuals with something to which they essentially belong and from which they are existentially separated, as seen in the distinction between mystical love, which unites by negation of the self, and ethical love, which transforms by affirmation of the self.

- Idolatrous faith, on the other hand, can lead to spiritual creativity showing an increasingly shallow and empty character, and the passion of faith can be transformed into the suffering of unconquered doubt and despair, and in many cases into an escape to neurosis and psychosis, as warned against by philosophers such as [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Tolstoy, and Nietzsche.

- The use of symbols is essential for experiencing the holy, and without them, the experience of the holy vanishes, and the distinction between mystical and ethical love can be seen in the difference between ascetic and formative activities, which may be related to the difference between jnana and bhakti/karm [[Yoga | yoga]], as hinted at in the text.

- Ultimately, that which is based on an ultimate concern is not exposed to destruction by preliminary concerns and the lack of their fulfillment, and the experience of the holy is not limited to religious contexts, but can also be found in secular idolatry, such as nation and success, which can have healing power, but the basis for integration is often too narrow, as noted in the context of the poison of naturalism.

Demythologizing Sacred Stories and the Question of Ultimate Concern

- The text discusses the concept of religion and spirituality, citing Swami Vivekananda's idea that sacred stories must be demythologized and transformed into a philosophy of religion, and ultimately into a philosophy without religion, as mentioned in his work "The Necessity of Religion".

- The text also references Paul Tillich's statement that "no one is completely without an ultimate concern", but the author questions the validity of this claim, suggesting that it may be self-contradictory and that Tillich may not have taken his own message seriously, instead using it as a talking point or "got'cha" phrase.

- The author notes that faith is a difficult concept to grasp and describe, as mentioned in "The Courage To Be", and that the answer to the question of meaning must accept the state of meaninglessness as its precondition, rather than trying to escape or remove it, as stated on page 175 of the book.

Practical Spirituality, Critical Thinking, and the Search for Truth

- The text also quotes Swami Vivekananda's "Hints of Practical Spirituality", where he discusses the importance of not judging others and recognizing the limitations of one's own knowledge and understanding, citing the saying of [[Jesus | Christ]] "Judge not that ye not be judged" and emphasizing the need for humility and caution in both religious and scientific pursuits.
- Additionally, the text highlights the importance of critical thinking and analysis, encouraging readers to approach both religious and scientific claims with a healthy dose of skepticism and to test and prove everything before accepting it, as advised by [[Swami Vivekananda]], who suggests beginning with disbelief and analyzing and testing claims before accepting them.
- The text also touches on the idea that true spirituality and devotion can be practiced in various ways, without the need for formal churches or rituals, and that the divine or ultimate reality can be accessed through individual effort and participation, as mentioned by Sam Harris in a recent talk, and as illustrated by the example of people practicing breathing and concentration as a form of devotion.

The Hindu Mindset, Yoga, and the Pursuit of Spiritual Enlightenment

- The Hindu mindset believes that [[God]] is within oneself, and the reality of everything is the same infinite, with the world having a relative existence that fulfills its requirements but lacks independent existence, relying on the Absolute Reality beyond time, space, and causation.
- Attaining the culmination of [[Yoga]] is possible for everyone, but it requires a tremendous amount of effort and preparation, involving more than just listening to lectures or practicing breathing exercises, and instead demands a deep commitment to contemplation and spiritual growth.
- The key to spiritual life is to seek the kingdom of God first, and everything else will follow, which involves renunciation and living for an ideal, leaving no room in the mind for anything else, and meditation, or Dhyâna, is a crucial tool in this pursuit, allowing individuals to divest themselves of material conditions and connect with their divine nature.
- The body and attachment to it are major obstacles to spiritual growth, and individuals must learn to think of themselves as spirits, not bodies, and view the universe as a series of paintings or scenes on a canvas, of which they are the witness, rather than being dragged down by materialism and naturalism.

Bhakti, Ritualism, and the Use of Symbols in Spiritual Growth

- The concept of Bhakti, or devotion, is manifested in various degrees and stages across different religions, with the lowest stage being ritualism, where abstract ideas are made concrete through symbols and forms, and while some reformers have opposed the use of symbols, they can be helpful tools

for spiritual growth, as long as they are not mistaken for the ultimate goal, which is the spirit.

- The use of symbols, such as bells, music, rituals, books, and images, can be beneficial for representing abstract ideas and facilitating spiritual growth, but they should not be confused with the ultimate goal of spirituality, and individuals must be careful not to become too attached to these symbols, instead using them as a means to an end, which is the attainment of spiritual perfection.

Spiritual Tradition, Intellectual Development, and the Transcendence of Idolatry

- The text emphasizes that being born into a spiritual tradition or church can be beneficial, but dying within its rigid forms and structures can indicate a lack of spiritual growth and development, as it is essential to move beyond these external forms to achieve true spiritual understanding.

- The development of the soul is not solely an intellectual process, and a person can be highly intelligent yet spiritually immature, as evidenced by the fact that many people struggle to conceive of abstract concepts like omnipresence, instead relying on material images and idolatry.

- Idolatry is a natural part of human nature, and people are born with a tendency to worship symbols and forms, but the goal of spiritual growth is to transcend this idolatry and recognize one's true nature as spirit, which is infinite and formless.

- The text criticizes the tendency of people to fight over whose idol or form of worship is correct, and instead encourages readers to look beyond these superficial differences and recognize the unity of humanity as a single organism slowly evolving towards spiritual truth.

- The study of different religions can help people recognize that their own thoughts and ideas are not unique, but rather part of a larger universal quest for truth, and that the external forms of devotion are merely a kindergarten or preparatory stage for higher spiritual growth.

- Ultimately, the text suggests that true spiritual longing and sincerity are what matter, and that individuals must be willing to move beyond the external forms and structures of religion to reach a deeper level of understanding and connection with the divine.

True Religion as Being and Becoming, and the Importance of Realization

- The concept of religion is not about doctrines, dogmas, or intellectual argumentation, but rather about being and becoming, and realizing the truth, as emphasized by the author of the text in Journal314_47-52.

- Many people claim to believe in [[God]] and the soul, but when asked if they have actually realized or seen them, few can say they have, and this lack of personal experience is what leads to disputes and fighting among different sects, as illustrated by the story of the representatives of various sects in India who were arguing over which God was the greatest.

- A sage who was invited to decide the matter asked each of the disputants

if they had seen their respective Gods, and when he found that none of them had, he realized that their arguments were based on a lack of knowledge, and that if they had truly known God, they would not have been arguing, much like a jar that is full of water makes no noise, but one that is being filled does.

- The author also notes that many people are atheists, but some, like the materialists, are sincere in their beliefs, whereas others, who claim to be religious but do not truly practice or understand their faith, are insincere, and that the desire for perfection and reaching the goal of spiritual enlightenment can only be achieved by those who truly want it and are willing to make an effort to realize it.

The Desire for Spiritual Growth and the Search for Self-Realization

- The author criticizes the way many people approach religion, using the example of a woman who collects furniture from all over the world and adds a little bit of religion to her life as a fashion statement, and instead suggests that true religion is about a deep desire for spiritual growth and self-realization, as illustrated by the story of the disciple who wanted religion and was taught by his master that he must want it as desperately as he wants a breath of air when he is underwater.

- The author, who is likely [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], given the style and content of the text, emphasizes that the search for truth and spiritual growth is not about security or intellectual argumentation, but about a non-rational, direct experience of the ultimate reality, and that this desire for truth is what drives individuals to seek spiritual enlightenment, rather than just following religious dogma or seeking material possessions.

The Awakening of Spiritual Desire and the Longing for God

- The attainment of true religion requires a deep-seated desire or thirst for a higher power, and until this desire is awakened, one's efforts to achieve spiritual growth are insincere, as they are driven by intellect or external influences rather than a genuine longing for connection with a higher power.

- A person who has awakened to this desire becomes consumed by a longing to connect with [[God]], and this longing is characterized by a sense of madness or urgency that drives them to seek out a deeper understanding of the divine, as illustrated by the example of a thief who becomes obsessed with obtaining a vast treasure that is just out of reach.

Preparations for Spiritual Growth and the True Love of God

- The process of spiritual growth and development involves a series of preparations, including the use of forms, ceremonies, prayers, and other rituals, which serve to purify the soul and prepare it for a deeper connection with God, but these preparations are only the beginning, and true love of God requires a selfless and unconditional devotion.

- According to Tillich, the true love of God is not about seeking rewards or avoiding punishment, but rather about cultivating a deep and abiding connection with the divine, and as [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] notes, this connection is often motivated by egotistical desires rather than a genuine desire for spiritual growth.

The Test of True Love and the Nature of Devotion

- The first test of true love is that it knows no bargaining, and as long as one's devotion to [[God]] is motivated by a desire for personal gain or reward, it is not true love, but rather a form of spiritual shopkeeping, as illustrated by the example of a person who prays for wealth, children, or territory.
- True love of God is characterized by a willingness to let go of fear and to approach the divine with a sense of openness and vulnerability, as illustrated by the example of a mother who protects her child from harm, and this love is not motivated by a desire for reward or a fear of punishment, but rather by a deep and abiding connection with the divine.
- As the text notes, even intellectual and spiritual leaders, such as Tillich and Kierkegaard, recognize that the true love of God is not about fear or reward, but rather about cultivating a deep and abiding connection with the divine, and that this connection is characterized by a sense of selflessness, openness, and vulnerability.

The Knight of Faith and the Transcendence of Forms and Symbols

- The concept of a "Knight of Faith" is described as someone who has passed beyond concerns about God's nature, rewards, punishments, fears, and doubts, and has reached a state of supreme devotion, where forms and symbols fall off, and they cannot belong to any particular sect.
- This state of supreme devotion is characterized by a desire to become "God-intoxicated" and to transcend limited forms and symbols, allowing the individual to experience a deeper connection with the divine, as discussed in the context of Bhakti.

Heidegger on Death, Authenticity, and Being-Towards-Death

- The philosopher [[Martin Heidegger]] is referenced, particularly in relation to his ideas about the human tendency to evade the reality of death, and how this evasion conceals the true nature of existence, leading to an inauthentic way of being.
- Heidegger's concept of "being towards death" is explored, highlighting the distinction between obsessing over the details of one's own death and acknowledging the inevitability of death, with the latter being seen as a more philosophical and authentic approach.
- The anticipation of one's own death is seen as a liberating force, allowing individuals to break free from the influence of others and live more authentically, and this anticipation is characterized as an "anticipation" rather than an "actualizing" of death.

Anxiety, Curiosity, and the Authentic Experience of Existence

- The idea of anxiety is discussed in relation to being in the world, and how it can bring about a moment of vision, disclosing the authentic "there" and allowing individuals to experience existence in a more authentic way, as noted in the context of finitude and the human situation.
- The concept of curiosity is also explored, suggesting that it is driven by a desire for the infinite, rather than a fascination with the finite, and that it is activated by the fleeting nature of the present moment, which is characterized by a "falling kind of temporalizing".

Dasein, Thrownness, and the Search for Authenticity

- The concept of "Being-towards-death" is discussed, where [[Dasein]], or human existence, is thrown into the world and initially flees from the reality of its own mortality, becoming lost in the world and its factual concerns.
- In order to exist authentically, Dasein must reject the worldly influences and arbitrary norms, and instead, anticipate its own death, allowing it to see its existence as transitory and fleeting, and to renounce the worldly realm and its unthinking influences.
- The experience of anxiety is described as a state where Dasein is taken back to its "naked uncanniness" and becomes fascinated by the nothingness and insignificance of the world, which reveals the nullity of worldly concerns and the impossibility of projecting oneself upon a potentiality-for-Being.
- This anxiety is not a fear of something specific, but rather a feeling of uncertainty and insignificance in the face of the unknown, and it is through this experience that Dasein can discover its authentic self, unencumbered by worldly affairs and material concerns.

Anticipation, Renunciation, and the Authentic Existence of Dasein

- The concept of "anticipation" is introduced, which refers to the authentic existence of [[Dasein]], where it lets itself come towards itself as its ownmost potentiality-for-being, and this anticipation is not based on a present or past, but rather on the future, which must be won from the inauthentic future.
- The idea of renunciation is emphasized, as seen in the works of philosophers such as [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Tillich, and Cioran, where the individual must renounce the worldly realm and its influences in order to discover their authentic self, and this renunciation is necessary to experience the "ultimate concern" or the authentic self that is not repressed by worldly concerns.
- The temporal meaning of this revealing is also discussed, where the experience of anxiety discloses the insignificance of the world and reveals the nullity of worldly concerns, allowing Dasein to understand its authentic potentiality-for-being and to exist in a state of authenticity.

Authenticity, Nihilism, and the Discovery of the True Self

- The concept of anxiety is discussed as a fundamental aspect of human existence, where individuals are anxious about their own mortality and the uncertainty of the world, and this anxiety can liberate them from inauthentic possibilities and allow them to become free for authentic ones.
- According to Heidegger, authenticity is the realization of the Self as something more than material, and it involves living as a Self, discovering what the Self is, and embracing the nothingness of the world, which is a concept closely related to Nihilism.
- The text highlights the idea that Nihilism, or the nothingness of the world, can be a foundation for a moment of vision, which allows for a resolution, and this resolution is related to the concept of [[God]], suggesting that Nihilism and God are intertwined.
- The idea of hope is also discussed, and it is not seen as a hope for a future event, but rather as a discovery of one's true Self, and Heidegger's philosophy is described as having a deep religious significance.
- The concept of curiosity is also explored, and it is seen as a transcendental yearning that arises when faced with the nothingness of the world, and it is this curiosity that drives humans to move forward, even in the face of uncertainty and mortality.

Resoluteness, Being-Towards-Death, and the Nullity of Dasein

- Heidegger's concept of resoluteness is discussed, which involves taking over authentically in one's existence the fact that one is the null basis of one's own nullity, and this resoluteness is characterized as an anticipation of Being-towards-death, which reveals the nullity of [[Dasein]] and allows for an authentic understanding of one's potentiality-for-Being-guilty.
- The text also touches on the idea that authentic resoluteness involves keeping repeating itself, and not falling into the nothingness of the world, and that this path is narrow and unintelligible to the common sense manner in which people understand Dasein or Being.
- Finally, Heidegger makes a distinction between worldly hope, which is seen as a distraction from the anxiety of existence, and an ecstatico-temporal relation to the thrown ground of itself, which is described as a mystical or entheogenic experience, highlighting the complexity and depth of human existence.

The Nothing of the World, Conscience, and the Nullity of Existence

- Heidegger's concept of the 'nothing of the world' is described as a negative that signifies something positive, which is a key aspect of the Nihilistic Experience, and he dismisses both biological and religious explanations of this experience, instead referring to it as 'existential'.
- The idea of conscience is also explored, with Heidegger stating that the concept of 'Guilty!' must be rid of its attachment to law-breaking or an 'ought' and instead be understood as a fundamental aspect of human

existence, unencumbered by false morality.

- The phenomenon of ambiguity in human interaction is discussed, where people engage in 'idle talk' and 'curiosity' to distract themselves from the nullity of their existence, and this ambiguity is seen as a fundamental aspect of [[Dasein]], or human existence, that needs to be worked through.

Heidegger's Philosophy, Biography, and the Concept of Being with Others

- Heidegger's ideas are contrasted with those of other philosophers, such as Descartes, and his biography is often discussed, but his dismissal of biological and religious explanations of the Nothing is rarely mentioned by commentators.

- The concept of 'Being with Others' is also touched upon, with Heidegger suggesting that genuine human interaction is often obscured by the 'false' and 'worthless' mouth-noises of everyday conversation, where people engage in conflicting monologues without realizing the nullity of their possibilities.

- The idea that people 'flee' from the illusions that comfort them from their own deaths is also mentioned, with the suggestion that they only semi-consciously avoid confronting the reality of their own mortality, and that this is a fundamental aspect of human existence that needs to be acknowledged and worked through, as suggested by thinkers like McKenna, who argues that culture is an 'intelligent test' that one must not become too comfortable with.

Dasein, Fleeing from Death, and the Call of Conscience

- The concept of [[Dasein]] is discussed, where it is claimed that the masses do not generally understand the phenomenon of "fleeing" from death, and that seeking agreement from the masses would be a misunderstanding, as stated in section 50 of the text.

- Heidegger's explanation of the Nihilistic experience in section 57 is highlighted, where he notes that atheists and theists misinterpret this experience due to their reluctance to be authentic and confront anxiety, instead chasing after it and participating with the Nothingness of the world.

- The "call" of conscience is described as indefinite, indefinable, and a call of oneself by oneself, which is a concept also found in the ideas of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and eastern/mystical conceptions of "unity" or "all is one", and this call is said to be a positive force that brings Dasein face to face with its own nullity.

Uncanniness, Guilt, and the Finite/Infinite Gap

- The concept of "Uncanniness" is covered up in everyday events, and others will not understand this because they repress their true Self, leading to a sense of guilt that is not a worldly guilt of failing to meet expectations, but rather a fundamental aspect of Dasein due to the finite/infinite gap.

- Heidegger's idea of guilt is explored, where it is understood that guilt

is not a result of breaching a moral requirement, but rather a result of the finite/infinite distinction, and that all actions are absurd, making it impossible for the natural self to transcend its worldly self and reach the Authentic Self.

- The concept of "Salvation through Grace only" is touched upon, and it is suggested that guilt may be the finite/infinite distinction, which allows for the pursuit of authenticity, but not its achievement, as Heidegger's "Authentic" man is an ideal to strive for, rather than a reality that can be attained.

Heidegger's Authenticity, Guilt, and the Limitations of Human Existence

- Heidegger's own life is cited as an example, where he lived a secluded life, yet joined the Nazi party, illustrating the impossibility of being truly authentic, and that care itself is permeated with nullity, making `[[Dasein]]` guilty, as stated in the formally existential definition of guilt as "Being-the-basis of a nullity".

- The relationship between conscience, care, and guilt is further explored, where conscience is seen as the call of care from the uncanniness of Being-in-the-world, summoning Dasein to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-guilty, and that this call is often misinterpreted due to expectations of being told something useful about taking action.

- The concept of conscience, as discussed by Heidegger, is not about providing practical injunctions or maxims that can be reckoned up unequivocally, but rather about summoning Dasein to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-its-Self, which can lead to a sense of quietism, solitude, and non-movement.

Conscience, Care, and the Call to Authenticity

- Heidegger's interpretation of the conscience is contrasted with the everyday conception, where the conscience is seen as a universal voice that is objectively binding and not just subjective, but this interpretation is actually a fleeing in the face of the conscience, allowing Dasein to escape the uncanniness of its Being.

- The call of conscience, according to Heidegger, is not about taking action in the world, but rather about recognizing the Nothingness that is the ground of being, which can be seen as a positive content, signifying something like non-movement or a waking up to the Nothingness.

Dasein, the "They", and the Discovery of Authentic Being

- `[[Dasein]]`, in its everyday existence, is dispersed into the "they" and must first find itself, and this discovery of the world and disclosure of Dasein's authentic Being is accomplished through a clearing-away of concealments and obscurities, such as idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity.

- Heidegger's conception of the conscience is seen as a middle ground between the Naturalistic and Theistic interpretations, where the conscience is neither entirely material nor a God-like character with human qualities,

but rather an indefinite something that speaks in the individual subject.

- The call of conscience, as seen existentially, is not an impossible fiction, but rather a call that signifies something positive, such as non-movement, and it is only when seen in this way that Dasein can truly understand its own authentic Being and the world around it.

Dissolution of Boundaries and the Embracing of Nothingness

- The concept of a dissolution of boundaries is necessary, which involves participating in and embracing the Nothingness that is brought about by anxiety, as discussed in the context of Heidegger's philosophy and referenced in Journal314_47-52.

- According to Heidegger, everyday human experiences, such as equanimity and ill-humour, are not ontologically insignificant, even if they are often overlooked, and this idea is also reflected in the thoughts of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who notes that humans live with death all the time yet never think they will die themselves, illustrating the concept of maya.

- The state of being in a lack of mood, which is often persistent and not to be mistaken for a bad mood, is actually a manifestation of [[Dasein]] becoming satiated with itself, and this burden of Being is something that cannot be fully understood or known, leaving room for the concept of doubt within faith.

- A mood of elation can temporarily alleviate the burden of Being, but this also discloses the burdensome character of Dasein, and even in everydayness, the Being of Dasein can burst forth, showing the pure existence of being, but the reasons behind it remain in darkness, highlighting the finite-infinite gap and human estrangement.

The Burden of Being, Moods, and the Evasion of Dasein

- Heidegger notes that Dasein often evades the Being that discloses the mood, and instead, people tend to flee, distract, or cover up their true feelings, adopting a "fleeing" attitude, and this is related to the concept of "thrownness," which refers to the facticity of being delivered over to one's existence.

- The "they" character, as described by Heidegger, reacts to their thrownness by turning away from the burdensome character of Dasein, and this turning away is often done through a state-of-mind that implies a disclosive submission to the world, which can lead to encountering things that matter, but also to losing one's true Self in the process.

- Ultimately, the text touches on the idea that while we may not be able to fully grasp the generality of being in itself, we do find ourselves placed in the midst of the generality of bare being, and this existence is characterized by an essential difference between understanding the whole of being and finding oneself in the midst of being, with the former being impossible in principle and the latter happening all the time in human existence.

The Presence of Be-ing, Boredom, and the Revelation of Existence

- The concept of be-ing is always present in our daily lives, even when we are not actively engaged with it, and it maintains a unity as a whole, although this unity may be hidden in the shadows, and it can be revealed in moments of profound boredom or dread.
- Profound boredom is a state where everything, including oneself, is pulled into a state of indifference, and it reveals be-ing as a whole, whereas dread is a fundamental mood that is distinct from fear and anxiety, and it is characterized by an odd calm and a sense of indeterminacy.
- Dread is not fear of something specific, but rather a feeling of uncertainty and unease that is not directed at any particular object or situation, and it is in this state that we are suspended, leaving us hanging and unable to hold on to anything, and it reveals no-thing, making everything seem indifferent and unimportant.

Dread, No-thing, and the Nature of Be-ing

- The experience of dread is one of slipping away from ourselves and from be-ing, and it leaves us speechless, as every attempt to say something about it is silenced by the overwhelming presence of no-thing, and it is only by transforming our human being into its openness that we can grasp the nothing that shows up in dread exactly as it shows up.
- The author suggests that dread is a rare and fleeting experience, but one that is essential for revealing the nature of be-ing and our existence, and it is through this experience that we can gain insight into the concept of no-thing and its relationship to be-ing, and the author's ideas are reminiscent of those expressed in "[[Being and Time]]".

Nothingness, Being, and the Importance of Personal Experience

- The concept of nothingness is crucial in understanding human existence, and it is essential to approach it through personal experience, as emphasized by Heidegger in Being and Time, rather than rushing to extremes like [[God]] or Naturalism.
- In the state of dread, being as a whole becomes untenable, and it is characterized by a spellbound calm, which is overwhelming and can lead to a deeper understanding of existence, as described in the phrases "In dread, being as a whole becomes untenable" and "In the clear night of dread's no-thing, the original openness of being as such arises for the first time".
- The experience of nothingness, or the "no-thing", is what allows existence to transcend being and relate to itself, and without this original manifestness of no-thing, there can be no selfhood and no freedom, as stated in the text "Being there means beholdenness to no-thing" and "Without [the] original manifestness of no-thing, no selfhood and no freedom".
- Heidegger notes that this original dread is rare, and it is often disguised by our everyday dealings with being, which can lead to a superficial existence, but it is still present and can awaken at any moment,

as mentioned in the text "Now what does it mean that this original dread happens only in rare instances" and "Original dread can awaken in existence at any moment".

The Nothingness, Creativity, and the Greatness of Existence

- The nothingness is not something to be feared, but rather it shares a secret bond with creativity, cheerfulness, and mildness, and it is what allows existence to be daring and to preserve its ultimate greatness, as described in the phrases "For the daring, dread is not an opponent of joy or even of the comfortable pleasures of quiet busyness" and "It shares a secret bond with the cheerfulness and mildness of creative yearning".
- Heidegger also acknowledges that this position of anxiety may seem arbitrary and exaggerated, and that it may not be possible to hold onto it at all times, but it is still a fundamental aspect of human existence, as stated in the text "But above all, all of us exist and relate ourselves to being which we ourselves are not and which we ourselves are—without such dread" and "Is this not an arbitrary finding and the no-thing attributed to it an exaggeration".

Nothingness, Dread, and the Transcendence of Being

- The concept of nothingness is deeply rooted in human existence, and its rarity makes it a profound experience that can evoke feelings of hidden dread and suspense, as it is permanently on the verge of being realized but only seldom comes into play.
- According to Hegel's proposition in the Science of Logic, "Pure being and pure no-thing is the same," which suggests that being and nothingness belong together because being itself is finite and revealed only in the transcendence of existence enduring nothingness.
- The beholdenness of existence to nothingness on the basis of hidden dread is the surmounting of being as a whole, transcendence, and it is only through this transcendence that human existence can relate to being, by being beholden to nothingness and going above and beyond being.
- The manifestation of nothingness at the heart of existence is what allows the full strangeness of being to come over us, evoking wonder and prompting us to ask the question "Why?", which is the foundation of philosophical inquiry and the driving force behind science.
- Philosophy, as distinct from science, requires a deeper engagement with the fundamental possibilities of existence as a whole, involving making room for being as a whole, letting oneself come to nothing, and embracing the suspense that arises from the basic question of metaphysics: "Why be-ing, after all, and not rather no-thing?"

Heidegger, Instinct, Conscience, and the Divided-Self

- The author reflects on the insights of Heidegger, who explains the disconnect between instinct and conscience, relating to the idea of the "divided-self" and the tension between the natural self and a higher

calling, which can lead to feelings of guilt and disappointment, as seen in Heidegger's own decision to join the Nazi party.

- The author reflects on the idea that prominent figures, such as priests, CEOs, teachers, writers, and philosophers, can be accused of something terrible, and they need to make a connection between Heidegger and Becker, which was previously clear but now seems hazy.

Heidegger, Nietzsche, and the Limits of Science

- The author discusses Heidegger's sentiment, similar to Nietzsche's, that science, despite its ability to describe the world theoretically, cannot capture the lived experience of human emotions, such as the experience of listening to music, and that moods still play a role in science without reducing it to pure feeling.

- After reading "The Death of Ivan Illych", the author feels that the illusion of people's actions around them has become transparent, making it agonizing to see through the actions of others, and they note that sections 46-53 of Heidegger's work are important for understanding the "everydayness" of the evasion of death and the role of anxiety in drawing one away from the world.

- The author explores the idea that anxiety discloses the nothingness of all possibilities of everydayness, turning existence into an impossibility, and that this is a form of nihilism, citing the examples of Nietzsche's breakdown, Kierkegaard's "knight of faith", and Vivekananda's "selfless" being as seemingly impossible ideals.

Anxiety, Nihilism, and the Nothingness of Possibilities

- The author introduces the concept of "uncanniness" as a feeling of being "not at home" in the world, and the "Call of Conscious" as a voice that tries to pull individuals away from the influence of others and back to their authentic selves, which is seen as a path to revelation and understanding of one's true self, as discussed in Heidegger's section 57 and Vivekananda's idea of Oneness.

- The author notes that this voice of consciousness is both internal and external, saying nothing pragmatically, but serving as a positive force that guides individuals towards their true selves, and they mention that section 54 and side-note 268 begin to answer the question of where to go from this point of existential crisis.

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Quotes from the New Testament

- The section from the document 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' provides a collection of quotes from the [[New Testament]], specifically from the books of [[Gospel of Matthew | Matthew]] and [[Gospel of Luke | Luke]], with a focus on the teachings of [[Jesus]].
- The quotes emphasize the importance of trusting in God's providence and not worrying about material needs, as stated in Matthew 6:25-34, where Jesus says to "take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink" because [[God]] will provide for those who seek His kingdom and righteousness.
- Jesus also teaches about the importance of storing up treasures in heaven, rather than on earth, where they can be destroyed or stolen, as mentioned in Luke 12:33-34, and He instructs His followers to "sell that ye have, and give alms" in order to have a treasure in heaven.
- The quotes also touch on the theme of discipleship, with Jesus saying that those who want to follow Him must be willing to deny themselves, take up their cross, and leave behind their earthly attachments, as stated in the phrase "deny thyself, take up thy cross each day and follow me".
- Additionally, the section includes teachings on the dangers of serving two masters, with Jesus saying that "no one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other", and the importance of not judging others, as stated in the phrase "judge not, that you be not judged".
- The quotes also emphasize the importance of living a life of obedience to God's words, with Jesus saying that those who hear His words and do them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock, and those who do not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.
- Overall, the section provides a collection of quotes that highlight Jesus' teachings on faith, discipleship, and living a life that is pleasing to God, with a focus on trusting in God's providence, seeking His kingdom, and living a life of obedience to His words.

More Quotes from the Bible

- The section from the document 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' contains a collection of quotes that appear to be from [[Bible | the Bible]], specifically from the teachings of [[Jesus]], and they convey important messages about faith, humility, and the relationship between [[God]] and humanity.
- The quotes emphasize the importance of having faith and not being anxious about worldly things, as stated in the phrase "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'" , and instead, seeking first the kingdom of God and his

righteousness.

- Jesus teaches his followers to be compassionate, to give to the needy in secret, and to not resist evil, as seen in the quote "Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also", and to fear God rather than those who can only harm the body.
- The quotes also highlight the challenges of following Jesus, including the potential for conflict with family members and the need to prioritize one's relationship with God, as stated in the phrase "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me".
- Jesus emphasizes the importance of humility and becoming like children in order to enter the [[Kingdom of heaven (Gospel of Matthew) | kingdom of heaven]], as seen in the quote "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven", and notes that it is difficult for rich people to enter the kingdom of God.
- The section also includes quotes that mention specific individuals, such as Peter, who is rebuked by Jesus for setting his mind on human things rather than divine things, and Jesus' mother and brothers, who are told that whoever does the will of God is considered part of Jesus' family.
- The final quote in the section, "Godliness with contentment is great gain", suggests that living a virtuous and contented life is a key aspect of one's relationship with [[God]], and is a recurring theme throughout the quotes.

Augustine's Confessions on Detachment

- The text from 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' discusses the concept of detachment from worldly desires and the importance of focusing on spiritual growth, as emphasized by [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]] in his [[Confessions (Augustine) | Confessions]], where he notes that the love of money is the root of all evil and that those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and hurtful lusts.
- The quotes highlight the attractiveness of worldly things, such as beautiful bodies, gold, and silver, but also warn against becoming too attached to these things, as they can lead to sin and distraction from God's law, with Augustine stating that to obtain all these worldly things, one may not depart from God nor decline from His law.
- The text also touches on the idea that human friendship and worldly honour can be enticing, but ultimately, they are fleeting and insignificant compared to the joy and delight found in God, with Augustine noting that the life we live has its own enchantment, but the better and higher things are forsaken when we focus on the lowest order of goods.
- Additionally, the quotes mention the concept of sin and how it can arise from an immoderate inclination towards worldly things, with Augustine stating that suddenly every vain hope became worthless to him, and that he realized the insignificance of everything in [[Existence | existence]].
- The text also references biblical figures such as [[Abraham]], Isaac,

Jacob, [[Moses]], and [[David]], who were commended by [[God]] but judged unrighteous by human standards, highlighting the difference between human judgment and God's judgment, with Augustine noting that a thing that was formerly lawful may become unlawful after a time.

- Furthermore, the quotes express a sense of grief and darkness that can come from attachment to perishable things, with Augustine stating that his heart was utterly darkened, and whatever he beheld was death, and that he felt his life was a horror to him because he would not live halved after the death of someone he loved.

- The text advises to praise God for the physical objects that please us, but to turn our love back to their creator, and to sacrifice our own desires and imaginations to God, with [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]] noting that if physical objects please us, we should praise God for them, but turn back our love to their creator.

- Finally, the quotes touch on the idea of spiritual interpretation and the importance of understanding [[Religious text | scripture]] in a non-literal sense, with Augustine stating that he could see that certain passages in scripture were to be resolved by the mysteries of spiritual interpretation, and that he panted after honours, gains, and marriage, but God mocked him.

Spiritual Journey and the Platonists

- The speaker reflects on their spiritual journey, expressing a desire to cleave unto [[God]] and abandon worldly hopes, recognizing that the joy of a faithful hope lies beyond the vanity of earthly pleasures.

- The speaker describes themselves as being stuck in a state of spiritual stagnation, greedy for present goods and pleasures, but ultimately recognizing the emptiness and distraction of these desires, and the need to seek after God and the blessed life.

- Through their reading of the Platonists, the speaker comes to understand the concept of incorporeal truth and the nature of God, recognizing that God is infinite, unchanging, and the source of all other things, and that the body and earthly desires can weigh down the soul and mind.

- The speaker also reflects on the concept of iniquity, defining it as a perversion of the will, turned aside from God towards lower things, and resulting in a state of being bloated with external goods and casting away one's inmost treasure.

- The speaker mentions the influence of certain individuals, including Simplicianus, who congratulated them on not falling into the trap of false philosophical teachings, and the discovery of the life of Anthony, which had a profound impact on them, inspiring them to marvel and be inflamed by the example of this spiritual leader.

- Throughout the passage, the speaker expresses a sense of longing and striving for a deeper connection with God, and a recognition of the need to overcome the distractions and temptations of the world in order to achieve a state of spiritual wholeness and peace, guided by the wisdom of God and the examples of spiritual leaders like Anthony.

Inner Struggle with Worldly Desires

- The narrator of the text, likely [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]], is reflecting on his inner struggle to dedicate his life to a higher power, and is torn between his worldly desires and his spiritual aspirations, as he meditated on embracing a life of solitude and giving up his worldly employment to seek a higher power alone.
- The narrator questions the motivations behind his actions and the actions of others, wondering what the ultimate goal is in their pursuits, and whether their hopes and desires are driven by a desire for earthly power and prestige, or by a desire to serve a higher purpose, as he asks "what goal are we seeking in all these toils of ours?"
- The narrator describes the conflict within himself as a struggle between his "two wills", one carnal and one spiritual, which tears his soul apart, and notes that this inner conflict is a result of the "law of sin" which is the "tyranny of habit" that holds the mind captive, even against its will.
- The narrator also reflects on the fleeting nature of earthly desires and the impermanence of worldly power, and notes that even those who seem to have attained great success and prestige are not immune to the dangers and uncertainties of life, as he says "how frail, how beset with peril, is that pride".
- The narrator finds inspiration in the example of others, such as Victorinus, who have returned to a life of faith and devotion, and is drawn to the idea of seeking a higher truth and a deeper understanding of the divine, as he says "are there not many men who, out of a deeper pit of darkness than that of Victorinus, return to thee".
- The narrator's reading of [[Bible | the Bible]], particularly the words "put on [[God | the Lord]] [[Jesus | Jesus Christ]], and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof", serves as a catalyst for his introspection and spiritual searching, and he begins to see the world and himself in a new light, as he says "I saw thy invisibility invisibilia tua understood by means of the things that are made".
- Despite his desire to dedicate his life to a higher power, the narrator is held back by his own weaknesses and habits, and struggles to break free from the "baggage of the world" that weighs him down, as he says "thus with the baggage of the world...my musings on you were like the efforts of those who desire to awake...yet a man will usually defer shaking off his drowsiness when there is heavy lethargy in his limbs".
- The narrator's journey is marked by a sense of longing and yearning for a deeper connection with the divine, and a recognition of the difficulties and challenges that must be overcome in order to achieve this goal, as he says "how high art Thou in the highest, and how deep in the deepest! and Thou never departest, and we scarcely (with great difficulty) return to Thee".

Inspiration from a Friend's Spiritual Dedication

- The narrator of the text is expressing their increasing anxiety and desire

to follow a path of wisdom and spirituality, as they reflect on their daily life and interactions with others, including a friend who has dedicated themselves to serving God.

- The friend is described as someone who has avoided distractions and reserved time to pursue wisdom, and has become a "friend of [[God]]" by turning their eyes to a book and being changed inwardly, where God saw the transformation and stripped their mind of worldly concerns.
- The narrator is inspired by the friend's example and the story of two other individuals who have also dedicated themselves to serving God, including two men who have forsaken their earthly possessions and followed God, and their affianced brides who have dedicated their virginity to God.
- The narrator reflects on their own life and realizes that they have been deferring their pursuit of wisdom and spirituality for many years, despite being stirred to an earnest love of wisdom by reading Cicero's Hortensius at the age of 19.
- The narrator expresses frustration and shame at their own lack of progress on the spiritual path, comparing themselves to others who have made greater strides, including the "unlearned" who have "taken heaven by force" and those who have received "wings to fly away" from the burdens of the world.
- The narrator acknowledges the disconnect between their mind and body, recognizing that their mind commands their body to take action, but they have not yet taken the desired steps to follow a spiritual path, and are instead torn between their desire for spiritual growth and their attachment to worldly concerns.
- The narrator's inner turmoil is evident as they describe themselves as "mad for health, and dying for life", and physically express their frustration by tearing their hair out, striking their forehead, and clasping their knee, yet still failing to take the desired action to follow a spiritual path.

The Soul's Relationship with God and Nothingness

- The text discusses the concept of the soul and its relationship with [[God]], highlighting the idea that the mind is torn between earthly desires and eternal delights, as stated in the quote "The mind commands itself and is resisted."
- The City of God is referenced, and the ideas of [[Socrates]] and [[Plato]] are mentioned, with Socrates believing that the causes of things can only be comprehended by a purified mind, and Plato entertaining the idea of God as the cause of [[Existence | existence]] and the ultimate reason for understanding.
- The text also quotes [[Miguel de Molinos]], who describes the mystical experience of nothingness, which he believes is the means by which the Lord works wonders in the soul, and that embracing this nothingness and misery is the path to attaining a state of mind reformed and achieving the greatest good.
- The idea of mortifying passions and denying oneself is also discussed, as

a necessary step towards achieving spiritual perfection, with the ultimate goal of reaching a state of nothingness, where one despises and abhors their own worthlessness and is able to quietly endure spiritual martyrdoms and inward torments.

- The text emphasizes the importance of seeking God and discovering Him in order to attain truth, security, and righteousness, as stated in the quote "For if man has been so created as to attain, through that which is most excellent in him, to that which excels all things,--that is, to the one true and absolutely good God, without whom no nature exists, no doctrine instructs, no exercise profits."

- The text emphasizes the importance of embracing nothingness and humility in order to draw closer to God, stating that one must die to their self and keep themselves in a state of nothingness to bar the door against everything that is not God.

- It highlights the idea that God's omnipotence can produce wonders from the chaos of nothingness, and that if one keeps their soul quiet and resigned, [[God]] can work wonders within them, creating a deep knowledge of themselves and a sense of humility and lowliness.

- The text also notes that many souls become troubled and disquieted when they suffer, but that it is necessary to believe that these afflictions are a manifestation of God's divine mercy, which humbles and tries the soul, allowing it to have a deeper understanding of itself.

- It quotes [[St. Bernard (dog breed) | St. Bernard]] and St. Bonaventure, who teach that one should not form conceptions of God or try to understand the divine presence through rational means, but rather should approach God with silent and humble resignation, allowing oneself to be guided by God's hand.

- The text encourages the reader to be silent, believe, suffer, and have patience, as these qualities are essential for drawing near to God and understanding the divine law, and that even when one feels idle and unproductive, they are actually preparing their heart for God's wisdom to be imprinted upon it.

- Ultimately, the text suggests that the goal of the spiritual journey is to reach a state of holy hatred of oneself, where one is overwhelmed and drowned in the depth of their own nothingness, and that this state is necessary for true happiness and wisdom.

Deep Prayer, Humility, and the Bitter Sea of Sorrows

- The text describes a state of deep prayer and humility, where the soul is resigned and silent in the presence of [[God]], without desiring to understand or know anything, and this state is necessary for the soul to be whole and at peace.

- However, this state is often accompanied by a "bitter sea of sorrows" and internal and external pains, as well as attacks from invisible enemies, including scruples, lascivious suggestions, and unclean thoughts, which can lead to feelings of lukewarmness, loathing, and weariness for the things of

God.

- The soul may experience a great desertion, feeling as though there is no more a God for them, and that they are incapable of entertaining a good desire, but this is a necessary step for purging the soul and making it know its own misery and the annihilation of all passions and disordinate appetites.
- According to the text, God allows these temptations and sufferings to humble the soul and make it know its own misery, and that the Lord's goodness is what humbles the soul's pride and gives it the most wholesome medicine through these horrible temptations.
- The text also quotes [[Isaiah]], stating that all righteousness is as filthy rags, and that it is necessary for them to be purified with the fire of tribulation and temptation, so that they may be clean, pure, perfect, and agreeable to the eyes of God.
- Many souls are troubled and disquieted by these painful torments, but it is necessary to believe that it is the goodness of divine mercy that is at work, and that the soul must have a deep knowledge of itself, reckoning itself the worst and most impious of all souls, and hence abhor itself with humility and lowliness.
- The text emphasizes the importance of internal recollection, faith, and silence in the presence of [[God]], and that the soul must shut up its senses and trust God with all the care of its welfare, minding nothing of the affairs of this life.
- Finally, the text warns that as soon as the soul gives itself up to its Lord in this inward way, all hell will conspire against it, but that the best thing to do is to sweetly despise the troublesome thoughts and make an offering to God of the trouble, rather than trying to resist them, which can leave the soul in greater anxiety.

Perseverance in Prayer and Internal Recollection

- The text emphasizes the importance of perseverance in prayer and internal recollection, even when one feels dryness and a lack of spiritual sentiment, as this is a crucial aspect of spiritual growth and development, and it is through patience and faith that the soul can be internally improved.
- It highlights that the fruit of true prayer does not consist in enjoying spiritual lights or knowledge, but rather in enduring with patience and persevering in faith and silence, believing that one is in the Lord's presence, and turning to him with tranquillity and purity of mind.
- The text notes that nature can be an enemy to the spirit, causing torment and uneasiness during spiritual exercises, particularly in prayer, but that these challenges can be overcome with patience and perseverance, and that they can ultimately lead to vast spiritual advantages.
- It warns against giving up on prayer and internal recollection due to a lack of pleasure or sensible sentiments, as this can be a result of the devil's attempts to discomfit the soul and alienate it from internal conversation with [[God]], and instead encourages believers to persevere and

trust in God's presence.

- The text cites the example of Mother Francesca Lopez of Valenza, a religious of the third Order of St. Francis, who was given guidance by the Lord on the importance of internal recollection, and notes that even a short period of prayer with recollection and humility can be more beneficial to the soul than extended periods of penitential exercises.
- It also quotes a saying that the more the soul rejoices in sensible love, the less delight God has in it, and that the less the soul rejoices in sensible love, the more God delights in it, highlighting the importance of detachment from worldly pleasures in order to deepen one's spiritual life.
- Finally, the text concludes by addressing the common error that internal recollection or prayer of rest involves a lack of activity on the part of the faculties, and instead emphasizes the importance of active perseverance and faith in order to achieve true spiritual growth and development.

Mystical Silence and Internal Recollection

- The text discusses the concept of mystical silence and internal recollection, highlighting that it is a state where the soul operates by simple apprehension, enlightened by holy Faith, and aided by the divine gifts of the [[Holy Spirit | holy Spirit]], as opposed to relying on memory, judgment, or discourse.
- According to the text, achieving this perfect way of praying requires penetrating into internal recollection and mystical silence, stripping oneself of imperfect reflection and sensible pleasure, as noted by the author, and also referenced by Underhill.
- The text emphasizes that engaging in daily occupations such as studying, reading, preaching, eating, and doing business does not divert one from this internal recollection, as long as these activities are conformed to God's will and pleasure, as stated by St. Thomas.
- The author stresses the importance of not speaking, not desiring, and not thinking in order to arrive at the true and perfect mystical silence, where [[God]] communicates with the soul and teaches it perfect and exalted wisdom.
- It is noted that forsaking the world and renouncing one's own desires and all things created is not enough to gain this treasure, but rather one must wean oneself from all desires and thoughts and rest in mystical silence to allow God to communicate and unite with the soul.
- The text also warns against putting on a garb of disordinate desire, vain complacency, and industrious affection, which are enemies to the peace of the soul, and instead recommends loving one's neighbor without detriment to one's own spiritual good, as advised by [[Paul the Apostle | St. Paul]] in I Tim. 4.
- The author advises taking heed to oneself and one's doctrine, continuing in rest, disengaged, and wholly resigned to the divine will and pleasure, and notes that one pure act of internal resignation is more worth than a hundred thousand exercises for one's own will.

- The text concludes by emphasizing the importance of keeping quiet and resigned in one's own nothingness, even if endowed with internal light and experience, until God calls one for the good of souls, and notes that internal light and experience are gifts not communicated to all souls, but only to abstracted and resigned souls who have advanced to perfect annihilation.

True Zeal and Spiritual Guidance

- The text emphasizes the importance of a true zeal, springing from pure love and a purged Soul, in governing works, as any actions not driven by this zeal will lead to vanity, self-love, and spiritual pride, ultimately cloaking the Soul with these negative qualities.
- It warns against self-confident individuals who undertake ministry based on their own judgment and opinion, as they may end up filled with self-conceit, despite potentially doing some good for their neighbors, and instead advises being quiet, resigned, and renouncing one's own judgment and desire to find true happiness and perfection.
- The text also highlights the rarity of individuals capable of guiding others through the mystical way, with quotes from notable figures such as Father [[John the Apostle | John]] Davila, [[Francis de Sales | St. Francis of Sales]], and the illuminated Thauler, who estimate that only one in a thousand, one in ten thousand, or one in a hundred thousand people can be considered an expert Master of Spirit, underscoring the scarcity of true spiritual guides.
- The text discusses the importance of humility and self-denial in receiving spiritual guidance, stating that many souls deprive themselves of the infinite benefit of this precious food by judging that they are not sufficiently prepared, and that a pure end and a true desire of doing the Will of [[God]] are necessary to come with confidence.
- It highlights the need for a spiritual director to live disinterestedly and seek purely the Glory of God, rather than their own proper esteem, and that a sign of a spiritual master's disinterest is their lack of displeasure when a soul leaves them for another guide.
- The text also emphasizes the importance of rejecting worldly honour, self-conceit, spiritual ambition, and the desire for fame, and instead, turning away from these inclinations and focusing on internal solitude and the employment of souls.
- It notes that many souls have fallen into the precipice of self-love and indiscreet penances, imagining that sanctity only consists in rigid penances, and that subjecting one's judgment to spiritual fathers is necessary to avoid this mistake.
- The text encourages the reader to approach spiritual guidance with humility, a desire to do the Divine Will, and with the leave of their confessor, and to endeavor to live with greater purity and self-denial, with an universal taking of oneself off from the world, and with an inward mortification and continual retirement.

- It also expresses the idea that the divine love suffers itself to be mean in the incomprehensible mystery of uniting with a miserable creature, and that the reader should humble themselves to the very depth of nothing, confess their unworthiness, and acknowledge the wonders of the divine love.
- The text concludes by expressing a desire to be united with the Sovereign Lord, to die to the world, and to remain united with Him, and to be kept back from returning to imperfect liberty.

Balance in Spiritual Practices and Internal Mortification

- The text discusses the importance of balance in spiritual practices, warning against excessive use of penances and severities, which can lead to bitterness of heart and pride, as noted by Kempis, and instead advocating for a more moderate approach that incorporates internal mortification and contemplation.
- According to the text, when the soul begins to retire from the world and vice, it should initially use rigorous practices such as haircloth, fasting, and discipline to tame the body, but as it enters the way of the spirit, these corporal chastisements should be relaxed, allowing the soul to focus on internal mortification and spiritual growth.
- The text also describes the characteristics of those who have achieved a high level of spiritual maturity, including a loving fear of [[God]], contempt of themselves, and true hope in God, as well as a willingness to humble themselves and enter into interior retirement with quiet and silence to know God and receive his divine influence.
- The text quotes Saint Bernard, stating that to serve God is to do good and suffer evil, and that those who seek perfection through sweetness and consolation are mistaken, instead emphasizing the importance of desiring no other consolation from God than to end one's life in true obedience and subjection, as exemplified by Christ's way of self-denial and taking up the cross.
- The text notes that few souls arrive at this happy state of spiritual maturity, as few are willing to embrace contempt, suffer themselves to be refined and purified, and undergo the death of the senses, which is a high grace that none deserves, but is instead a sovereign gift from God.

Suffering and Conformity to Christ

- The section from the document 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' discusses the importance of suffering and conformity to [[Jesus | Christ]] in achieving union with God, as referenced in Matth. 24: 26, emphasizing that a soul must be willing to follow Christ in the way of suffering to be united with him.
- The text highlights the value of humility, poverty, and affliction, stating that being subdued and subject, being poor, being despised, and being afflicted can ultimately lead to great happiness, riches, honor, and comfort, as well as a deeper understanding and knowledge of [[God]].
- The author notes that all knowledge and union with God arise from suffering, which is the truest proof of love, and that a soul must learn to

be constant and quiet in the face of tribulation, allowing itself to be washed with the bitter waters of affliction to find true riches in heavenly gifts.

- The text also describes the intense emotional and spiritual struggles that a soul may experience during this process, including feelings of darkness, anguish, contradictions, and vehement temptations, as well as a sense of being forlorn and subject to passions of impatience, anger, and despair.
- Despite these challenges, the author encourages the soul to remain constant, quiet, and resigned, with a true knowledge of its own nothingness, trusting that God's omnipotence can produce wonders in the soul created in his own image and likeness.

Suffering, Tribulation, and Self-Denial for Spiritual Growth

- The section concludes by emphasizing the importance of silence, suffering, and patience, stating that all good consists in being silent, suffering, and holding patience with rest and resignation, and that true luck consists not in enjoying, but in suffering with quiet and resignation, as noted by St.
- The text from 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' discusses the importance of suffering, tribulation, and self-denial in achieving spiritual growth and perfection, as emphasized by various mystic divines and authors, including [[Teresa of Ávila | Teresa]] and Tolstoy.
- According to the text, pure and perfect love consists in the cross, self-denial, and resignation, and it is necessary to endure spiritual martyrdom and painful torment to arrive at a state of high contemplation and loving union with [[God]].
- The text also highlights the need for mortification, humility, and a mean opinion of oneself, and notes that many people who pray do not truly experience God because they are not mortified or attentive to Him after their prayers.
- Additionally, the text quotes Tolstoy as saying that the infallible rule for spiritual growth is to have no care about worldly life, and that a person who lives according to this doctrine must be ready to endure violence, hunger, and cold at any moment.
- The text also references the idea that tribulation and suffering are necessary for a person's life to be acceptable to God, and that those who are perfect ought to always be desirous of dying and suffering, as stated by authors such as [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], who notes that God will sometimes allow faults and weaknesses in order to help the soul understand its own misery and obtain precious peace.
- The text ultimately emphasizes the importance of resignation, courage, and gallantry in the face of suffering and tribulation, and encourages the reader to strive for a state of perfection and transformation with God, even if it requires dying to oneself and one's desires.
- The quotes from various authors, including [[Teresa of Ávila | Teresa]], Tolstoy, and Kierkegaard, provide a comprehensive view of the spiritual journey and the importance of embracing suffering and self-denial in order

to achieve true spiritual growth and union with God.

- The text concludes by emphasizing the need for self-awareness, humility, and a willingness to suffer and die to oneself in order to achieve true perfection and transformation with [[God]], and notes that this is a difficult and rare achievement, as there are very few people in the world who have attained this state of perfection.

The Doctrine of Jesus vs. the Doctrine of the World

- The doctrine of [[Jesus]] is considered preferable to the doctrine of the world because it acknowledges the impossibility of making life secure and the inevitability of death, as noted by Tillich and Spong, allowing individuals to focus on the true meaning of life rather than struggling for security.
- According to [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], a life focused on individual happiness is meaningless and will end in a stupid death, highlighting the absurdity of an isolated personal life and the importance of seeking a deeper purpose.
- The pursuit of wealth and material possessions is a never-ending cycle that ultimately leads to unhappiness and overwork, as people constantly strive to acquire more and better things, from basic necessities like overcoats and watches to luxurious items like houses and carriages.
- True contentment is rare, and even when it does occur, it is often motivated by a desire to accumulate more wealth and security rather than a genuine desire to simplify life, as observed in the rarity of finding someone who is content with their lot in life.
- The speaker reflects on their own life and the lives of those around them, noting that people often prioritize worldly desires like ambition, power, and gain over virtuous qualities, and that those who prioritize virtue are often met with contempt and ridicule.
- The speaker also notes that they were once unaware of the emptiness of their own life and the lives of those around them, comparing their social interactions to the scenes in a madhouse, where people talk and interact without truly listening or understanding each other.
- The speaker's life was initially distracted from the search for meaning by the comforts of family life, but they eventually returned to questioning the purpose of life and the distinction between right and wrong, recognizing that these questions are fundamental and essential to living a meaningful life.
- Ultimately, the speaker comes to realize that they must understand the reasons for their own actions and the meaning of life in order to truly live, and that this understanding is essential for moving forward and finding purpose.

Existential Crisis and the Search for Meaning

- The narrator of the text describes a state of existential crisis, where they feel a lack of purpose and meaning in life, and are unable to find

fulfillment or satisfaction in anything, knowing that ultimately, everything will lead to suffering and death.

- The narrator expresses a sense of desperation and hopelessness, feeling like they are being dragged down into the grave by an irresistible force, and are astonished that they had not realized the futility of life sooner, given the inevitability of illness, death, and the transience of human [[Existence | existence]].
- The narrator questions the point of living, loving, and caring for others, including their family, as they believe that everyone is subject to the same conditions of suffering and death, and that it is cruel and absurd to bring others into this reality, only to have them suffer the same fate.
- The narrator feels lost and trapped, like a man in a wood, trying to find a way out, but knowing that every step can only lead them further astray, and are unable to find comfort or solace in their own reflection or in the world around them.
- The narrator criticizes the branches of knowledge, such as physiology, psychology, biology, and sociology, for their inability to provide a solution to the problem of life, and for their obscurity, pretension, and contradictions, and notes that other branches of knowledge, while impressive in their own right, do not address the fundamental questions of human existence.
- The narrator's attitude is one of embracing the inevitable, rather than adopting a Stoic or Vivekananda-like perspective, and they seem to be searching for a way to come to terms with the reality of their own mortality and the meaninglessness of life.

Philosophical Nihilism and the Meaninglessness of Life

- The section from the document 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' discusses the meaning of life and the search for answers to fundamental questions, with various philosophers and thinkers, including [[Socrates]], Schopenhauer, [[Solomon]], and [[The Buddha | Buddha]], concluding that life is without inherent meaning.
- These thinkers suggest that the pursuit of knowledge and understanding ultimately leads to the realization that life is fleeting and that death is inevitable, with Socrates stating that "we approach truth only in the proportion as we are farther from life."
- The quotes from these philosophers emphasize the idea that life is filled with suffering, illness, old age, and death, and that it is ultimately "vanity and worthless," as stated by Solomon, with Schopenhauer describing life as "an evil, and a passage from it into nothingness" being the only good.
- The text also references the idea that the search for meaning and purpose in life is often confuted by the reality of human [[Existence | existence]], with the author noting that even the most powerful intellects among mankind have come to the same conclusion, that life is without inherent meaning.
- The philosophers mentioned in the text, including Socrates, Schopenhauer,

Solomon, and Buddha, all seem to agree that the only absolute knowledge man can possess is that life is without a meaning, and that death is the ultimate reality, with Buddha stating that "to live, knowing that sufferings, illness, old age, and death are inevitable, is not possible; we must get rid of life, get rid of the possibility of living."

- The text also touches on the idea that the human desire to find meaning and purpose in life is often at odds with the reality of human existence, with the author noting that even the most wise and intelligent individuals are not immune to the suffering and despair that comes with the realization that life is without inherent meaning.

- The quotes from these philosophers are presented as a testament to the idea that the search for meaning and purpose in life is ultimately a futile endeavor, and that the only truth that can be known with certainty is that life is fleeting and that death is inevitable, with the author concluding that "all was vanity" and that "death was better than life."

Confronting the Meaninglessness of Life and the Role of Faith

- The author of the text describes a painful and disgusting position they found themselves in, but chose not to end their life despite having the ability to do so, due to a vague understanding that their ideas about the meaninglessness of life might be incorrect.

- The author reflects on the human tendency to live despite the possibility of death, and questions why people like themselves and philosophers such as Schopenhauer, who understand the emptiness and evil of life, continue to live, suggesting that perhaps they alone are wise enough to see the truth.

- The author comes to realize that their previous way of life, focused on satisfying earthly desires, had hidden the truth from them, and that to truly live, one must renounce worldly pleasures, be humble, and endure, as guided by a higher power or faith.

- The author acknowledges that reason alone did not bring them to their current understanding, but rather an instinctive consciousness of life, which they describe as an embracing of the terrifying mystery of [[Existence | existence]], and notes that faith is not about believing without evidence, but about embracing this mystery.

- The author observes that people around them, including those of similar social standing, either do not understand the question of the meaning of life, or understand it but are too weak to act on it, and that science provides no satisfactory answers to this question, often simply stating "identity" as a response.

- The author references the idea that even wise people, like fools, will eventually die, and that if a person lives, they must believe in something, whether it be the finite or the infinite, and that without faith, there is no life.

- The author also references the thoughts of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who would rather die than give up his metaphysical beliefs, and notes that they themselves had to re-examine their past beliefs and

explanations for the meaning of life, finding them to be worthless in the light of reason.

- The author concludes that their own position, as well as that of Schopenhauer and others, is foolish, as they understand life to be evil, but continue to live, highlighting the contradictions and paradoxes of human existence, and marking a turning point in their own journey, as they begin to leave behind renunciation and despair.

Nihilism and the Teachings of Jesus

- The section from the document 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' discusses the concept of [[Nihilism | nihilism]] and its potential conclusion, as well as the importance of following the teachings of [[Jesus]], particularly the commandment "Resist not evil", which is seen as the central point of his doctrine.

- The text includes quotes from various sources, including Leo Tolstoy's "A Letter to a Hindu" and "My Religion", which highlight the importance of renouncing violence and following the divine law, even if it means suffering and persecution.

- Tolstoy's writings express his struggle to understand and follow Jesus' teachings, including the idea of turning the other cheek and loving one's enemies, and how this requires a complete renunciation of worldly advantages and a willingness to bear all consequences.

- The text also references Friedrich Nietzsche's "AntiChrist", which emphasizes the importance of the commandment "Resist not evil" as a rule whose practice is obligatory, and how it is the key to understanding Jesus' doctrine.

- The author of the document notes the similarities between Tolstoy and Nietzsche's ideas, despite their differing perspectives, and how they both highlight the importance of following Jesus' teachings in a genuine and radical way, rather than just paying lip service to them through rituals and ceremonies.

- The section concludes by emphasizing the need to choose between following the divine law, as taught by Jesus, and the human law, which often prioritizes self-interest and violence, and how this choice has significant implications for one's life and actions.

The Divine Law vs. Human Law

- The doctrine of [[Jesus]] is directed at denouncing all human errors, including those related to the Church, State, Culture, Science, Art, and Civilization, which are considered empty idols that lead to man's perdition, as emphasized by Jesus, the Hebrew prophets, [[John the Apostle | John]] the Baptist, and other true sages of the world.

- The concept of "Resist not evil" is questioned, and it is argued that the lives of those who do not show love and compassion for their fellow humans, and instead prepare punishments and calamities for them, are indeed vain, highlighting the importance of living a life filled with love and

compassion.

- Jesus is seen as one who continued and amplified the absolute divine law, rather than just a prophet revealing a new law, and his teachings are considered to be a continuation of the principles of God, the [[God | creator]] of the world and of man, as understood by the author.
- The author reflects on the results of teaching children to value simplicity and humility, rather than encouraging them to indulge in sensuous desires and materialistic pursuits, and suggests that this approach could lead to a more meaningful and fulfilling life.
- The author notes that both believers and sceptics have a false conception of life, with the sceptics believing in the idea of a life of happiness as a fundamental right, and that this misconception rests on the same foundation as the beliefs of the theologians, highlighting the need for a deeper understanding of life and its purpose.
- The concept of "saving" one's life, according to the doctrine of Jesus, is linked to the idea of understanding the personal life of man, as discussed by prophets, [[Solomon]], [[The Buddha | Buddha]], and other wise men, and the author suggests that people often avoid thinking about this theme due to the fear of confronting the abyss of death, as noted by [[Blaise Pascal | Pascal]].
- The author uses the example of people who perished in tragic events, such as the circus at Berditchef or on the slopes of Koukouyef, to illustrate the idea that death is inevitable and can happen to anyone, and that it is essential to find what is imperishable in life and to repent and arouse oneself to avoid a similar fate, as emphasized by [[Jesus]] and other spiritual leaders.

The Inevitability of Death and the Pursuit of the Imperishable

- The text discusses the inevitability of death and the futility of attempting to escape or guard against it, as death is always present and can occur at any moment, whether through sudden events or gradual decline, and it is pointless to try to avoid it by all imaginable means.
- The quotes highlight the idea that laboring to achieve worldly prosperity is a futile endeavor, as death will always intervene before one can complete their goals, and that the pursuit of personal desires and the accumulation of wealth is ultimately meaningless in the face of mortality.
- The text also explores the difference between the Jewish conception of life, which views mortal life as the true and supreme good, and the [[Christianity | Christian]] perspective, which sees mortal life as a fallen life that is not the true life, and how Jesus founded his doctrine of eternal life on the Hebraic conception of life, emphasizing the importance of renouncing personal desires and merging with the universal life of humanity.
- The doctrine of [[Jesus]] is contrasted with the idea of individual immortality of the soul, which is seen as affirming the continuance of individuality forever, rather than encouraging renunciation of the personal

life, and the text suggests that the pursuit of eternal felicity or punishment in the afterlife is not a central tenet of Jesus' teachings, but rather a distraction from the true message of renunciation and service to humanity.

- The text references various philosophers and spiritual leaders, including [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Tillich, and Eckhart, and notes that the idea of living for something beyond personal desires is a universal theme, with people seeking meaning and purpose in life by living for their children, families, nations, or humanity, and that this desire for transcendence is a fundamental aspect of human nature.
- The author argues that the only path to salvation is through the renunciation of personal will and the alignment with the will of [[God]], and that this is the true meaning of life and death, as revealed by Jesus and echoed in other spiritual traditions, such as the Upanishads, which emphasize the importance of selflessness and service to others.

Living a Meaningful Life and Death Through the Doctrine of Jesus

- The author reflects on their life, considering it a "stupendous farce" that will end in a "stupid death," but believes that their life and death will have meaning for themselves and others if they follow the doctrine of Jesus.
- The author criticizes those who pray, observe sacraments, and give charity, but do not truly follow Jesus' example, as their actions are inspired by a different doctrine, and notes that people are stuck in earthly thinking, prioritizing faith over works and quietism, as mentioned in the Upanishads.
- The author argues that people hide from their true situation and do not desire to know the truth that governs human life, instead living without truth and being convinced that seeking truth is a useless occupation, using examples such as the Cobra at the door and falling from the Empire State building to illustrate the need for diligence.
- The author questions why life is full of evil and wrongdoing, and whether it is possible to abstain from participating in it, but is told that the only option is to save one's soul for the future life, and that trying to live well and help others is seen as a temptation of pride.
- The author notes that they are faced with a contradiction, where they are told to either believe in and obey the powers that be, or to renounce the world and take refuge in a convent or monastery, but believes that this is not in line with the spirit of [[Christianity]] or the [[Judaism | Jewish religion]].
- The author criticizes the tradition that it is better for a person to retire from the world than to expose themselves to temptations, and argues that this belief is foreign to the spirit of Christianity and the Jewish religion.
- The author highlights the suffering endured by men in following the doctrine of the world, but notes that there is little suffering in behalf of

the doctrine of [[Jesus]], and argues that the fear of suffering is a puerile excuse that shows how little people really know of Jesus' doctrine.

- The author concludes that Jesus' command to take up the cross and follow him is not being followed, and that people are not taking his doctrine seriously, instead using the fear of suffering as an excuse not to follow his teachings.

Following the Teachings of Jesus vs. Societal Values

- The text discusses the idea that people are more willing to follow orders from a man in a uniform, even if it leads to suffering and death, than to follow the teachings of Jesus, which emphasize the importance of living a simple and humble life.

- It highlights the societal values of power, domination, and abundance of worldly goods, and how these values are in contrast to the teachings of Jesus, which state that true happiness does not depend on fortune and power, and that the rich cannot enter into the kingdom of [[God]].

- The text also critiques the idea that people can make their [[Existence | existence]] secure through material possessions and worldly pursuits, comparing it to the act of an ostrich hiding its head in the sand, and instead suggests that the doctrine of [[Jesus]], which teaches that life is insecure and that one must be ready to die at any moment, is preferable.

- The author describes the benefits of living a poor and simple life, as taught by Jesus, including living in the country, working outdoors, and being free from the burdens of material wealth, and argues that this type of life is a condition for following the doctrine of Jesus and entering into the kingdom of God.

- The text references the writings of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] and the concept of Maya, and also mentions the idea that one can still practice the teachings of Jesus, such as the five commandments, regardless of their beliefs in other religious doctrines.

- Ultimately, the text emphasizes the importance of living a life of non-enmity and non-resistance, as taught by Jesus, and suggests that this is the key to true happiness and fulfillment.

Personal Transformation and the Importance of Humility

- The author of the text has undergone a significant transformation in their perspective, where they can no longer foster anger and pride, and instead recognize their own guilt and seek to make peace with others, as they have come to understand that their previous judgmental and angry attitude towards others was the principal source of their disagreements.

- The author notes that they have been influenced by the ideas of Vivekananda and Tolstoy, who emphasize the importance of humility and recognizing the value of all individuals, and as a result, they have begun to remedy their judgmental attitude and now believe that true greatness lies in humility and serving others.

- The author's newfound understanding has led them to reevaluate their

values, and they now consider things like honors, glory, wealth, and luxury to be wrong and despicable, while simplicity, poverty, and humility have become right and important to them, and they can no longer support anything that lifts them above or separates them from others.

- The author has also come to realize that the distinction they once made between their own people and those of other countries is destructive to their welfare, and that true welfare is only possible when they recognize their fellowship with the whole world, leading them to believe in the importance of cosmopolitanism and the renunciation of nationality.

- As a result of this transformation, the author's views on issues like love of country, military exploits, and self-defense have changed, and they now believe that even in the face of evil or foreign invasion, they should not defend themselves, but instead recognize that their enemies are also human beings who are seeking salvation, and that the evil they do can ultimately only be good for the author.

Chesterton's Orthodoxy: Wonder and Welcome

- The section from the document 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' features quotes from GK Chesterton's book 'Orthodoxy', which emphasizes the importance of revealing the truth and doing good to all people, regardless of their nationality or background.

- According to Chesterton, a person who is dependent on the luxuries of life is corrupt, and the main problem is finding a balance between being astonished at the world and feeling at home in it, which can be achieved by combining a sense of wonder with a sense of welcome.

- Chesterton also discusses the idea that people need a life of practical romance, which involves a combination of something strange and something secure, and that this can be achieved by viewing the world with a sense of wonder and an idea of welcome.

- He criticizes thoroughly worldly people for not understanding the world and relying on cynical maxims that are not true, and argues that [[Christianity]] is not about being comfortable or cowardly, but rather about finding a balance between admiring nature and not imitating it.

- Chesterton also explores the relationship between [[God]] and humanity, and argues that if it is true that people can feel happiness in doing harmful things, then the religious philosopher must either deny the [[Existence | existence]] of God or the present union between God and humanity.

- Additionally, he discusses the role of imagination and reason in human thought, arguing that imagination does not breed insanity, but rather reason can lead to madness, and that creative artists are less likely to go mad than mathematicians or chess-players.

- Overall, the quotes from Chesterton's 'Orthodoxy' emphasize the importance of finding a balance between wonder and welcome, and of living a life that is guided by a sense of morality and a connection to something greater than oneself.

Mental Exhaustion and the Flaws of Materialism

- The text discusses the concept of mental exhaustion and the characteristics of individuals with mental disorders, noting that they often possess a "horrible clarity of detail" and are able to argue with great logic, unhampered by emotions or a sense of humor, which can make them more convincing in arguments than people with good judgment.
- The author criticizes the modern scientific society for discouraging people from thinking about death and for promoting a materialistic worldview that has an "insane simplicity" and fails to account for the complexities and mysteries of human experience, leaving out important aspects of life such as hope, courage, and poetry.
- The text argues that materialism can lead to a loss of humanity, destroying essential human qualities like kindness, hope, and courage, and that it can result in fatalism, which is not a liberating force, and instead, it takes away people's freedom to make choices and act with purpose.
- The author suggests that reason, when used without a connection to the world and human experience, can be a sign of insanity, and that the modern critics of religious authority are misguided in their attacks, as they fail to recognize the importance of faith and the role of religious authority in protecting humanity from the dangers of unchecked reason and the void of [[Nihilism | nihilism]].
- The text also touches on the idea that reason itself is a matter of faith, and that it is impossible to separate reason from faith, as even the most skeptical individuals must have faith in the idea that their thoughts have some relation to [[Existence | reality]], and that the concept of evolution, when taken to its logical conclusion, can be seen as an attack on rationalism rather than religion.

The Importance of Objective Truth and the Dangers of Unchecked Reason

- The text discusses the idea that if everything is in a state of flux and there are no fixed things, then it is impossible to think or have a standard to measure improvement, as argued by philosophers like Nietzsche, who claimed that what was once considered good is now considered evil.
- The author agrees with pragmatists that apparent objective truth is not the only consideration, but argues that a belief in objective truth is necessary for the human mind, and that without it, one cannot rebel against anything or have a standard to measure improvement.
- The author criticizes philosophers like Schopenhauer, Tolstoy, Nietzsche, and Shaw, arguing that their philosophies lead to mental helplessness and madness, and that they have lost their right to rebel against anything by rebelling against everything.
- The author also discusses the idea that some philosophers, like Tolstoy and Nietzsche, have noble qualities, but that these qualities are often undermined by their own actions or inconsistencies, and that historical

figures like [[Joan of Arc]] embody the best qualities of these philosophers, such as a reverence for the poor and a willingness to take action.

- The author argues that there is no inconsistency between having love for humanity and having hatred for inhumanity, and that the idea that the laws of nature are unalterable is a form of magic that is not supported by scientific evidence, but rather by sentimental associations.
- The author concludes that the ordinary scientific man is a sentimentalist who is swept away by associations, rather than being guided by reason or objective truth, and that this approach to science and philosophy is flawed and leads to mental helplessness and madness.

The Human Condition and the Need for Both Optimism and Pessimism

- The author reflects on the human condition, noting that people have forgotten who they are and that understanding the self is more challenging than understanding the cosmos, as expressed in the phrase "thou shalt love [[God | the Lord]] thy God; but thou shalt not know thyself."
- The author discusses the concept of modern thought contradicting the basic creed of his boyhood, which was founded on fairy tales that taught him to be modest and submit to the limitations of a wild and delightful world.
- The author argues that a person must be able to both love and hate the world, being a fanatical pessimist and optimist at the same time, in order to truly change it, and that this combination is what makes a rational optimist fail and an irrational optimist succeed.
- The author criticizes the idea that certain creeds or philosophies can only be held in specific ages or times, stating that this is an "imbecile habit" and that truth is timeless, as evidenced by the statement "you might as well say that a certain philosophy can be believed on Mondays, but cannot be believed on Tuesdays."
- The author recounts their personal journey from calling themselves an optimist to realizing that [[Christianity | Christian]] optimism is based on the fact that humans do not fit into the world, and that this realization brought them true happiness, as they learned that "man is a monstrosity" and that this unnaturalness is what makes life poetic.
- The author notes that Christianity is often misunderstood as being either too pessimistic or too optimistic, but that it actually combines furious opposites, such as the desire for life and the acceptance of death, as seen in the statement "he must seek his life in a spirit of furious indifference to it; he must desire life like water and yet drink death like wine."
- The author highlights the example of St. Francis and St. Jerome, who were able to express both extreme optimism and pessimism because they kept their passions in balance, with St. Francis being a "shouting optimist" and St. Jerome being able to "paint the world blacker than Schopenhauer."

Spiritual Detachment and the Dark Night of the Soul

- The provided text discusses the concept of spirituality and the importance

of detaching oneself from worldly desires, with quotes from St. [[John of the Cross]] and references to his work "The [[Dark Night of the Soul]]", emphasizing that a person who is dependent on the luxuries of life is corrupt in various aspects.

- According to the text, the doctrine of [[Jesus | Christ]] teaches contempt for all worldly things, allowing individuals to receive the reward of the [[Holy Spirit | Spirit of God]], and it is stated that the earth and all its contents are nothing compared to [[God]], and that the heavens' lights are perfect darkness in comparison.

- The text also explains that when an individual's affections are set on created things, they are considered nothing before God, and that love for anything other than God can be seen as wronging Him, highlighting the idea that created things hinder transformation in God and are less than nothing, much like darkness is the absence of light.

- Additionally, the text notes that once an individual has experienced the sweetness of the Spirit, worldly desires become unappealing, and that God leads people to perfection through their natural constitution, guiding them from what is vile and exterior to what is interior and noble.

- The text reiterates the idea that all created things, along with the affections bestowed upon them, are nothing and hinder transformation in God, using the analogy of darkness and light to illustrate that the soul focused on creatures will never comprehend God, emphasizing the need for spiritual detachment and focus on the divine.

- The text emphasizes that until one's soul is purged of worldly affections, they will not be able to possess God in this life through the pure transformation of love, nor in the afterlife through the beatific vision, as stated in the document 'Journal314_Quotes_Final'.

- According to the text, the whole creation is nothing compared to the infinite Being of God, and a soul whose affections are set on created things is considered nothing and even less than nothing before God, because love begets equality and likeness to the object beloved.

- The text highlights that all the goodness, sweetness, and riches of the world are, in comparison to God's infinite goodness, supreme wickedness, pain, and poverty, and that a soul whose affections are set on these things is wicked, poor, and mean in God's sight.

- The Divine Wisdom, as mentioned in the text, bewails men because they make themselves loathsome and poor through their love for worldly things, and [[God]] addresses those who set their affections on these things, calling them little ones and bidding them to understand subtlety and take notice of the great things of God.

- The text emphasizes that it is supreme ignorance to think that one can attain union with God without casting away the desire for natural and supernatural things, and that the doctrine of [[Jesus | Christ]] is contempt of all things, so that one may receive the reward of the [[Holy Spirit | Spirit of God]].

- The text also notes that many spiritual persons seek spiritual food but

are not content with God alone, instead intermingling carnal and earthly satisfactions, and that they are losing the good things of the Spirit because they will not raise their desires above trifles.

- Ultimately, the text concludes that the journey to union with God must be a perpetual struggle with one's desires, and that the more earnest one is, the sooner they will reach the summit, as guided by the principles outlined in 'Journal314_Quotes_Final'.

Spiritual Transformation and the Cessation of Desires

- The attainment of spiritual perfection requires the cessation of desires, as virtue is not fully acquired until the soul is empty, detached, and purified from all desire, according to the principles outlined in the text.

- To reach the state of perfection, one must fulfill the three commandments of Jacob, which involve casting away earthly affections and attachments, purifying oneself from the impressions of desires, and changing one's garments, symbolizing a transformation of the soul.

- The process of spiritual transformation is facilitated by [[God]], who infuses the soul with a new understanding and love of God, detaching the will from old desires and human satisfactions, and bringing the soul into a state of new knowledge and deep delight.

- The ultimate goal of this spiritual journey is to become an altar of God, where the soul offers the sacrifice of praise and love, and God alone dwells, as stated in the text, "It is the will of God that the soul should be empty of all created things, so that it may become a fitting altar of His Majesty."

Faith as a Dark Night and the Path to Union with God

- The text also highlights the importance of faith, which is described as a dark night that gives light to the soul, and the role of darkness in illuminating the soul, as expressed in the phrase "the night of faith shall guide me," emphasizing the idea that faith is a means of enlightenment, even in the midst of darkness.

- The teaching presented in the text suggests that the faith, which is obscure and dark, can illuminate the soul and guide it towards union with God, as stated in the Psalmist's words, "Night shall be my light in my pleasures," referring to the pleasures of pure contemplation and union with God.

- The soul must be in darkness to have light and journey on the spiritual road, as stated in "The Abyss of Faith", and this darkness refers to the soul's detachment from its own understanding, sense, imagination, judgment, and will, in order to be rightly guided by faith.

- The soul is greatly embarrassed on the road to Divine union when it leans on its own understanding, sense, imagination, judgment, or will, and it must release and detach itself from these habits to attain the divine union.

- To achieve this union, the soul must be detached from all created things, actions, and capabilities of its own, including its own understanding,

taste, and feeling, so that it can attain to the receiving of God's likeness and be transformed in Him.

- The more the soul cleaves to created things and relies on its own strength, the less it is disposed for this union, because it does not completely resign itself into the hands of [[God]], and the fitting disposition for this union is pureness and love, which is perfect resignation and complete detachment from all things for God alone.

Degrees of Union with God and the Role of Detachment

- Every soul can attain to this union according to its measure, but not all attain to it in an equal degree, and the degree of union is determined by God, with some souls being more advanced than others, yet all equally satisfied according to their dispositions and knowledge of God.
- The soul that does not attain to the degree of purity corresponding with the light and vocation it has received from God will never obtain true peace and contentment, because it has not attained to the detachment and emptiness of its powers required for this pure union.
- Faith, Hope, and Charity all play a role in this process, with Faith deriving certainty but not clearness, Hope rendering the memory empty and bringing darkness, and Charity emptying the will of all things and compelling us to love God above all, which requires withdrawing our affections from every object to fix them wholly upon God.
- [[Jesus | Christ]] our Lord has stated that to be His disciple, one must renounce all possessions, and that virtues can bring darkness to the soul if they are not accompanied by detachment from created things, as He says, "Every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth cannot be My disciple."
- Our Lord also teaches that the path to life is narrow and few find it, and that to enter this path, one must constrain themselves and detach their will from worldly things, loving [[God]] above all, which is referred to as the night of the senses, as He says, "How narrow is the gate and strait is the way that leadeth to life; and few there are that find it."
- Many people mistakenly believe that simply retiring from the world, correcting excesses, or practicing virtue and mortification is enough, but true detachment and emptiness of spirit, as recommended by our Saviour, require a deeper level of self-denial and poverty, which involves annihilating oneself and purging away all self-seeking in spiritual things.
- Those who do not rise to this level of detachment often seek only delights and sweet communications with God, rather than true self-denial and detachment of spirit, which is actually a form of spiritual gluttony, and they render themselves spiritually enemies of the cross of Christ.
- True spirituality, on the other hand, seeks bitterness rather than sweetness in God, inclines to suffering more than consolation, and seeks to be in want of everything for God, rather than possessing, and this is to follow Christ and deny self, as opposed to seeking oneself in God, which is the opposite of love.

- To seek God in Himself is to be willingly deprived of comfort and refreshment from God, and to incline oneself to will and choose whatever is most disagreeable for Christ's sake, whether proceeding from God or the world, which is to love God, and this is the true meaning of carrying the cross and seeking refreshment and sweetness in it.
- Ultimately, giving oneself up to suffer for Christ's sake and annihilating oneself utterly is the sum and root of all virtue, and without this exercise, all other efforts will be profitless, notwithstanding great meditations and communications, as our Saviour teaches us to seek and endure the cross in everything for God.

The Imitation of Christ and the Limits of Human Understanding

- The attainment of spiritual progress and union with [[God]] is only possible through [[The Imitation of Christ | the imitation of Christ]], and this union is the highest and noblest state that can be achieved in life, as stated in the quote "there is no progress but in the imitation of [[Jesus | Christ]]".
- According to the text, many people who consider themselves friends of Jesus Christ are actually seeking their own comfort and satisfaction in Him, rather than His sufferings and death, and therefore do not truly know Him, as mentioned by the statement "I see that Jesus Christ is but little known by those who consider themselves His friends".
- The intellect and human understanding are limited and cannot fully comprehend God, and in fact, the more one tries to understand God through human knowledge, the further they will be from true enlightenment, as explained by the quote "all that the intellect may comprehend; all that the will may be satisfied with; and all that the imagination may conceive, is most unlike unto God, and most disproportionate to Him".
- The concept of Mystical Theology, also referred to as the secret Wisdom of God, is a way of contemplating God that involves making oneself blind to human understanding and covering oneself with darkness, in order to receive the Divine enlightening, as described by S. Dionysius as a "ray of darkness".
- Aristotle's comparison of the human intellect to the eyes of a bat in relation to the sun is used to illustrate the idea that human understanding is blinded by the greater Light of God, and that faith is the only means by which God manifests Himself to the soul, as stated by the quote "[[Aristotle]] says, that as the eyes of the bat are with regard to the sun, which wholly blinds them, so is our intellect with regard to the greater Light of God which is to us perfect darkness".
- The text also warns against relying on outward bodily senses, such as seeing, hearing, and smelling, as a means of spiritual guidance, as these can be deceptive and lead to error, presumption, and vanity, and instead emphasizes the importance of faith and interior spiritual experiences, as mentioned by the statement "the bodily sense is as ignorant of spiritual things, as a beast of the field is of the things of reason".

- S. Paul's statement "He that cometh to [[God]] must believe that He is" is referenced to emphasize the importance of faith in approaching God, and the need to walk by faith, with one's understanding in darkness, in order to be united with God, as explained by the quote "the greater the faith of the soul the more is that soul united to God".
- The text concludes that true spiritual growth and union with God can only be achieved by letting go of human understanding and relying on faith, and that this is the only means by which God manifests Himself to the soul in the Divine light, which surpasses all human understanding.

The Dangers of Materialism and the Importance of Interior Quiet

- The soul is often led astray by its focus on material and palpable things, which excite the senses and cause it to abandon the guidance of Faith in its pursuit of union with God, as it mistakenly believes that the light from these things is a means to achieve its desired union.
- The spiritual man must reject all apprehensions and corporeal satisfactions that are liable to the exterior senses, and instead learn to abide with attention in loving waiting upon God in a state of quiet, giving no heed to imagination or its operations.
- It is sad to see individuals disturb their own souls when they are at peace in interior quiet, where [[God]] fills them with refreshment and peace, by drawing them away to outward things and compelling them to abandon their goal.
- To achieve perfect union with God, the soul must be careful not to lean upon imaginary visions, forms, figures, and particular intelligible objects, as these things can never serve as proportionate or proximate means towards this end and are instead an obstacle in the way.
- Some spiritual persons fall into spiritual wrath when they become irritated at the sins of others and keep watch on them with uneasy zeal, which is contrary to spiritual meekness, as noted by various philosophers and theologians such as [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], Nietzsche, Tolstoy, and Seraphim.
- These individuals have gained some degree of spiritual strength in God, enabling them to refrain from creature desires and suffer a light burden and aridity without turning back, but they are still susceptible to the [[Dark Night of the Soul]], where God turns their light into darkness and leaves them in a state of uncertainty and dryness.
- In this state, they are unable to advance in meditation and find insipidity and bitterness in spiritual things and good exercises, which is a challenging and transformative experience for the soul.

The Dark Night of the Soul and Spiritual Purgation

- The text describes a spiritual journey where [[God]] allows the soul to experience a "dark night" to quench its sensual desires and purge its attachment to created things, which can be a difficult and trying experience for the soul.

- According to the text, there are signs that indicate a soul is undergoing this purgation, including a lack of pleasure or consolation in the things of God, and a sense of backsliding or not serving God, despite a strong desire to do so.
- The soul is freed from its attachments and desires when it undergoes this night, which brings numerous blessings, including the acquisition of virtues, and allows the soul to journey towards eternal things, which is a great happiness and good fortune.
- The text quotes Our Saviour, referencing the strait gate and the narrow way that leads to life, and explains that the night of sense is the strait gate, where the soul detaches itself from sense and establishes itself in faith, in order to journey towards God in pure faith.
- The text also describes a second night, the night of the spirit, which is darker and more trying than the night of sense, but has greater benefits, including the knowledge of oneself and one's misery, which is the first and principal benefit caused by this arid and dark night of contemplation.
- Ultimately, the soul emerges from this journey with a deeper understanding of its own misery and a greater sense of humility, having been stripped of its attachments and desires, and having been purified through the experience of the dark night.

Self-Knowledge and the Illuminating Power of Darkness

- The soul, having donned the attire of aridity and abandonment, possesses a deeper understanding of itself through the virtue of self-knowledge, recognizing its own limitations and inability to act on its own, and it is in this state that [[God]] enlightens the soul, granting it knowledge of its lowliness and the greatness of God.
- In this dark night of contemplation, God cleanses and frees the understanding, allowing the soul to comprehend the truth, and it is through this process that the soul is instructed supernaturally by God in His Divine wisdom, as stated by Isaias and experienced by [[David]], who found that the aridities and detachments of his sensual nature were the means to a knowledge of God.
- The dark night, with its aridities and voids, serves as a means to a knowledge of God and oneself, although it is only the beginning of a deeper understanding, and it is through this journey that the soul gains virtues, such as quietism and awareness of the Other, and is protected and delivered from all that is not God.
- As the soul approaches God, it feels a deeper sense of darkness and obscurity due to its own weakness, much like a man approaching the sun, and it is through this dark contemplation that the soul is cured of its afflictions and regains its health, which is God Himself, as described by the Prophet and experienced by those who undergo this spiritual transformation.
- The process of dark contemplation is likened to a cure, where the soul is restricted from worldly desires and appetites, and is instead nourished by a

delicate and moderate spiritual diet, allowing it to regain its health and approach God, as stated by Tillich, who says that doubt shows true faith, and as experienced by those who have undergone this spiritual journey.

The Transcendent Light of God and the Soul's Purgation

- The spiritual light of [[God]] is so immense and transcendent that it can blind and darken those who approach it, causing the soul to feel keenly the shadow of death, lamentations, and pains of hell, as it feels chastised and unworthy of God.
- In this state of purgative contemplation, the soul experiences a profound emptiness and impoverishment of temporal, natural, and spiritual goods, and is surrounded by miseries of imperfection, aridity, and emptiness, leading to a consciousness of its own deepest poverty and wretchedness.
- God brings about this dark contemplation to purge the soul of its affections and imperfect habits, annihilating and emptying it of all that is imperfect, much like fire consumes the mouldiness and rust of metal, and this process is a most afflictive suffering for the soul.
- The soul's suffering is so great that it feels as though it is being suspended in the air, unable to breathe, and it believes that its director's advice contains no remedy for its troubles, leaving it feeling powerless and imprisoned in a dark dungeon, unable to move or see.
- The soul's only hope for relief is for the Lord to completely purge it in the manner that He wills, and until then, no means or remedy is of any service or profit, and the purgation will be of greater or less severity and duration in proportion to the degree of union of love that God's mercy grants it.
- The Prophet describes this process as a necessary destruction of the soul's passions and imperfections, which have become natural to it, in order for it to be purified and annihilated, and ultimately become one with the [[Holy Spirit | Spirit of God]], according to the degree of union of love that is granted to it.

The Dark Night of the Soul and the Abyss of Faith

- The text discusses the concept of a "dark night" where the soul is unable to raise its affection or mind to [[God]] and is hindered by distractions and forgetfulness, as described in Chapter 7 of the second book, and this experience is characterized by a sense of emptiness and disconnection from God.
- According to Divine [[Religious text | Scripture]], this journey to God is secret and different from human knowledge, and it involves losing oneself and becoming nothing, which is often considered the worst thing possible, but is actually a necessary step towards union with God.
- The text also quotes Fr. [[Seraphim Rose]], who emphasizes that everything in life is temporary and only God remains, and that humans have a choice to follow the way of the world or to choose God, and that the Christian's "[[Nihilism | nihilism]]" is one that proceeds from abundance, where God is

all and the world is nothing.

- Fr. Seraphim Rose also notes that the [[Christianity | Christian]] can enjoy the goods of the world while realizing their evanescence, but they are not needful, and that those who do not live in [[Jesus | Christ]] already live in the Abyss and cannot fill their emptiness with worldly treasures, and that men often learn through pain and suffering rather than pleasure and happiness.

- The text references various spiritual leaders and philosophers, including Jeremias, Tillich, and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and highlights the importance of letting go of particular forms and conceptions to be united with God, as stated in the quote "As God is not comprehended under any form, or likeness, or particular conception, so the soul also, if it is to be united to Him, must not be under the power of any particular form or conception".

- The concept of pleasure and happiness can lead individuals to become satisfied with the world as it is, whereas pain and suffering can drive them to seek a more profound happiness beyond the limitations of the world, as noted in the discussion of the human experience.

- The idea of a Nihilist universe, as described by philosophers like Nietzsche, is one where there is no absolute truth, no right or wrong, and no point of orientation, leaving individuals without a sense of direction or purpose.

- The Nihilist perspective is characterized by a sense of meaninglessness and futility, with some individuals being aware of this emptiness and being driven to madness and suicide, while others lead seemingly meaningless lives without being aware of it, highlighting the complexities of the human condition.

The Relativity of Truth and the Metaphysical First Principle

- The notion that all truth is empirical or relative is self-contradictory, as statements like these are themselves not empirical but metaphysical, and absolute statements cannot be relative, as argued in the critique of relativism.

- The scientific faith, which is based on principles like the coherence and uniformity of nature, is founded on absolute truth, and if these principles are not rooted in truth, they can be no more than unverifiable probabilities, as discussed in the examination of the foundations of scientific knowledge.

- The concept of ultimate truth, whether conceived as the [[Christianity | Christian]] [[God]] or the ultimate coherence of things, is a metaphysical first principle that collapses the theory of the relativity of truth, revealing it as a self-contradictory absolute, as explained in the discussion of metaphysics and epistemology.

- Many individuals in academic institutions, government, science, and humanist intellectual circles do not fully believe in absolute truth, or more particularly in Christian Truth, but still use the name of truth,

having reinterpreted it to fit a quasi-Nihilist content, as observed in the analysis of contemporary intellectual trends.

- The atheist arguments against the concept of God are considered irrefutable but irrelevant, as the god being argued against is, in fact, no god at all, being uninterested in man and powerless to act in the world, as noted in the critique of atheistic perspectives.
- Nietzsche is mentioned as a prophet who knew everything about [[Nihilism]] except its ultimate meaning, highlighting the complexities and nuances of his philosophical thought, and the Realists of the free world are criticized for transforming and simplifying the [[Christian tradition]] into a system for promoting worldly progress, as discussed in the examination of the relationship between philosophy and culture.

Liberalism, Nihilism, and the Christian Order

- The foundation of Liberalism is flawed, as it is built upon the concept of Man rather than a higher deity, and this foundation is also embraced by Nihilist atheism, which explicitly formulates the implicit ideas present in Liberalism, as noted by philosophers such as Tillich and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- In the [[Christianity | Christian]] order, all activities are judged in the light of the afterlife, which is eternal, and any compromise between Christian terminology and worldliness is unconvincing to both Orthodox Christians and consistent Nihilists, as seen in the works of Dostoyevsky and the character of Ivan Karamazov.
- The Liberal belief that one can lead a civilized life without immortality is flawed, as it ultimately leads to the conclusion that "all things are lawful" and that life has no ultimate consequence, a idea also explored by Nietzsche, and this worldview is in stark contrast to the views of Tolstoy on anarchy.
- Nihilist rule, or Anarchy, is a government established by men with no higher aim than earthly happiness, and the Revolution that accompanies it will not rest until it ends in a totalitarian Kingdom of this world, highlighting the dangers of a system that rejects Divine Truth.
- The Liberal is more interested in worldly ends and is indifferent to the [[Existence | reality]] of Heaven and Hell, conceiving of [[God]] as a vague impersonal power, and is unable or unwilling to think in terms of ultimate things, as they are consumed by their pursuit of culture, learning, business, or comfort.
- The search for absolute truth is absent in the Liberal, who is overburdened by worldly interests and ideas, and is unwilling to give them up for the humility and poverty that are the marks of a genuine seeker after truth, as noted by philosophers such as [[Socrates]] and [[Jesus | Jesus Christ]], who is referred to as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life".
- The academic system that promotes skepticism and irrelevance of Christian Truth is corrupting, and the evil lies primarily in the system itself, which is founded upon untruth, rather than in the individual professors who preach

it, highlighting the need for a re-evaluation of the values and principles that underlie our understanding of the world.

Nihilism, Realism, and the Rejection of Christian Truth

- The concept of [[Nihilism]] is being redefined in the context of the text, where a True Nihilist is described as someone who respects nothing, rejects authority, and accepts only scientific truth, reducing everything to the physical and material.
- In contrast to Liberalism, the Realist worldview is characterized by open atheism, materialism, and self-interest, with a rejection of idealism and abstraction in favor of concrete and factual knowledge, which is referred to as "scientism" rather than legitimate science.
- The text references various thinkers, including [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Tolstoy, and Underhill, and argues that those who take scientific knowledge as the only truth and deny what lies above it can be considered Nihilists in the exact sense of the term.
- The author criticizes the "pretended humility" of Realist scholars and scientists, who are seen as usurping the throne of [[God]] with their emphasis on scientific research over Divine Revelation, and notes that the difference between Realism and Liberalism lies not in doctrine, but in emphasis and motivation.
- The text also discusses the philosophy of Nietzsche, who rebelled against a diluted form of [[Christianity]] that had been influenced by Liberal humanism, and argues that both Christians and Realists share a love of truth and a passion for getting to the root of things, but differ in their approach and ultimate goals.
- Ultimately, the author suggests that the Realist worldview, which is characterized by a fanatical devotion to the material world, is a form of Nihilism that mistakes Christianity for another form of idealism and rejects it in favor of a solely materialistic perspective.

Materialism, Atheism, and Vitalism

- The text discusses the concepts of materialism, atheism, and realism, stating that even the most charitable views cannot recognize a love of truth in these ideologies, as they have become misguided and ultimately lead to the negation of truth.
- The motives of realists are deemed impure, as they prioritize worldly values over truth, and their actions serve to annihilate higher truths concerning [[God]] and the spiritual life, with logical [[Positivism | positivism]] being a key aspect of this movement.
- The text also explores the concept of vitalism, which is characterized by a rejection of [[Christianity | Christian]] truth and a pseudo-spiritual pretension, often manifesting as a "new spirituality" that is actually a form of [[Nihilism | nihilism]] that attaches itself to healthy organisms to destroy them from within.
- Various forms of popular unrest are identified, including the passion for

movement and speed, the appeal of television and cinema, the primitive character of popular music, and the cult of physical prowess in sport, all of which serve as escapes from the emptiness and meaninglessness that result from abandoning God and revealed truth.

- The cult of "awareness" and "realization" is also seen as a form of vitalism, present in the devotees of modern art, [[Zen]] [[Buddhism]], and the supposed "religious experience" stimulated by drugs, although the author notes that these experiences may be steps towards symbolism and a connection to God.

- The text concludes by highlighting the need to define vitalism and expose its nihilist character, which is distinct from liberalism and realism, as it undermines truth through indifference and attacks it in the name of a lesser, partial truth, with key figures such as W.B. Yeats, Huxley, and Tyndall being mentioned as examples of these ideologies.

Vitalism, Nihilism, and the Death of God

- The concept of Vitalism is discussed as having no relation to truth, instead focusing on a different order, and is revealed to be infecting humanism with its strange axiom that the "love of truth" is never-ending because it can never be fulfilled, leading to a constant search for something that may never be found.

- This attitude is criticized as a way for unbelievers to hide their abandonment of truth behind noble rhetoric, and is linked to the ideas of Nietzsche, who said that to be creative, one must first destroy and smash accepted values, which is a key principle of [[Nihilism]].

- The "death of [[God]]" is explained as a loss of faith in God and the Divine Truth that once sustained humanity, leading to an apostasy to worldliness and a sense of uncertainty and anxiety, which is characterized as an abyss of nothingness.

- The idea of Nihilism is explored as a state of being without truth, where the individual has lost faith in God and the Divine, and is left with a sense of nothingness and uncertainty, which is self-contradictory and suicidal.

- The question is raised as to what the god of the Nihilist is, and it is suggested that it is nothingness itself, the "corpse" of the "dead God", which weighs upon the Nihilist and leads to a sense of incoherence and absurdity in the world.

- The text also references Nietzsche's famous statement "God is dead" and explores the implications of this idea, including the feeling of emptiness and disorientation that comes with it, as expressed in the passage "We have killed him, you and I, we are all his murderers".

- The summary concludes by highlighting the idea that humanity is left without a sense of direction or purpose, feverishly pursuing the work of "progress" without a clear reason or sense of direction, and instead straying through infinite nothingness.

Nihilism as a Spiritual Disorder

- The concept of [[Nihilism | nihilism]] is described as a spiritual disorder that can only be overcome by spiritual means, and it is described as the absolute despotism of worldliness where all human energy is devoted to worldly concerns, with the ultimate goal of production and happiness in this world.
- The idea of seeking [[Christianity | Christian]] ideals in this world is considered idolatry and of [[The Antichrist (book) | the Antichrist]], and it is emphasized that the end of the Church is the transformation of men, not society, with the Church being in society only because men are in society.
- The importance of spiritual means in overcoming nihilism is highlighted, and it is noted that there has been no attempt to apply such means in the contemporary world, leading to a sense of emptiness and desperation, as expressed in the personal feelings of unworthiness and the search for meaning.
- The concept of "total peace" is considered a utopian ideal, and it is questioned whether it is possible to achieve, with the distinction between earthly and otherworldly goals being emphasized, as seen in the ideas of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- The idea of "Christian action" is discussed, with the emphasis being on the importance of living a Christian life in all aspects, including social and political responsibilities, but not with the goal of creating a Christian society, rather as a natural result of Christian men living in society, as seen in the words of [[Thomas Merton]].
- The personal and direct act of helping others, such as feeding a hungry brother, is considered a Christian act and a preaching of the Kingdom, done for personal reasons and as a recognition of the brother as [[Jesus | Christ]], highlighting the importance of individual actions and relationships in living a Christian life.

Christian Action and the True Kingdom of God

- The text discusses the concept of a "political crusade" to abolish social evils, such as hunger, and how it can be wrapped in a cloak of "idealism" that prioritizes worldly ideals over spiritual truth, as noted by Vivekananda in [[Karma yoga | Karma Yoga]].
- The author cautions that even sincere Christians participating in such crusades may be obscuring inward truth by emphasizing outward ideals, and that this approach can lead to a denial of the true Kingdom of [[God]], which is not of this world.
- The author quotes [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who emphasizes the importance of Karma Yoga, and notes that the emphasis on "action" and "projects" can detract from the acceptance of God's will and the realization of inward truth.
- The central need of our time, according to the author, is not political commitments or social responsibilities, but rather prayer, penance, fasting,

and preaching of the true Kingdom, as emphasized by [[Jesus | Christ]], and that the only "social responsibility" of a [[Christianity | Christian]] is to live a life of faith for their own salvation and as an example to others.

- The author criticizes a "new Christianity" that prioritizes outward results and seeks to build a Kingdom in the world, rather than seeking the true Kingdom of God, which is not of this world, and notes that Christianity can only be "successful" if it renounces the true Kingdom and seeks to build a worldly kingdom instead.

- The author argues that true Christianity is not about achieving outward success or transforming the world, but rather about living a life of faith and allowing God's will to be done, and that even charitable actions, such as building hospitals and bridges, can be misguided if they are motivated by a desire for worldly results rather than a desire to serve God.

The Earthly Kingdom vs. Christ's Kingdom

- The modern age is focused on building the "Earthly Kingdom", a goal that is not Christian, and many Christians, including Catholics and Orthodox, are unintentionally contributing to its construction with the best of intentions.

- The author criticizes "prophets" like Berdyaev and Tolstoy, who are considered semi- or pseudo-Christians, and believes that true Christians must prioritize the central problem of humanity, which is death and its answer, [[Jesus | Christ]], over worldly concerns.

- The author argues that Christians who genuinely believe in and live according to their faith, including the concept of an "other world", have something new and meaningful to offer contemporary society, which is often disillusioned with [[Christianity]] due to its perceived hypocrisy and idealism.

- The involvement of Christians in social idealism projects is seen as a compromise, where they prioritize building a worldly kingdom over Christ's Kingdom, which is a refinement of the "Grand Inquisitor" concept from Dostoyevsky's work.

- The author emphasizes the need for Christians to focus on spiritual disciplines like prayer, penance, and fasting, rather than getting caught up in worldly activities, and to live their lives with a deep love for [[God]] and zeal for His Kingdom, which would naturally lead to positive outcomes.

- The author also references the writings of [[Teresa of Ávila | Theresa of Avila]], who describes a profound spiritual experience of being in a "world of light" and laments having to return to the worldly realm after experiencing heavenly conversation, highlighting the contrast between the spiritual and worldly realms.

Spiritual Longing and the Search for God

- The given text appears to be a collection of quotes and passages from various spiritual and philosophical sources, including [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]], Tolstoy, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Huxley, and

Teresa, that express a sense of disillusionment and discontent with the worldly life and a yearning for a deeper connection with God.

- The quotes convey a sense of frustration and desperation, with the speakers feeling trapped in a "prison-house life" filled with "vexation, and disappointment, and manifold trouble", and seeking solace in the idea of turning inward to find God and true fulfillment.
- The passages also emphasize the importance of humility, compassion, and selflessness, with Teresa's conception of humility being particularly strict, and the need to let go of worldly attachments and desires in order to attain true blessedness and union with [[God]].
- The text also touches on the idea of original sin and its consequences, with the speaker reflecting on the "great hurt" it has done to humanity, leading to a sense of alienation and inability to connect with God, and acknowledging that it is not just Adam's sin, but also one's own sin that contributes to this state.
- The quotes from various sources, including Solitude, suggest that one can find God and experience divine comfort and guidance by settling oneself in solitude and turning inward, rather than seeking external sources of comfort or trying to escape the difficulties of life.
- The overall tone of the text is one of spiritual longing and seeking, with the speakers expressing a deep desire to transcend the limitations and sufferings of the worldly life and to experience a more profound and meaningful connection with God.

Love and Fear of God, Prayer, and Self-Reflection

- The document 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' contains quotes that express a deep sense of love and fear of [[God]], as well as a desire to improve one's spiritual life through prayer and self-reflection, with the speaker acknowledging their own imperfections and limitations.
- The quotes discuss the importance of proper preparation for prayer, including meditation on the life and death of the Lord, one's own death, and the last day, in order to reach a state of spiritual enlightenment and connection with God.
- The speaker describes the experience of mystical prayer, where one feels engulfed in God's presence and enjoys a sense of love and rapture without fully understanding it, and distinguishes this from ordinary prayer, where one is more aware of their thoughts and actions.
- The quotes also emphasize the importance of humility and self-mortification in attaining supernatural prayer, and advise against seeking advancement or worldly pleasures, instead encouraging a life of simplicity and detachment.
- The speaker notes that suffering can be a form of acceptable prayer, and that true humility involves recognizing one's own unworthiness and being content with the smallest things, and warns against the dangers of worldly attachments, including relationships with relatives, which can hinder one's spiritual growth.

- The document concludes with a note of caution, advising that the contents should only be shared with spiritual persons of exceptional experience and prudence, as they may be misunderstood or misinterpreted by others, and the speaker expresses humility and self-doubt about their own ability to write about such profound spiritual matters.

Detachment from Worldly Things and Self-Indulgence

- The section from the document 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' emphasizes the importance of detachment from worldly things and self-indulgence in order to truly serve [[God | the Lord]], with the ultimate goal of achieving freedom and perfection.
- It highlights that attachment to relatives and personal desires is a significant obstacle to overcome, and that one must constantly remind themselves of the vanity and fleeting nature of all things to withdraw their affections from trivial matters and fix them on what is eternal.
- The text also stresses the need to become detached from oneself and one's own pleasures, and to cease caring about personal comforts and desires, as this is the least that one can offer to God when beginning to serve Him truly.
- It warns against the dangers of desiring honor and precedence, as this can be fatal to perfection, and instead encourages individuals to focus on pleasing God and caring nothing for their own pleasure.
- The section also touches on the idea that true perfection can be achieved anywhere, not just in a religious life, but that worldly trappings can be a significant impediment to detachment and humility.
- Additionally, it cautions against a false sense of right and entitlement, encouraging individuals to flee from phrases such as "I had right on my side" and instead focus on surrendering to God's will, even in the face of suffering and insults.
- The text concludes by describing the life of a nun as a path to detachment and freedom, where one's sole pleasure lies in pleasing [[God]], and that this life can be a form of Heaven on earth for those who are truly committed to it.

Spiritual Growth and Detachment

- The text from 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' discusses the importance of spiritual growth and detachment from worldly things, with the author noting that it is possible to attain freedom and renunciation with the Lord's help, and that this process may be difficult at first but becomes a habit over time.
- The author encourages readers to show love to God and to consider the wonderful exchange of giving Him their love and receiving His, and to reflect on what they can do for God, their Maker, emphasizing that even small actions can be significant if done with the right intention.
- The author also warns against making excuses for not being perfect, such as saying "We are not angels" or "We are not saints", and instead encourages

readers to strive for perfection with God's help, and to trust that He will do His part if they do theirs.

- The text also touches on the idea that progress in spiritual growth is not measured by the number of consolations or favors received from [[God]], but rather by the desire to grow and to stimulate a longing for spiritual things, and that this longing can be so strong that it can lead to a kind of spiritual death, which is considered happy.

- The author references "The Interior Castle" and notes that the gate to entering this castle is prayer and meditation, and that it is important to understand one's own nature and the gifts of the soul, rather than just focusing on worldly things.

- The author emphasizes the importance of humility and recognizing one's own nothingness, and notes that while self-examination is important, it is also important not to get too caught up in it, and to instead focus on contemplating the Divinity, and that this will lead to greater spiritual growth.

- The author describes a soul that is worldly and preoccupied with earthly things, and notes that it is prevented from entering into itself and enjoying the beauties of the castle due to these distractions, and encourages readers to withdraw from unnecessary cares and business in order to enter a deeper state of spiritual growth, specifically the second mansion.

Perseverance, Faith, and the Struggle Between Worldly and Spiritual Desires

- The text from 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' discusses the importance of perseverance and faith in living a spiritual life, warning that without immediate action, one may lose what has already been gained and fall prey to the temptations and risks of the world.

- It highlights the struggle between worldly desires and spiritual aspirations, noting that people often trust more in what is visible than in the teachings of faith, which can lead to unhappiness and a sense of disconnection from one's true purpose.

- The text also emphasizes the value of associating with those who lead a spiritual life, as they can provide guidance and support, and encourages the reader to persevere in the right way and to withdraw from bad company.

- Quotes from various sources, including a nun and [[C. S. Lewis | C.S. Lewis]], are used to illustrate the idea that true happiness and fulfillment can only be found in suffering for [[Jesus | Christ]] and in living a life of faith and devotion.

- The text warns against complacency and overconfidence, even among those who have dedicated their lives to a spiritual path, citing the example of [[David]] and [[Solomon]] to illustrate the dangers of relying too heavily on one's own righteousness.

- C.S. Lewis is quoted as saying that the universe is either governed by an absolute goodness, in which case our efforts are hopeless because we are

enemies to that goodness, or it is not, in which case our efforts are also hopeless, highlighting the paradoxical nature of human [[Existence | existence]] and the need for faith and devotion.

- The text concludes by noting that [[God]] is both the only comfort and the supreme terror, and that meeting the gaze of absolute goodness is not something to be taken lightly, but rather something that should inspire a sense of awe and reverence.

The Human Condition, Reality, and Christianity

- The quotes in this section of 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' discuss the human condition, the nature of reality, and the role of [[Christianity]] in understanding and coping with the difficulties of life, with references to the ideas of psychedelics, Smith, and Huxley.

- The quotes suggest that people need to confront the harsh realities of life, including the possibility that our existence is desperate and that the truth is often terrifying, and that Christianity offers a way to understand and find comfort in the face of these realities, as noted by the author who says that the Christian religion is a thing of unspeakable comfort, but it begins in dismay.

- The quotes also touch on the idea that our perception of reality and human [[Existence | existence]] is flawed, with the author questioning the nature of consciousness and why we are able to see and understand the harsh realities of life, and also wondering if reality is meaningless to us, or if we are simply unable to understand it, as expressed in the phrase "if reality at its very root is so meaningless to us".

- The author further explores the idea that the pain and suffering we experience in life, including grief and agony, must eventually subside, but questions what will follow, suggesting that it may be a state of apathy or boredom, and poses the question of whether grief finally subsides into boredom tinged by faint nausea.

- The quotes also raise questions about the existence and nature of [[God]], with the author suggesting that if the tortures and suffering we experience are unnecessary, then either there is no God or God is bad, highlighting the difficulty of reconciling the existence of evil and suffering with the idea of a benevolent deity.

Despair and the Sickness Unto Death

- The concept of despair and [[The Sickness unto Death | the sickness unto death]] is discussed in the context of [[Christianity]], with quotes from Kierkegaard's "Sickness Unto Death" highlighting the importance of recognizing and embracing despair as a necessary step towards faith.

- According to [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], the natural man is ignorant of what the dreadful truly is, yet he shudders at things that are not dreadful, and he worships an idol as God, which is not the same as knowing the true God.

- The ability to despair is seen as an infinite advantage, as it allows

individuals to become eternally and decisively conscious of themselves as spirit, as self, and to become aware of the fact that there is a God, and that they exist before this God.

- Kierkegaard notes that everyone, to some extent, is in despair, with a disquietude, perturbation, or anxious dread of an unknown something, and that only true Christians are not in despair, as they have found a way to lose themselves in order to gain themselves through the aid of the eternal.
- The Christian perspective on despair and the sickness unto death is unique, as it views death as a transition unto life, and therefore, there is no earthly, bodily sickness unto death from a Christian standpoint.
- The sickness unto death is a concept that must be understood in a peculiar sense, as it refers to a spiritual sickness that can only be healed through Christianity, and the possibility of this sickness is seen as man's advantage over the beast, allowing for sharp observation and eventual healing.
- The quotes from Kierkegaard, as well as references to other thinkers such as Seraphim, Smith, and Huxley, emphasize the terrifying nature of the experience of despair, which is often referred to as "hell" by mystics and other spiritual leaders.
- Ultimately, the ability to despair and to become aware of [[The Sickness unto Death | the sickness unto death]] is seen as a necessary step towards faith and spiritual growth, and the Christian's advantage over the natural man lies in their ability to think dauntlessly of everything earthly and worldly, including death.

The Despair of Not Being Able to Die

- The concept of despair is discussed as a state where one hopes for death as a means of escape, but is unable to die, and this feeling of being trapped is considered one of the most awful experiences, as noted by Cioran and Tillich in their works, including "Courage" by Tillich on page 11.
- The idea that death is not the last thing, but rather a phase of a sickness, is explored, and it is suggested that true despair is the disconsolateness of not being able to die, which is a state of being trapped in a desperate situation.
- The view that despair is a necessary step towards spiritual growth and self-awareness is presented, and it is argued that this perspective is not gloomy or depressing, but rather uplifting, as it views every person as being capable of becoming spirit and being conscious of themselves as self.
- The importance of becoming eternally and decisively conscious of oneself as spirit is emphasized, and it is stated that a person's life is wasted if they never become aware of their [[Existence | existence]] before [[God]], which can only be attained through despair, as noted in the discussion of wasted lives.

Delusion, Despair, and Spiritual Awareness

- The tendency for people to erect grand systems and theories, but fail to

live according to them, is criticized, and it is noted that this can be a form of delusion, where individuals prioritize completing their systems over personal authenticity, as illustrated by the example of a thinker who builds an immense system but lives in a state of personal contradiction.

- The idea that one must first despair completely in order to break through to a deeper level of spiritual awareness is presented, and it is suggested that this process can be a transformative experience, as noted in the phrase "one would first have to despair completely, to despair out and out, and then the spirit-life might break through from the very bottom".

- The ability of people to live in a state of despair while still functioning in the temporal world is discussed, and it is noted that this can be a hidden and unnoticeable phenomenon, where individuals may appear to be living normal lives but lack a true sense of self, as described in the passage "he may nevertheless be perfectly well able to live on, to be a man, as it seems, to occupy himself with temporal things".

Spirituality, Despair, and the True Self

- The text discusses the concept of spirituality and the self, citing Vivekananda's statement that individuals who die without realizing their true Self as Spirit die like animals, and highlighting the idea that people who are not conscious of themselves as spirit or before [[God]] are in a state of despair, regardless of their accomplishments or enjoyment of life.

- According to the text, individuals who are not grounded in God and do not understand the source of their faculties may experience despair, but they often misidentify the cause of their despair, focusing on earthly losses rather than the loss of the eternal, and may claim to be in despair without truly understanding what it means.

- The text also explores the idea that people may go through life without developing a true self, instead imitating others and living a superficial [[Existence | existence]], and that even in the face of adversity, they may not develop a deeper understanding of themselves or their place in the world, as evidenced by the example of someone who claims to be a [[Christianity | Christian]] but does not truly become a self.

- Additionally, the text touches on the idea that individuals may feel a need for solitude, which is a vital necessity for them, and that this need can be intense, like the need for breathing or sleeping, suggesting that people may be drawn to spiritual or introspective pursuits as a way to connect with their true selves.

- The text critiques the superficiality of modern life, where people may be distracted by worldly concerns and diversions, and may not truly understand or practice their faith, instead going through the motions of religion without developing a deeper sense of self or spirituality, as exemplified by the image of someone holding their head under water or going mad for God.

The Importance of Solitude and the Self

- The text discusses the importance of solitude and the need for individuals

to have time alone, as it is a sign of a deeper nature and a measure of one's spirit, with those who are unable to be alone being compared to social birds that die without the presence of others.

- In contrast to ancient times and the Middle Ages, where solitude was respected, modern society shuns solitude and views it as a punishment, which is seen as a reflection of the fact that having spirit is considered a crime in today's age.

- The text also explores the concept of the self and how it can create illusions of virtue and self-control, but ultimately, these constructions are empty and lack substance, highlighting the complexity of human nature and the search for meaning.

- The author discusses the definition of faith as being grounded transparently in [[God]], and how this understanding of faith is central to the text, with faith being seen as the opposite of sin, rather than virtue, and morality being viewed as illusory and not concerned with actions.

- The text references the idea that sin is not the opposite of virtue, but rather a state of consciousness characterized by [[Nihilism | nihilism]] and the awareness of death, and that faith is the experience of living with this awareness, citing philosophers such as Tillich and concepts like Maya.

- The author also addresses criticisms of [[Christianity]], suggesting that people are offended by its teachings not because they are too dark or severe, but because they are too high and demanding, requiring individuals to strive for something extraordinary and to live in intimate relationship with God, as referenced by authors like Tolstoy and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].

- Ultimately, the text presents a vision of Christianity that is both challenging and profound, one that requires individuals to have the humble courage to believe in the extraordinary offer of help and relationship that God extends to humanity, and to dare to accept this offer, as emphasized by the author's discussion of faith and sin.

Christianity, Sin, and the Natural Man

- The natural man is often unable to comprehend or accept the extraordinary concepts of Christianity, such as the concept of sin, and therefore may be offended by them, as they cannot fit these ideas into their narrow-minded and comfortable worldview.

- According to the text, Christianity takes a significant step beyond the ordinary and into the absurd, which can lead to offense, and it is the concept of sin that distinguishes Christianity from paganism, with the natural man lacking the understanding of sin due to a lack of defiant will.

- The text also critiques individuals who claim to understand and appreciate noble concepts, such as self-denial and sacrificing one's life for the truth, but then proceed to act in contradiction to these values, demonstrating a lack of genuine understanding and a tendency to prioritize worldly gain and recognition.

- The figure of [[Socrates]] is referenced throughout the text, with the

author suggesting that the world needs a Socratic approach, which emphasizes ethical and religious understanding, rather than just aesthetic and metaphysical knowledge, and that many people labor to obscure their genuine understanding of what is right in order to avoid making difficult decisions.

- The author argues that true understanding of what is right is essential, and that without it, individuals may claim to have knowledge, but ultimately, they are just distracting themselves from the ethical and religious implications of their actions, and that a Socratic approach is necessary to cut through the confusion and distractions of the world.

Socratic Ignorance and the State of Christendom

- The Greek spirit lacked the courage to acknowledge that a person can knowingly do wrong, and Socrates intervened by stating that when a person does wrong, they have not understood what is right, as expressed in the quote "When a man does wrong, he has not understood what is right."
- The author emphasizes the importance of recognizing the limitations of human comprehension, particularly in relation to [[Christianity]], and asserts that it is a plain ethical duty to admit that one cannot fully comprehend it, which is a concept that the age and Christendom need, referred to as Socratic ignorance.
- The author highlights that Socratic ignorance is not just a lack of knowledge, but a kind of godly fear and divine worship, as Socrates' ignorance was rooted in reverence for the Deity and a recognition of the qualitative distinction between [[God]] and man.
- The author criticizes the state of Christendom, stating that it has become a wretched edition of Christianity, full of misprints and senseless omissions, and that it has taken Christianity's name in vain, with many people claiming to be Christians without truly understanding or living according to its principles.
- The author also discusses the rarity of true priests and the importance of continuity with respect to one's consciousness of oneself, noting that many people are only momentarily conscious and lack a deep understanding of themselves and their spirituality.

The Christian Concept of Sin and Self-Awareness

- The author explores the concept of sin in a [[Christianity | Christian]] context, stating that sin is a position that develops a more and more positive continuity, and that it is a paradox that no person can fully comprehend, requiring instead a deep sense of experience and faith, as expressed in the quote "Christianly sin is (and this has to be believed, it is indeed the paradox which no man can comprehend) -- sin is a position which out of itself develops a more and more positive ponerende continuity."
- The author references the idea that to sin is human, but to remain in sin is devilish, and suggests that this proverb must be understood in a different sense from a Christian perspective, emphasizing the importance of recognizing the gravity of sin and the need for repentance and faith.

- The concept of sin is often misunderstood as merely a series of individual acts, rather than a continuous state of being, with the particular sins being expressions of this ongoing state, similar to how the puffing of a locomotive is a visible manifestation of its underlying momentum.
- Most people live without a deep understanding of themselves and their own consistency, [[Existence | existing]] in a state of spiritual unawareness, where their lives are marked by a series of disconnected events and actions, without a sense of infinite self-consistency.
- The state of being in sin is what holds the individual together, giving them a sense of self and consistency, with particular new sins being merely expressions of this underlying state, rather than the cause of their sinfulness.

The Selfish Despairer and the Rejection of Forgiveness

- The selfish and ambitious nature of the individual is a key aspect of their sinfulness, with their despair and refusal to accept forgiveness being a form of rebellion against [[God]].
- The concept of God is often used carelessly and without true understanding, with many people paying lip service to their faith without genuinely grappling with its implications, and the despairer's rejection of God's forgiveness is a manifestation of their desire to be themselves, even if that means embracing their own torment and protesting against the existence of a higher power.
- The despairer's mindset is characterized by a desire to be themselves, even in their suffering, and to assert their individuality against the world, with their torment becoming a form of self-definition and a way to protest against the [[Existence | existence]] of a higher power.

The Despair of Weakness and the Comfort of Eternity

- The text discusses the concept of despair, particularly the despair of weakness, which is a passive suffering of the self, and how it differs from the despair of self-assertion, with the author noting that the weak despairer will not hear about the comfort of eternity because it would be the destruction of them as an objection against the whole of existence.
- The author explains that the despairer who is depicted in the text does not realize that they are in despair over the eternal, but rather thinks they are in despair over something earthly, and that this is because they ascribe great value to earthly things, which is precisely to despair about the eternal.
- The text also touches on the idea that most people have not become very deep in despair, and that they live in the category of immediacy, with only a few attempting to live in the category of spirit, and that those who do attempt to take the inward direction often veer away when they encounter the first difficulties.
- The author notes that despair over the earthly or something earthly is the most common sort of despair, especially in the second form of immediacy with

a quantitative reflection, and that this is why many people believe that despair is something that only belongs to youth, but the author argues that this is not the case.

- The text highlights the importance of self-reflection and ethical reflection in overcoming despair, and that the self must be dissociated from external circumstances in order to truly understand and accept oneself, with the author suggesting that this requires a breach with immediacy as a whole and a consciousness of a self that is gained by the infinite abstraction from everything outward.
- The author mentions that there are very few people who live even passably in the category of spirit, and that most people shy away from this life, having not learned to fear and not understanding what "must" means, and that they are therefore unable to endure the contradictions and challenges that come with living a life of spirit.

Despair, Childish Illusion, and the Path to Faith

- The text discusses the concept of despair and how it affects individuals, with Tolstoy mentioning that his initial thoughts on existential concerns are often referred to as "childish" and that many people retain a sense of childish illusion throughout their lives.
- According to the text, a person who despairs understands that it is a weakness to take earthly concerns too seriously, but instead of turning to faith, they become more deeply absorbed in despair and despairs over their own weakness, leading to a deeper consciousness of their despair.
- The text also notes that such despair is relatively rare, and if it does not lead to a radical change towards faith, it can either intensify into a higher form of introversion or break through to the outside, causing the individual to plunge into life and distractions, as mentioned by [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]].
- If an individual maintains absolute introversion, they are at risk of suicide, but if they open up to someone, they may be less likely to consider suicide, although they may still fall into despair due to the fact that they have shared their secret with another person.
- The text highlights the idea that the despairing individual who is conscious of their despair is further from salvation than one who is unconscious of it, and that the conscious despairer's despair is more intense, as noted by Kierkegaard, who also mentions that he has no "common language" with others.
- Additionally, the text references the idea that participation and simple salvation, as discussed by Tolstoy and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], are not easily attainable, and that the despairing individual may mistakenly believe that transformation can be accomplished easily, like changing a coat.
- The concept of unawareness is discussed as a form of despair that can be particularly dangerous, as it may lead individuals to desperately seek permission to despair, and they may even resist any attempts to prevent them

from doing so, as noted in the context of the poet's perspective.

Unawareness as Despair and the Question of Eternity

- A specific form of despair is described as being unnoticed in the world, where individuals lose their sense of self and become perfectly adjusted to the world, making them successful in a worldly sense, but this form of despair is not recognized as such, and is instead seen as a desirable state, with the world having no understanding of what is truly dreadful, as also alluded to in the context of Heidegger's idea of living 'concretely'.
- The text also explores the idea that when an individual's time on earth comes to an end, eternity will ask only one question: whether they lived in despair or not, regardless of their circumstances, status, or accomplishments, and this question will reveal the true state of their soul, with the individual's response to despair being the determining factor.
- The importance of becoming eternally and decisively conscious of oneself as spirit, as self, is emphasized, and it is noted that this can only be achieved through despair, with the individual's life being considered wasted if they never became aware of their [[Existence | existence]] before [[God]], and the possibility of gaining infinity through despair is highlighted.
- The believer is said to possess the antidote to despair, which is the possibility that comes with faith, as with God all things are possible, and this faith resolves contradictions, such as the human certainty of destruction and the possibility of salvation, allowing the individual to find health and resolution in their spiritual life, much like a healthy body resolves physical contradictions, as noted in the comparison to a draft being indifferently cold and warm.

Faith, Anxiety, and the Human Condition

- The concept of faith is complex, with philosophers like Tillich and [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] acknowledging the role of doubt in faith, and Kierkegaard himself struggling to make the "leap" of faith, which raises questions about the actualization of this type of faith.
- According to the text, humans are designed to be spiritual, but many people prefer to dwell in the "cellar" of sensuousness, becoming furious when encouraged to occupy the higher level of their being, which is available to them but remains unoccupied.
- The state of despair is often characterized by a half-obscurity, where the individual is partially aware of their condition but refuses to fully acknowledge it, and may use diversions or distractions to maintain this obscurity, sometimes even doing so with a certain level of self-awareness and psychological insight.
- When individuals fail to confront their inner selves, they may turn away from the inward direction and focus on outward appearances, accepting their given abilities and talents, but neglecting true self-reflection and potentially forgetting their deeper selves in the process.

- This neglect of the inner self can lead to a life of outward success and respectability, where the individual becomes a respected member of society, but may still be lacking in true self-awareness and spiritual depth, as exemplified by the example of a person who is a [[Christianity | Christian]] in Christendom, but only in a superficial sense, similar to how they would have conformed to the dominant culture in any other society.

Immortality, Purity of Heart, and the Eternal

- The question of immortality is a recurring theme, with the individual wondering if there is an afterlife where one would recognize themselves again, which is particularly interesting for someone who is questioning their own sense of self.
- The concept of purity of heart is to will one thing, and this is only achievable by focusing on the Eternal, which is always present and true, whereas the changeable is subject to change and can lead to folly.
- A person who seeks relief from suffering through temporal [[Existence | existence]] is actually forgetting the Eternal, and a man of prayer does not need to seek knowledge from learned books, but rather remains piously ignorant of worldly things and focuses on the Good.
- The worldly goal is not one thing, but rather an illusion that appears to be one thing, and it is actually a multitude of things that can change into its opposite, whereas the Good is one thing in its essence and remains the same in all its expressions.
- Worldly honor is a whirlpool of confused forces and a sense-deception, and even if it were unanimous, it would still be meaningless, as it requires one to grovel, flatter, and betray others, and ultimately leads to despising oneself and trembling before change.

Nihilism, Double-Mindedness, and the Temporal

- The experience of [[Nihilism | nihilism]] is described as the change of death, where the sensual man must step aside and all becomes soberly quiet, and the text also suggests that despair is simply double-mindedness, implying that it is a state of being torn between two conflicting desires or beliefs.
- The concept of despair is described as having two wills, where an individual fruitlessly tries to follow one will while avoiding another, resulting in a state of double-mindedness, as noted by James as the 'divided self'.
- The human experience is marked by a disconnect between the ideal life and the actual life, where individuals have great moments of hope and enthusiasm, but these are often forgotten in the daily routine, and their words of enthusiasm are not backed by actions, as referenced in James 3:5.
- People have intentions and plans for life, but these often lose their strength and fade away, unable to withstand opposition, and this is evident in the way individuals quickly forget their resolutions and fail to make lasting changes.

- The text also describes the consequences of over-screaming one's nature and conscience, leading to a state of dryness and emptiness, where individuals become giddy and lose sight of what is truly important, and this can ultimately lead to destruction.
- It is noted that it is horrible to see individuals rush towards their own destruction, and even more horrible when they are aware of their situation but choose to quietly witness their own downfall, rather than seeking help, and this is seen as a form of extreme vanity.
- The speaker acknowledges their own share of double-mindedness and frailties, and expresses a desire for the talk to attract listeners to the Good, rather than to the speaker themselves, and to repel them from judging others, as this would also be a form of double-mindedness, and instead, the focus should be on selflessness.
- The text concludes by questioning the nature of the world, citing [[Religious text | Scripture]], such as I [[John the Apostle | John]] 5:19, which states that the world "lieth in wickedness", and suggesting that if the world is not inherently Good, then earthly reward is of a doubtful character, and this raises important questions about the human condition and the nature of morality.

Willing the Good, Suffering, and the Eternal

- The text discusses the concept of willing the Good, emphasizing that true willingness to do good should not be motivated by the desire for reward or the fear of punishment, as this constitutes double-mindedness, a concept also explored in [[Karma yoga | Karma Yoga]].
- According to the text, the world often rewards what resembles the Good, but true willingness to do good should not be influenced by this, and individuals should guard themselves against the temptation of reward, even if it comes from [[God]], to rightly will the Good.
- The text also highlights that doing good is often met with ingratitude, lack of appreciation, poverty, contempt, and suffering, and that true faith and hope are related to the Eternal through the will, with the wish being the sufferer's connection to a happier temporal [[Existence | existence]].
- The concept of the wish is further explored, with the text stating that it is not the cure for suffering, but rather the life in suffering, the health in suffering, and the perseverance in suffering, keeping the wound of suffering open for the Eternal to heal, a concept also discussed by thinkers such as [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], Zapffe, Becker, Tillich, and Ligotti.
- The text contrasts the wish with hope, stating that while there are short-lived and childish hopes, there is also a hope that is born in death and does not die, committing the sufferer to the Good, and that faith can also be a source of commitment to the Good, with true faith seizing the Eternal and holding fast to it, even in the face of suffering and death.
- The text ultimately presents a nuanced and complex exploration of the human experience, highlighting the importance of faith, hope, and the

willingness to do good, even in the face of adversity, and referencing various philosophical and spiritual concepts, including those discussed by Karma Yoga, Vivekananda, Zapffe, Becker, Tillich, and Ligotti.

Faith, Love, and Suffering

- The text discusses the concept of faith and love in relation to suffering, emphasizing that with love, a sufferer can draw the Eternal nearer to themselves and experience a love that endures beyond death, committing them to the Good.
- The author warns against despair, stating that it is to deny that [[God]] is love, and instead encourages the sufferer to commit themselves to the Good by hope, faith, and love, rather than seeking temporary relief or comfort from the world.
- The text also explores the idea of the wish, which is the desire to be with the Infinite, and how it can be strengthened or abandoned in the face of suffering, with the author urging the sufferer to take a single, decisive step towards the Eternal, regardless of their circumstances.
- The author emphasizes the importance of not turning away from the sight of suffering too soon, but rather dwelling on it and sharing in the common lot of suffering as a fellow human being, in order to find healing and comfort.
- The text highlights the distinction between useless suffering and suffering that helps one reach the highest, stating that suffering is only useless when one will not let themselves be helped by it, and that it can be a medicine for the "deadly disease of busyness" when pondered and shared with others.
- The author encourages self-reflection and strictness with oneself, in order to truly understand and empathize with those who are suffering, and to avoid calling oneself a sufferer without truly experiencing the depth of suffering.

Suffering, Edification, and the Human Experience

- The text discusses the concept of suffering and how it can be a deeply personal and isolating experience, with some pains being impossible to fully understand or sympathize with, and it is noted that this type of suffering is not related to earthly concerns such as [[Job (biblical figure) | job]] or relationships, but rather to existential concerns like the concept of [[God]], Nothingness, or [[Nihilism]].
- The text uses the metaphor of a lone horse that joins a meeting of other horses to learn about life, where the elder horses share their wisdom about the suffering and hardships that horses face, and this story serves as a way to illustrate the universal experience of suffering.
- The text also references biblical concepts, such as the idea that one sinner who repents is more important to Heaven than ninety-nine righteous men who have no need of repentance, as mentioned in [[Gospel of Luke | Luke]] 15:7, and the phrase "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened" from [[Gospel of Matthew | Matthew]] 11:28, to emphasize the importance of

acknowledging and addressing the deeper, more profound sufferings in life.

- The concept of edification is introduced as a common human concern that involves contemplating and understanding the sufferings of others, and it is noted that this type of contemplation is more important than the actions of those who are busy but do not truly suffer, and that true edification requires a willingness to confront and discuss the more terrible sufferings in life.

- The text critiques those who avoid discussing or thinking about the more profound sufferings in life, preferring instead to focus on more superficial concerns, and argues that this type of avoidance is a form of escapism that can lead to a lack of frankness and a bad conscience, and that true edification requires a willingness to confront and understand the deeper sufferings of others.

Suffering, Authenticity, and the Edifying Talk

- The author reflects on the concept of suffering and how it relates to authenticity and the human experience, drawing parallels between the idea of "bad conscience" and Jean-[[Paul the Apostle | Paul]] Sartre's concept of "bad faith", which both seem to be about authenticity and double-mindedness.

- The text quotes a passage that suggests that while others may offer comfort and aid to those who are suffering, the sufferer must ultimately help themselves and be willing to suffer all in order to be committed to the Good, with the author noting that this commitment is not about being exempt from suffering, but rather about being intimately bound to [[God]].

- The author addresses the reader directly, acknowledging that talk of suffering can be tiresome, but emphasizing that an edifying talk never tires of it, and that even those who are considered "happy" can benefit from knowledge of suffering in order to improve their education and character.

- The text encourages sufferers not to let their lives be consumed by futile counting of their sufferings, but rather to remember that they can still accomplish something, even if it is just willing to suffer all and being committed to the Good, with the author distinguishing between true sufferers and those who feign suffering for attention.

- The author emphasizes the importance of commitment and loyalty to the Good, even in the face of suffering, and warns against the destructive power of cleverness, which can be misused to evade decisions and postpone commitment, noting that true healing and salvation come from the Eternal, not from earthly or temporal solutions.

- The author concludes by emphasizing the need for sufferers to remain firm in their commitment to the Good, even when faced with the temptation to use cleverness to escape or avoid their suffering, and to trust in the Eternal for healing and salvation, rather than relying on earthly means.

Suffering, Cleverness, and the Eternal's Healing

- The text discusses the concept of suffering and the role of the Eternal in healing, highlighting that the Eternal's healing is not a physical cure, but

rather a spiritual one, and that those who cling to earthly hopes and cleverness may miss out on the Eternal's help.

- According to the text, when a sufferer dedicates themselves to their suffering and renounces earthly hopes, they may initially experience a sense of hopelessness, but ultimately, they can find rest in the trustworthiness of the Eternal, as seen in the example of a sick man finding relief in a particular position.

- The text also explores the idea of double-mindedness, where a sufferer wishes to be healed but does not truly desire to be healed by the Eternal, leading to a state of internal disease and increasing restlessness, as exemplified by the double-minded person who, even at the moment of death, is afraid to make a decision and send for a clergyman, due to cleverness and fear of the unknown.

- The author references the philosopher [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] and the concept of Pascal's Wager, suggesting that taking one's suffering to heart and seeking comfort in the Eternal can be a source of solace, even if it seems like a gamble, and that cleverness and earthly hopes can ultimately lead to despair and a lack of true healing.

- The text concludes by emphasizing the importance of taking one's suffering to heart and seeking help from the Eternal, rather than relying on cleverness and earthly hopes, which can hinder the decision to seek true healing and lead to a state of double-mindedness and internal disease.

Temporal Hopes vs. Eternal Commitment

- The text discusses the idea that individuals often prefer to hold onto temporal hopes and expectations rather than committing to the Eternal, due to a fear of regretting their decision, even though the Eternal is the only thing that can bring true consolation without regret.

- It criticizes the use of cleverness to evade commitment to the Eternal, stating that this double-mindedness is rooted in an unwillingness to let go of worldly things and can lead to a shallow and mediocre form of consolation that ultimately ends in remorse.

- The text argues that true comfort and salvation can only be found in commitment to the Eternal, and that offering or seeking temporal comfort is like giving a pauper counterfeit coin when one has gold to offer, emphasizing that the Eternal's comfort is pure gold.

- It highlights the difference between the sufferer who receives the Eternal's victorious comfort and [[God | the one]] who seeks temporary distractions or deceitful evasions, stating that the true sufferer must answer for the manner in which they have used their time and whether they have allowed themselves to be eternally healed.

- The text also critiques the notion that one should never give up hope, stating that there are certain hopes and desires that should be put to death, and that the Eternal calls out the hypocrisy of speaking equivocally about hope, emphasizing the need for genuine commitment to the Eternal.

Commitment to the Good and the Sufferer's Path

- The concept of earthly hope needs to be relinquished, as it can hinder the attainment of true hope, and the sufferer should not accept deliverance on the world's terms, as stated in Hebrews 11:15, but instead, should focus on the commitment to the Good.
- The sufferer who sincerely wills the Good uses cleverness to cut off evasions and launch themselves into the commitment, escaping the disillusionments of choosing the temporal way, and this commitment is not about concentrating sufferings, but about breaking through to the Eternal.
- The sufferer should not take upon themselves the suffering of a whole lifetime in advance, but instead, should take each day's burden as it comes, and the commitment should not be understood as a means to win something eternal through advance acceptance of suffering, but rather as a means to remain committed to the Good.
- The active one and the sufferer may both be committed to the Good, but they work in different directions, with the active one working from without to conquer, and the sufferer working inwardly by being willing to suffer all, and the true sufferer can always work for the Good outwardly by the power of example.
- The life of the sufferer, when committed to the Good, contains a great challenge to others and a severe judgment upon those who use their gifts inexcusably, and even if the sufferer is cut off from others, they are still sharing in mankind's great common concern and defending a difficult pass by saving their own soul.

Suffering, Courage, and Patience

- The question of whether one can will suffering is discussed, and it is distinguished between willing in the sense of inclination and willing in the noble sense of freedom, with the understanding that for many, it is impossible to unite freedom and suffering in the same thought, and philosophers like [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] have also discussed similar ideas.
- The passage discusses how people often view those who choose to suffer or take the harder path in life as fanatics or lunatics, citing the example of a person of means who could easily live a life of comfort but instead chooses to strain themselves and take on burdensome tasks.
- According to the text, courage is the willingness to voluntarily accept suffering, as illustrated by the example of a courageous knight who spurs his horse forward against a terrifying object, with the knight representing courage and the horse representing the lowly and skittish aspects of human nature.
- The concept of patience is also explored, with the Danish word for "patience" (Taalmod) containing the word for "courage" (Mod), and patience being described as the courage to voluntarily accept unavoidable suffering, with the sufferer finding freedom in the midst of suffering through submission to it.

- The passage also touches on the idea that people often view those who bear unavoidable suffering patiently as being coerced or making a virtue out of necessity, but the text argues that this is indeed a virtue, as the sufferer is bringing a determination of freedom out of necessity.
- The author references the philosopher Tillich, and discusses how the true sufferer's condition can be a catalyst for learning what the highest is, with the healing power of the decision for the Eternal residing in the sufferer's ability to voluntarily accept compulsory suffering.
- Ultimately, the passage suggests that patience can perform an even greater miracle than courage, as it achieves freedom in unavoidable suffering, and that the sufferer can find a sense of freedom and determination through their patient endurance of suffering.

Suffering, Cleverness, and the Triumph of the Good

- The concept of suffering is discussed in relation to the use of cleverness, where a Good person utilizes their cleverness to avoid escaping from suffering and instead remains committed to the Good by accepting the necessity of suffering.
- According to the text, a truly Good person does not will the Good for the sake of reward or to avoid punishment, but rather wills that the Good shall triumph through them, and they desire to be an instrument of the Good without seeking recognition or reward from the world or men.
- The text also warns against confusing impatience with humble, obedient enthusiasm, as impatience can lead to double-mindedness, which is distinct from true inspiration, and a double-minded person is not easily recognizable on earth as they do not will the Good for the sake of reward or punishment.
- The idea of time and eternity is explored, with the question of why time exists if the Good has always been victorious, and why individuals who sincerely will the Good are scattered and separated, making it difficult for them to connect with one another.
- The text references various philosophers and thinkers, including [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], and Huxley, and expresses a desire to combine different perspectives, including East and West, to gain a deeper understanding of the human experience.
- The concept of double-mindedness is further explored, with the suggestion that a double-minded person is not recognizable in the world because their double-mindedness is not evident, and it is only at the boundary between time and eternity that their true nature is revealed to the [[God | all-knowing]] One.
- The text ultimately suggests that true commitment to the Good requires selflessness and a willingness to sacrifice all, without seeking reward or recognition, and that this commitment is not easily recognizable in the world, but is instead recognized by a higher power.

Blessed Assurance, Fleeting Desires, and the Fear of God

- The text discusses the importance of having a blessed assurance that the

Good has always been victorious, which provides a sense of security and comfort that surpasses all understanding, and allows individuals to have pride and honor even in difficult times.

- It highlights the fleeting nature of momentary desires and passions, such as lust and anger, which may seem irresistible in the moment but become loathsome and vain in retrospect, and ultimately lead to repentance.
- The text also critiques the tendency for people to rush into crowds out of fear, and notes that true boldness lies in not being afraid, not even of [[God]], and that individuals who are truly afraid of God are often ridiculed by the crowd.
- The author emphasizes the importance of fearing God, not just loving Him, as a means of acknowledging one's eternal responsibility before God, and notes that this fear is essential for individuals who are conscious of being individuals and are aware of their accountability to God.
- The text encourages individuals to live in a way that allows them to cultivate a sense of consciousness and responsibility, which will enable them to navigate the relationships and duties of life with clarity and purpose, without withdrawing from the world or becoming overly self-absorbed.
- The author suggests that being mindful of one's eternal responsibility will help individuals to prioritize their actions and focus on what is truly important, and to avoid wasting time on frivolous activities, and instead to work selflessly and with a focus on the Good.
- The text concludes by referencing the biblical quote "it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting," which highlights the importance of remembering that all earthly things are fleeting and will be forgotten, and that true wisdom and understanding can be gained through reflection and contemplation.

The Eternal, Busyness, and the Importance of Reflection

- The concept of the Eternal is not forgotten, even after a thousand years, and it demands purity of heart and willing one thing, but in daily life, this claim is often set aside and ignored in the midst of busyness and worldly pursuits.
- In the world, people are often more concerned with influence, power, and wealth than with willing the Good, and they do not consider it important to scrutinize whether someone wholly wills the Good as long as they are successful and have a good reputation.
- The rush of life and the pressure of busyness can lead people to neglect contemplation and distinct thoughts, and instead, they may be deceived into thinking they have had an experience of contemplation when they have not.
- The author argues that this busyness is like a charm that can be harmful, especially to children and young people, who need quiet and retirement to allow the Eternal to unfold a divine growth.
- The author also discusses [[The Concept of Anxiety | the concept of anxiety]] and how it can be a danger to those who are educated by

possibility, as it can lead to a fall, such as suicide, if not understood and addressed properly, and that whoever is educated by possibility remains with anxiety and does not permit themselves to be deceived by its falsifications.

- The author emphasizes the importance of taking time to pause and reflect on one's life and willing the Good, and not just delegating this task to someone else, as every person should do this for themselves, and that this higher claim should command a person's whole mind, industry, and strength.

Anxiety, Freedom, and the School of Possibility

- The concept of anxiety is discussed as a transformative force that can lead individuals to freedom and possibility, with the understanding that anxiety is a school that educates through the absurd perspective, where all actions are equally valid, akin to [[Nihilism | nihilism]].

- According to the text, anxiety is freedom's possibility, and it is through faith that anxiety becomes absolutely formative, consuming all finite ends and discovering their deceptions, with no respite or distraction from its torments, as noted in the quote that no Grand Inquisitor has such frightful torments in readiness as has anxiety.

- The individual formed by anxiety is shaped by possibility and is cultivated according to their infinitude, with the understanding that possibility is the most difficult of all categories, as it encompasses all things being equally possible, including both the terrifying and the smiling.

- The text critiques the common perception that possibility is light, suggesting that this view is often held by those who do not truly understand possibility and instead cling to a mendacious invention of human depravity, whereas true possibility includes the potential for horror, perdition, and annihilation, as well as happiness and good fortune.

- The author argues that only when an individual has grasped the true nature of possibility, including its terrifying aspects, can they graduate from the school of possibility and develop a new appreciation for actuality, praising it as lighter than the weight of possibility, as noted in the phrase that actuality is far, far lighter than possibility had been.

- The text suggests that this process of formation through possibility requires honesty and faith, with faith understood as the inner certainty that anticipates infinity, as characterized by Hegel, and that through this faith, the individual can overcome the overwhelming anxiety of possibility and idealize finitudes in the shape of infinity.

- The author acknowledges that this perspective may seem obscure or foolish to those who have never experienced anxiety, but emphasizes the importance of embracing possibility and its transformative power in shaping the individual.

Anxiety, Faith, and the Infinite

- The text discusses [[The Concept of Anxiety | the concept of anxiety]] and

its relationship to faith, individuality, and the infinite, with references to philosophers such as [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] and similarities to the ideas of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], highlighting that one should not be anxious about finite things, but rather about the possibilities of life.

- According to the text, a person who has never experienced anxiety is considered spiritless, and that anxiety is a necessary step towards faith, as it allows individuals to confront the nothingness of the world and turn inward, away from the finite and towards the infinite.
- The text also explores the idea that individuals who are formed by finitude, or the finite, will never arrive at true faith, and that faith requires a deeper understanding of guilt and anxiety, which can only be achieved by struggling with the infinite, as stated by Kierkegaard, and later echoed by Heidegger.
- Furthermore, the text notes that those who learn to know their guilt only through finite means, such as external judgments, will never truly understand their guilt, and that true guilt is infinite, requiring a deeper level of self-awareness and understanding.
- The text also touches on the idea that individuals can avoid spiritual trial and anxiety by becoming spiritless, and that this can be achieved by seeking the advice of others and conforming to societal norms, but that this approach will ultimately lead to a lack of true individuality and faith.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that true individuality and faith can only be achieved by embracing anxiety and the infinite, and that this requires a willingness to confront the nothingness of the world and to struggle with the complexities of human [[Existence | existence]], as discussed by philosophers such as Kierkegaard and Heidegger, and spiritual leaders like Vivekananda.

Spiritual Trial, Repentance, and the Demonic

- The concept of spiritual trial is discussed, with some considering it a mere poetical fiction, while others believe it is a real and perilous journey, as described by philosophers such as Tillich and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], who suggest that life is a single, entire spiritual trail with no escape from the nothingness of the world.
- The idea of repentance is also explored, with faith being the only thing that can truly disarm the sophism of repentance, allowing individuals to renounce anxiety and extricate themselves from its grasp, as noted in the context of participation and the infinite and finite.
- The bondage of sin is described as a state where the individual is divided, with the "beast" taking on human form and constantly jeering at the person, much like a game where two people are concealed under one cloak, highlighting the concept of the divided self.
- The demonic is discussed as a fate that can happen to anyone, and it is only when it is touched by the good that it becomes clearly visible, with sympathy often being a way of protecting one's own egotism rather than truly

helping the sufferer, as observed in the cowardly age where people distract themselves from lonely thoughts.

- The text also critiques the way people often ignore or downplay the demonic, treating it as a spook that can be ignored, and instead focus on cringing conflicts between individuals, highlighting the lack of inwardness in many people, including those who consider themselves holy, as noted in the examples of Tolstoy and Singer.
- The importance of inwardness is emphasized, with those who lack it being comical, even if they consider themselves holy, as they are often in an unfree relation to their holiness, and the world is justified in laughing at them, much like a bowlegged man trying to act as a dancing master, as described in the context of Ha, Participation, Tillich, and Vivekananda.

Inwardness, Earnestness, and the Eternal

- The concept of the "holy" is discussed, where it is stated that the religious is absolutely commensurable and can be present at all times, emphasizing the importance of inwardness and earnestness in one's faith, as noted by the author of the Journal314_Quotes_Final document.
- The text critiques both rigid [[Orthodoxy (book) | orthodoxy]] and freethinking for missing the point of true inwardness, using examples such as YouTube debates on the [[Existence | existence]] of [[God]], where both sides are too worldly and lack earnestness, and referencing the preacher in [[Ecclesiastes]] who says "all is vanity" to highlight the importance of earnestness.
- The author argues that whoever lives in daily communion with the thought of God could hardly wish to pervert this thought, and that earnestness is a matter that cannot be defined, but rather is something that one must truly know and understand, as emphasized by the author's statement that "what I say here proves much better than any conceptual development that I know in all earnestness what is being discussed".
- The text also discusses the object of earnestness, which is oneself, and states that one who has not become earnest about this object but about something else is a joker, and that irony is jealous of earnestness, as seen in the example of individuals who treat various things earnestly but have not become earnest about the object of earnestness.
- The author notes that when inwardness is lacking, the spirit is finitized, and that inwardness is therefore eternity or the constituent of the eternal in the human being, referencing Otto's concept of the "numinous" and the importance of the Nihilistic experience in understanding the eternal.
- The eternal is discussed as being often accepted and rejected in the present time, but that both acceptance and rejection show a lack of inwardness and earnestness, as seen in today's debates between the "religious" and atheists, where both sides lack inwardness and misunderstand the concept of eternity, such as the "moral argument".
- The text concludes by stating that people are in a hurry because of anxiety about the eternal, which makes the moment an abstraction, and that

the denial of the eternal can express itself in various ways, such as mockery, prosaic intoxication with common sense, busyness, or enthusiasm for the temporal, and that eternity can be metaphysically construed in a way that preserves the temporal in a comical manner, as noted by the author in the context of the Journal314_Quotes_Final document.

The Comical, the Temporal, and Eternity

- The concept of the comical is rooted in the temporal, where contradictions arise, and it is this contradiction that gives rise to the comical, which is not present in eternity where all contradictions are canceled.
- The temporal is characterized by its accidental circumstances and odd nooks and crannies, where the soul has not been essentially present, and therefore, these aspects of life vanish, except for those who have been essentially present in them, but even for them, it will hardly acquire comical significance.
- The comical belongs to the temporal, and one cannot stop it metaphysically and aesthetically, and prevent it from finally swallowing whole the temporal, which will happen to someone developed enough to use the comic but not mature enough to distinguish between the eternal and the temporal.
- Eternity is not what people think earnestly about, instead, they are anxious about it, and anxiety can lead to a hundred evasions, and it is through anxiety that freedom's possibility announces itself, and this anxiety is directed towards a nothing, rather than a something.
- The object of anxiety is a nothing, and if its object is something that signifies something in terms of freedom, then we do not have a leap but a quantitative transition, and this is a concept that is also discussed by philosophers such as Tillich and Heidegger, and possibly Buber.

Anxiety, Freedom, and the Limits of Genius

- An individual's relation to its historical environment is complex, and freedom's possibility announces itself in anxiety, which can be triggered by various factors, including reminders, sights, jokes, speech, and silence, and these factors can have opposite effects on different individuals, highlighting the infinite limit of the quantitative.
- The concept of genius is also discussed, and it is noted that genius does not become significant in the most profound sense, as its compass can extend no further than that of fate in relation to fortune, misfortune, esteem, honor, power, immortal fame, all of which are temporal terms, and a deeper dialectical characterization of anxiety is excluded, and instead, anxiety is directed towards the appearance of guilt, which is an attribute of honor.
- The state of being a genius can happen to anyone, but a true genius would deeply grasp the profoundest mysteries of human [[Existence | existence]] and strive to understand them, rather than just being concerned with humanity, and this understanding requires courage and a willingness to acknowledge the imperfections of their own existence.
- According to the text, the existence of a genius can be considered a sin,

and one can only come to understand this by satisfying the hunger of the wishful soul, and even then, the genius's existence may not necessarily be happy, but rather a means of recreation that does not rise above the categories of temporality.

- The text suggests that only through religious reflection can genius and talent be justified in the deepest sense, and that a genius who turns towards themselves and the divine could become a religious genius, but would also have to endure great agonies, and that those who are insufficiently mature spiritually will not be able to grasp the true nature of immortality and spirit.

- Every human life is considered to be religiously arranged, and denying this would confuse everything and cancel out the concepts of individuality, race, and immortality, and the text criticizes the idea that people's talents and abilities should be used for mundane purposes, such as being a diplomat or an actor, without considering the deeper religious implications.

- The text laments that people do not take the time to reflect on how their religious existence relates to their outward existence, and instead get caught up in the fleeting moments of life, and that even those who attend church occasionally may not truly be living a religious existence, and that a profound religious reflection is required to truly understand how to live a meaningful life, even in tasks such as becoming a comic actor.

The Religious Genius and the Path of Struggle

- The text raises the question of [[Repetition (Kierkegaard book) | repetition]], and how an individual can return to themselves whole, after having begun religious reflection, and whether they can succeed in doing so, and notes that in the Middle Ages, individuals would often annihilate their imperfect qualities in order to take hold of themselves, and that this is a difficult task that requires great spiritual maturity.

- The text discusses the concept of the religious genius, who, despite having outward gifts and talents, chooses to embark on a path of pain, distress, and anxiety to reflect on their religious beliefs, rather than following the broad and easy way that their talents might afford them.

- This struggle is exhausting and may lead to moments of regret and despair, but ultimately, the individual will hear a voice saying "Well done, my son, just keep on, for he who loses all, gains all," indicating that the sacrifice is worthwhile.

- The religious genius turns inward, towards themselves, and in doing so, discovers guilt, which is a fundamental aspect of their relationship with [[God]], and the greater the genius, the more profoundly they discover guilt.

- The text also touches on the idea that language is often used to conceal thoughts, and that true freedom is found in turning inward and discovering one's own guilt and sin-consciousness, rather than seeking external validation or success.

Nihilism, the Death of God, and the Meaninglessness of a Mechanical World

- The philosopher [[Friedrich Nietzsche]] is quoted, discussing the concept of the "hour of great contempt," in which even one's happiness, reason, and virtues become repulsive, and the individual is forced to re-evaluate their values and beliefs, leading to a kind of nihilistic experience and renunciation.
- Additionally, the text critiques the idea of a purely "scientific" interpretation of the world, suggesting that such an approach may be lacking in significance and meaning, and that mechanics, in particular, is not a sufficient foundation for understanding [[Existence | existence]], as noted in Nietzsche's work, "[[The Gay Science]]".
- The concept of a mechanical world is deemed to be essentially meaningless, as it would neglect the intrinsic value of aspects like music, which cannot be fully appreciated through mere calculation or formulation, as noted in the discussion on the nature of music and its value.
- The quotes from the text suggest that the appearance of pessimism and [[Nihilism | nihilism]] can be a sign of growth and transition into new conditions of existence, as stated by the author, and that experiencing nihilism is necessary to understand the true value of societal values and ideals.
- The idea of a "true world" is questioned, with the suggestion that all values and ideals are based on fictitious categories and are designed to maintain human constructs of domination, as the text explains, and that the most extreme form of nihilism would be the view that every belief is necessarily false due to the lack of a true world.
- The author discusses the relationship between morality and nihilism, noting that those who have abandoned [[God]] cling to faith in morality, and that purely moral value systems, such as [[Buddhism]], can end in nihilism, as the text states, and that this is expected in Europe, where people hope to maintain moralism without a religious background.
- The text also touches on the idea of self-narcotization and the emptiness that can result from not knowing one's direction or purpose, as well as the concept of "creatureliness" and the transvaluation of earthly values, as mentioned in the context of Otto's ideas and the experiences of the nihilist, and the author's emphasis on the importance of selflessness, as discussed in the context of [[Karma yoga | Karma Yoga]] and the ideas of [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].

Nihilism, Morality, and the Search for Meaning

- The text from 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' discusses various philosophical concepts, including the attempt to find meaning and purpose in life through intoxication, cruelty, and blind enthusiasm, as well as the pursuit of knowledge and art as a means to escape the bleakness of [[Existence | existence]].
- The philosophical nihilist is described as someone who believes that life is meaningless and in vain, but this perspective is challenged by the idea

that pleasure and displeasure are only means to an end, and that the question of meaninglessness or its opposite may be insoluble for humans.

- The text also touches on the idea that morality has protected life against despair and the leap into nothing, and that the conception of a [[God | god]] [[Beyond Good and Evil | beyond good and evil]] is problematic, as it leaves us with the Absurd Perspective, where anything goes.

- The quote "man is something that is to be surpassed" suggests a naturalistic and earthly interpretation, rather than a complete renunciation of this world and submission to a higher power, and the famous phrase "we have killed him, you and I, we are all his murderers" refers to the death of God and the subsequent loss of direction and meaning.

- The text also includes critiques of [[Christianity]], with the statement "the Christian resolution to find the world ugly and bad, has made the world ugly and bad", and discusses the importance of individual action and responsibility, with the criterion for a proper mode of action being one that compromises only oneself.

- The text also references the ideas of Zarathustra, who speaks of deliverance from loathing and the need to find joyfulness, and includes quotes that suggest that suffering and impotence have created the concept of an afterlife, and that even those who despise the body are still serving their own self-interest.

- The final quote from 'The Gay Science' suggests that the author is more indebted to their long illness than to their health, implying that their experiences of suffering have been transformative and valuable.

Pain, Depth, and the Limits of Language

- The author acknowledges that great pain has a profound impact on their life, leading to a higher level of health and a deeper understanding of themselves, as it forces them to re-examine their trust, good-nature, and gentleness, and to develop a greater sense of suspicion.

- The author expresses doubt that pain necessarily "improves" us, but rather believes that it deepens us, and notes that many people, including the most gifted and noble, often live their lives without questioning their beliefs or examining the reasons behind them.

- The author critiques the idea that language is a direct reflection of the cosmos, suggesting that language is only a starting point for wisdom, and that the language builder often overestimates the power of words to embody wisdom.

- The author argues that if the allegations of [[Christianity]], including the concept of an avenging [[God]] and eternal damnation, were true, then it would be irrational for people not to dedicate their lives to their salvation, and that the everyday Christian is a pitiable figure who is unable to think critically about their beliefs.

- The author views Christianity as a relic of antiquity, with assertions that are no longer believable in modern times, including the idea of a god who begets children by a mortal woman, a system of justice that accepts

vicarious sacrifice, and the use of the cross as a symbol, all of which seem ghostly and outdated.

Nihilism and the Decay of Traditional Values

- The text discusses the concept of [[Nihilism | nihilism]] and the decay of traditional values, with the author referencing Friedrich Nietzsche's ideas and quoting from his work, including "[[The Antichrist (book) | The Antichrist]]", to argue that the values humanity holds in high regard are actually decadence-values.
- The author contends that the highest values of humanity have been emptied of their true meaning and are now prevalent under the guise of holiest names, with concepts like "eternal salvation of the soul" being dependent on minute distinctions of concepts that have been refined by subtle disputes of sects.
- The author criticizes the tendency to destroy life by using rhetoric that conceals the true intention behind words like "the other world," "[[God]]," "the true life," "[[Nirvana]]," "salvation," and "blessedness", and instead argues that humanity has unlearned its previous beliefs and has become more modest in its understanding of the world.
- The text also touches on the idea that humanity has dropped its notion of being derived from the "spirit" or "god-head" and now regards itself as just another animal, with the author stating that man is the most botched and sickliest of all animals, but also the most interesting.
- The author further argues that consciousness or "the spirit" is not a sign of perfection, but rather a symptom of a relative imperfection of the organism, and that the concept of a "pure spirit" is a piece of pure stupidity, as it denies the importance of the nervous system and the senses.
- The author concludes by criticizing the concept of an imaginary teleology, such as the "kingdom of God" or "eternal life", which is seen as a fictitious world that falsifies and denies [[Existence | reality]], and is rooted in a hatred of the natural world and a profound uneasiness in the presence of reality.

Reality, Suffering, and the Critique of Christianity

- The text discusses the concept of reality, suffering, and the role of religion in human life, with the author arguing that the preponderance of pains over pleasures leads to the creation of fictitious morality and religion, and that a person who suffers from reality must be a "botched reality".
- The author critiques the [[Christianity | Christian]] concept of a [[God | god]], describing it as a corrupt concept that declares war on life, nature, and the will to live, and instead praises the idea of a god that embodies both good and evil qualities, as a god who only represents goodness is not relatable or desirable.
- The author compares Christianity to [[Buddhism]], describing Buddhism as a more realistic and positive religion that faces problems objectively and

coolly, and is based on a strict phenomenalism, with the concept of "god" already disposed of before its appearance.

- The author notes that Buddhism is focused on the struggle with suffering, rather than sin, and is [[Beyond Good and Evil | beyond good and evil]], and that it is based on two physiological facts: an excessive sensitiveness to sensation and an extraordinary spirituality, which can lead to depression and require hygienic measures to combat.

- The author describes the measures prescribed by [[The Buddha | Buddha]] to combat depression, including a life in the open, moderation in eating and drinking, caution in arousing passions, and the promotion of ideas that make for quiet contentment or good cheer, with the goal of promoting health and well-being, and notes that prayer and asceticism are not included in these measures.

- The author also mentions that [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]] would likely agree with their critique of the Christian concept of god, and that the author's own experiences and those of their readers, particularly the objectivists, are relevant to the discussion of the physiological states that underlie Buddhism.

Morality, Religion, and the Human Condition

- The text discusses the concepts of morality, religion, and the human condition, citing the ideas of Buddha and the Jewish and [[Christianity | Christian]] faiths, and how they relate to the individual's sense of self and their place in the world.

- According to the text, Buddha's teaching emphasizes the importance of egoism as a duty, and combats mental fatigue by leading spiritual interests back to the individual's sense of self, while also advocating for a rejection of conflict and revenge.

- The text also quotes [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]], who suggests that when faith is exalted above reason and knowledge, it can lead to a discrediting of patient inquiry and a focus on hope as a stimulant to life, which can be more powerful than realized joy.

- The text criticizes the Jewish faith, stating that it involves a radical falsification of nature and [[Existence | reality]], and that it distorts concepts such as religion, civilization, morality, and history, turning them into contradictions of their natural significance.

- The text also discusses the concept of resentment and how it can lead to a rejection of life and the creation of a new world where acceptance of life is seen as evil, and how this can be used as a means to an end by those seeking power, such as the priestly class.

- Furthermore, the text argues that the concept of a [[God | god]] who demands obedience and punishment can lead to a perversion of morality, making it abstract and opposed to life, and that this can have negative consequences for individuals and society.

- The text ultimately seeks to understand what Jewish and [[Christianity | Christian]] morality entail, and how they relate to the human condition,

with a critical perspective on the role of religion and faith in shaping individual and societal values.

Morality, the Church, and the Misinterpretation of Christianity

- The text discusses the concept of morality and the influence of the church, stating that chance is robbed of its innocence and unhappiness is polluted with the idea of sin, while well-being is represented as a danger or temptation, and that philosophers support the church by perpetuating the lie of a "moral order of the world".
- The idea of a "moral order of the world" is criticized as a pitiable lie, where the priest takes the name of God in vain and determines the value of all things, calling the state of human society in which he has power "the kingdom of God", and the means of attaining this state "the will of God".
- The text also explores the concept of Christianity, stating that it actually denies the church, and that the [[Gospel | Gospels]] make instinctive the reverse of all heroic struggle, instead promoting the blessedness of peace, gentleness, and the inability to be an enemy, as seen in the sentence "resist not evil".
- The life and teachings of [[Jesus]] are discussed, with the author noting that Jesus claims nothing for himself alone, and that everyone is the child of [[God]] and equal to every other man, and that making Jesus a hero is a tremendous misunderstanding, as seen in the views of Tolstoy and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].
- The text also touches on the idea of the "spiritual" and the conception of civilization, stating that our whole conception of the "spiritual" could have had no meaning in the world that Jesus lived in, and that a morbid sensibility of the tactile nerves can lead to a hatred of [[Existence | reality]] and a flight into the "intangible" and "incomprehensible".
- The author notes that the "Kingdom of God is within you", a phrase also attributed to Tolstoy and Vivekananda, and that this idea is related to an instinctive hatred of reality, which is a consequence of an extreme susceptibility to pain and irritation, and that this hatred of reality is a result of degeneration, as seen in the delayed and incomplete puberty in the living organism.
- The text concludes by highlighting the contradiction between the peaceful preacher of the mount, sea-shore, and fields, and the aggressive fanatic, and that the "glad tidings" tell us that there are no more contradictions, and that the [[Kingdom of heaven (Gospel of Matthew) | kingdom of heaven]] belongs to children, representing a sort of recrudescence of childishness of the spirit.

A Faith Beyond Dogma and Ritual

- The described faith is not characterized by fervor, denunciation, or self-defense, and it does not rely on miracles, rewards, promises, or scriptures to manifest itself, instead, it is self-sufficient and lives through its own existence.

- This faith does not formulate itself into specific dogma or creed, but rather, it simply exists and is protected from formulaic expressions, as noted by the author, who draws parallels with the ideas of Perennialism, as discussed by [[Aldous Huxley]].
- The concepts and ideas expressed in primitive [[Christianity]], such as those related to the Last Supper, are seen as symbolic language and semantics, allowing for the use of parables to convey meaning, and it is emphasized that these concepts should not be taken literally.
- The author suggests that [[Jesus]] can be considered a "free spirit" who is unconcerned with established norms and values, and instead, focuses on inner experiences and truths, using words like "life," "truth," and "light" to describe the innermost aspects of human [[Existence | existence]].
- Jesus' teachings and way of life are seen as standing outside of all religion, worship, history, natural science, worldly experience, knowledge, politics, psychology, books, and art, and his "wisdom" is characterized by a pure ignorance of these things, as he is not concerned with culture or the worldly order.
- The author notes that Jesus' teachings do not deny the world, but rather, he is unaware of the ecclesiastical concept of "the world," and this perspective is reflected in his lack of concern for the state, social order, labor, war, and other worldly matters.
- The results of this point of view are seen in the evangelical way of life, which is marked by a different mode of action, including non-resistance, a lack of distinction between strangers and countrymen, and a refusal to appeal to courts of justice or heed their mandates, as noted in the teachings to "swear not at all" and never to divorce.
- The life and death of the Saviour are seen as a manifestation of this way of life, and it is noted that he no longer needed any formula or ritual in his relations with [[God]], not even prayer, and the author wonders if Leo Tolstoy's interpretation of Jesus' teachings was influenced by, or expanded upon, the ideas of [[Friedrich Nietzsche]].

The Gospel Way and the Abolition of Jewish Concepts

- The author discusses the concept of repentance and atonement in the Jewish doctrine, stating that it is not through "repentance" or "prayer and forgiveness" that one can reach God, but rather through the [[Gospel]] way, which is considered "God" itself, and this idea abolished the Jewish concepts of "sin," "forgiveness of sin," "faith," and "salvation through faith".
- The author interprets the symbolist, likely referring to Jesus, as someone who regarded only subjective realities as truths, and saw everything else, including natural, temporal, spatial, and historical concepts, as mere signs and materials for parables, with the concept of "the [[Jesus | Son of God]]" being an "eternal" fact and a psychological symbol.
- The author criticizes the crude ecclesiastical notions of God as a person, the "kingdom of God" as a future event, and the "son of God" as the second

person of the Trinity, considering these ideas to be a disrespect for symbols and a form of world-historical cynicism, which is being fought against by thinkers such as Spong, Tillich, [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], and Huxley.

- The author explains that the symbolism of the "Son" and "Father" expresses a feeling of transformation and eternity, and that the church has distorted this symbolism, turning it into dogma, such as the concept of "immaculate conception", and that the "[[Kingdom of heaven (Gospel of Matthew) | kingdom of heaven]]" is a state of the heart, not something to come after death.
- The author concludes that the "bearer of glad tidings", likely referring to Jesus, died as he lived and taught, showing mankind how to live, and that his way of life, including his demeanor before his accusers and on the cross, is what he bequeathed to humanity, rather than trying to "save mankind".

The Misunderstanding of Christianity and the Instinct for Integrity

- The text discusses the concept of [[Christianity]] and how it has been misunderstood over the centuries, with the author arguing that the true meaning of the [[Gospel | Gospels]] has been lost and replaced with a "holy lie" that benefits the church and its followers.
- The author, who refers to themselves as a "free spirit," believes that they are one of the first to understand the true nature of Christianity and the instinct for integrity that it requires, which is to submit to evil and love those who do harm, rather than defending oneself or seeking advantage.
- The author criticizes the church for being an incarnation of "deadly hostility to all honesty, to all loftiness of soul, to all discipline of the spirit, to all spontaneous and kindly humanity," and argues that the history of Christianity is one of progressively clumsier misunderstanding of the original symbolism of the Gospels.
- The author also critiques modern society for claiming to be Christian while engaging in behaviors that are anti-Christian, such as being a soldier, judge, or patriot, and argues that the modern man must be a "monster of falsehood" to call himself a Christian without shame.
- The author expresses contempt for the modern man and the values of modern society, which they see as being indecent and dishonest, and argues that it is no longer possible to bear the word "truth" being spoken by a priest, implying that the concept of truth has been lost in modern times.
- The author's tone is one of disgust and disillusionment with modern society and the church, and they seem to be calling for a return to a more authentic and honest understanding of the Gospels and the values of Christianity.

The Holy Lie and the Corruption of Christianity

- The author argues that modern theologians, priests, and popes knowingly lie when speaking about religious concepts, as they are aware that traditional notions of [[God]], sin, and salvation are no longer valid, and

that serious reflection and self-conquest of the spirit reveal the truth that these concepts are lies.

- The author contends that the term "[[Christianity]]" is a misunderstanding, as the true Christian way of life, as lived by [[Jesus | Jesus Christ]], was lost after his death on the cross, and what followed was a corruption of his teachings, with the "[[Gospel | Gospels]]" being transformed into "bad tidings" or a "Dysangelium".
- The author asserts that there are no true Christians, as those who claim to be Christian are actually driven by their instincts and have not understood the true teachings of Jesus, which emphasized a way of life characterized by freedom from resentment and superiority to negative feelings.
- The author criticizes the idea of the "kingdom of God" as a future event, with judgment and revenge, and instead suggests that Jesus' teachings were about living in the present, with a sense of unity between God and humanity, and that the concept of guilt and sacrifice was done away with by Jesus himself.
- The author argues that the doctrine of judgment, the second coming, and the resurrection corrupted the original teachings of Jesus, and that [[Buddhism]], in contrast to Christianity, promises nothing but fulfills its teachings, while Christianity promises everything but fulfills nothing.
- The author references [[Vedanta]] and [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]], suggesting that their teachings are in line with the author's own critique of traditional Christianity, and that the true message of Jesus has been lost due to the corruption of his teachings by those who followed him, including the concept of sacrifice and the idea of an afterlife.

Christianity, Immortality, and the Magnification of Selfishness

- The text discusses the concept of [[Christianity]] and its perceived flaws, with the author arguing that the idea of personal immortality has taken away the centre of gravity of life, leading to a lack of meaning and purpose in living.
- The author criticizes the notion that every individual has an "immortal soul" and is therefore as good as every other, stating that this idea has led to a magnification of selfishness and has been used by Christianity to lure in the dissatisfied and the fallen.
- The author quotes various phrases, including "the salvation of the soul" and "judge not," to highlight the contradictions and hypocrisies within Christianity, and argues that the religion teaches a misunderstanding of the body and refuses to rid itself of superstition about the soul.
- The author also discusses the concept of a [[God | god]] who intervenes in everyday life, stating that such a god would be seen as absurd and would have to be abolished, and criticizes the idea that a cause is made more worthy by the fact that someone has laid down their life for it.
- The text also touches on the idea of scepticism, with the author stating that great intellects are sceptical, and that a mind that aspires to great

things must be able to see beyond fixed convictions and consider multiple perspectives, citing Zarathustra as an example of a sceptic.

- The author references various philosophers, including [[Søren Kierkegaard | Kierkegaard]] and Tolstoy, to support their arguments, and argues that a healthy and contemptuous approach to life is necessary to truly understand and critique the values and lack of values in society.
- Overall, the text presents a critical and philosophical examination of [[Christianity]] and its values, arguing that the religion has been used to promote selfishness and has led to a lack of understanding and appreciation for the human body and the natural world.

Freedom from Conviction and the Limits of Reason

- The section from the document 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' discusses various philosophical ideas, including the concept of freedom from conviction, which belongs to strength and an independent point of view, as stated by the author, and the importance of knowing the limits of reason, which is considered genuine philosophy.
- The text criticizes priestly organizations and the concepts of "law," "will of [[God]]," "[[Religious text | holy book]]," and "inspiration," which are seen as means for priests to gain and maintain power, and notes that even philosophers like [[Plato]] and Confucius have used the "holy lie" to promote their ideas, with the author also referencing the ideas of Eugene Seraphim and [[Friedrich Nietzsche]].
- The author argues that true goodness and beauty are privileges of the superior caste, which is composed of the most intellectual individuals, and that only they have the right to beauty and goodness, as stated in the phrase "Pulchrum est paucorum hominum," which means goodness is a privilege.
- The text also touches on the idea of [[Nihilism | nihilism]] and the concept of a "beyond" that is seen as the death of life, with the author noting that Friedrich Nietzsche's view of nihilism was misinterpreted as naturalism and a revolt, rather than a complete reduction of the earthly with a "drowning" into the Other.
- The [[Christianity | Christian]] church is criticized for turning every value into worthlessness and every truth into a lie, and for promoting a "state" where all individuals lose themselves and engage in a slow suicide, which is called "life," as described in Friedrich Nietzsche's book "[[Thus Spoke Zarathustra]]".
- The author praises poverty and simplicity, stating that "he who possesses little is so much the less possessed," and notes that the world revolves around the inventors of new values, while the people and glory revolve around the actors, highlighting the difference between true creators and those who seek fame and power.
- The text concludes by stating that values are assigned to things by humans in order to maintain themselves, and that human significance is created by assigning significance to things, which is a key idea in the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, as referenced in the text.

Humanity's Lack of Unified Goal and the Importance of Self-Attachment

- The text discusses the concept of humanity and its lack of a unified goal, with the author stating that "humanity has not a goal" and that the individual's attachment to themselves is what gives life value, as they "attach more importance to himself than he does to the world".
- The author critiques the idea of a collective conscience, suggesting that individuals who seek to break free from the "herd" will face difficulties and inner turmoil, as they will still hear the "voice of the herd" echoing within them, and that "all isolation is wrong" is a notion that is deeply ingrained in human nature.
- The text also explores the idea that humans are "primordially illogical and hence unjust beings" and that this is a fundamental discord of [[Existence | existence]], as stated in the book "Human All Too Human", which highlights the flaws in human judgment and the tendency to form estimates based on partiality and aversion.
- The author argues that the majority of people endure life without questioning its value, but those who can sympathize with the suffering of others and see the bigger picture will necessarily doubt the value of life, and that this realization can lead to a sense of despair and hopelessness, as they will "collapse with a malediction against existence".
- The text questions the possibility of knowingly remaining in a state of untruth and whether death might be preferable, as the traditional notions of morality and religion have been annihilated, and that the only remaining motives are pleasure, pain, benefit, and injury, which are all based on error and partiality.
- The author suggests that a life lived without the influence of external opinions and expectations, where one can live "as in the natural state, without praise, reproach, competition", would be a more authentic and truthful way of living, and that even suicide can be seen as a rational and respectable act in certain circumstances, as it was during the times of the Greek philosophers and Roman patriots.

Delusions, Egoism, and the Critique of Asceticism

- The text discusses various philosophical ideas, including the concept of eagerness to stay alive despite not being able to attain one's ideal of life, which is considered less worthy of respect, and the idea that people often explain their symptoms of sickness as something more profound due to deep-rooted delusions, as seen in the example of the saint and Socrates' demon.
- It also explores the idea that individuals compare themselves to a being who embodies unegoistic conduct, such as [[God]], which leads to discontentment with oneself, and that people only feel emotions for themselves, not for others, but rather for the feelings that others inspire in them, as stated in the phrase "we feel only for ourselves."
- The text critiques the dogmas of asceticism, humility, and sanctity,

suggesting that they are a form of vanity, where individuals master themselves through exaggerated pretensions and later deify this tyrannically exacting part of themselves, as seen in the ethic of the [[Sermon on the Mount | sermon on the mount]], and that in every scheme of ascetic ethics, man prays to one part of himself as if it were God.

- Additionally, the text touches on the idea that in pessimistic religions, the act of procreation is often viewed as evil in itself, and that [[Christianity | Christian]] pessimists have a direct interest in promoting an opposite belief, as stated by the author, who also references his own work, "Zarathustra", and quotes himself, saying "he who would be a creator in good and evil-verily, he must first be a destroyer, and break values into pieces."

- The author, who refers to himself as "the most terrible man that has ever existed", also discusses the idea that the condition of the [[Existence | existence]] of the good is falsehood, or the refusal to see how reality is actually constituted, and that considering distress as an objection to be done away with is nonsense, as it is a natural part of life, and that the will to abolish bad things, such as bad weather, out of pity, is a form of fatal stupidity.

- The text concludes with the author's statement that he will become the most beneficent, despite being considered the most terrible man, and that the greatest evil belongs to the greatest good, which is the creative good, as expressed in his work, "Ecce Homo" and "Zarathustra".

Reality, Suffering, and the Path to Greatness

- The passage discusses the concept of reality and the human experience, highlighting the importance of acknowledging the darker aspects of life, such as terror and suffering, rather than striving for a superficial form of happiness or "goodness" that is based on a falsification of instincts.

- According to Nietzsche, as expressed through his character Zarathustra, the traditional notion of "goodness" is actually a hindrance to true greatness, and that one must be strong enough to confront reality as it is, with all its terrible and questionable characteristics, in order to achieve true greatness.

- The author notes that Zarathustra's goal is to conceive of a type of person who can see [[Existence | reality]] as it is, without being estranged or removed from it, and that this person would be able to embody the complexities and contradictions of reality, much like the ideas expressed by [[Swami Vivekananda | Vivekananda]].

- Nietzsche also touches on the idea that morality is a form of masking, and that once one unmask morality, they also unmask the worthlessness of the values that people hold dear, leading to a profound disillusionment with the concept of reverence and holiness.

- The author reflects on their own experiences, noting that they have mastered the ability to see both sides of an issue, whether it be Theism or Naturalism, and that they have developed a unique perspective through their

experiences of suffering and physiological weakness.

- Nietzsche describes how they have cultivated a sense of intellectual clarity and cheerfulness, even in the midst of great physical suffering, and that this has allowed them to think through complex ideas with a level of detachment and objectivity.
- The author also discusses their decision to embrace solitude and self-discipline, refusing to be pampered or tended to, and how this has allowed them to develop a deeper understanding of themselves and their instincts.
- Finally, Nietzsche notes that while an intrinsically morbid nature cannot become healthy, an intrinsically sound nature can actually be stimulated by illness, leading to a surplus of life and a deeper appreciation for the complexities of human experience, as referenced by authors such as Huxley, [[Augustine of Hippo | Augustine]], and Luther, and also in contrast to perspectives like Dawkins' "joyful universe" and the author's own "Nihiltheism".

Nietzsche's Will to Health and Life

- The author, who appears to be [[Friedrich Nietzsche]], reflects on a period of illness in his life, during which he discovered a new appreciation for life and developed his own philosophy, which he calls his "Will to Health and to Life".
- Nietzsche explains that he attacks and critiques things that are triumphant and unopposed, and that he does so alone, without compromising others, which is a unique aspect of his philosophical approach, and he notes that this approach is a result of his nihilistic experience.
- The author values solitude and self-mastery, and believes that his humanity consists not in understanding the feelings of others, but in his ability to endure and understand them, and that he needs solitude to recover and return to himself.
- Nietzsche expresses his disdain for traditional religious notions, such as the concept of [[God]], the immortality of the soul, and salvation, which he sees as clumsy and unsatisfying solutions to the complexities of life, and he notes that his rejection of these notions is instinctive and inherent to his nature.
- The author also critiques the scholar, who he sees as a decadent figure, exhausted by the constant need to respond to and critique the thoughts of others, and unable to think independently or defend himself against the influence of books.
- Additionally, Nietzsche touches on the idea of escape, suggesting that some people may turn to substances like hashish to escape from feelings of oppression, but he emphasizes that the true question is not the escape itself, but where the escape leads, implying that true freedom and liberation can only be achieved through a deeper understanding of oneself and the world.

Solitude, Self-Mastery, and the Limits of Scholarship

- The author reflects on how gifted individuals can be worn out by the age of thirty, and criticizes the habit of reading books early in the morning, calling it "positively vicious", as stated in the book "[[The Kingdom of God Is Within You | The Kingdom of God is Within You]]".
- The author shares an anecdote about Dr. Heinrich von Stein's struggle to understand the author's book "Zarathustra", and notes that to truly understand the book, one must have lived the experiences described in it, which can elevate a person to a higher level of understanding.
- The author discusses how people can only draw from books what they already know, and that experience is necessary to truly hear and understand the messages conveyed in a book, highlighting the idea that "no one can draw more out of things, books included, than he already knows".
- The author criticizes those who dismiss their work, including so-called friends who assume an "impersonal" tone when discussing their books, and notes that their writings are often met with superficial praise, such as congratulations on producing another work.

The Hypnotic Sensation of Nothingness and the Ascetic Ideal

- The author explores the concept of the "hypnotic sensation of nothingness" and how it can be a source of comfort for those who suffer, as discussed in the book "On the Genealogy of Morals", and how this sensation can be achieved through mechanical activity, regularity, and self-forgetfulness.
- The author examines the ascetic ideal and how it arises from a sense of lack and a need for self-justification, with the ascetic priest exploiting methods such as mechanical activity and self-forgetfulness to distract from pain and suffering, as described in the book "On the Genealogy of Morals".
- The text discusses the human experience of suffering and the need for a meaning or purpose behind it, as suffering itself is not the problem, but rather the senselessness of suffering, with the ascetic ideal providing a meaning to suffering by giving it a purpose.
- The ascetic ideal is described as a will for Nothingness, a will opposed to life, and a repudiation of the fundamental conditions of life, which is characterized by a hate of the human, animal, and material, and a horror of the senses, reason, happiness, and beauty.
- The text also references the Schopenhauerian theory, which glorifies music as the independent art-in-itself, speaking directly from the "abyss" and representing the language of the will, as understood by Schopenhauer, with a mention of "[Johann Sebastian Bach | Bach]" in this context.
- Additionally, the text critiques the idea that it is shameful to be happy when there is misery in the world, arguing that the healthy should not doubt their right to happiness and should separate themselves from the sick to prevent the spread of sickness, with a quote from "[[Beyond Good and Evil]]" emphasizing the importance of this separation.
- The text further explores the concept of philosophy as a form of autobiography, where the moral purpose of a philosopher's work is the vital germ from which the entire philosophy grows, and understanding the morality

behind a philosopher's assertions is essential to grasping their metaphysical ideas, as noted in "Beyond Good and Evil".

- The text concludes by highlighting the relationship between intellectual vision and the expansion of one's world, where new ideas and enigmas come into view as one's insight and acuteness grow, and the importance of recognizing the role of morality in shaping philosophical ideas, with references to the works of [[Friedrich Nietzsche]], including "Beyond Good and Evil".

The Decay of Religious Instincts and the Rise of Superficiality

- The text discusses the concept of [[God]] and sin, suggesting that these ideas may one day be viewed as insignificant, much like a child's plaything, and that humanity may always be childish in its pursuit of new ideas and distractions.

- The author notes that many people in Germany have lost their religious instincts due to generations of laboriousness, and now view religion with dull astonishment, being too occupied with their daily lives to consider its purpose or relevance.

- The author also observes that people who have delved deeply into the world have discovered that it is often necessary for individuals to be superficial in order to cope with the complexities and difficulties of life, and that this superficiality can be a preservative instinct that teaches people to be flighty and false.

- Additionally, the text touches on the idea that some individuals, such as artists and philosophers, may be driven to create or seek out superficial or falsified representations of life as a way of taking revenge on the world or avoiding the truth, and that this can be a sign of a deeper pessimism or fear of the truth.

- The author criticizes the idea of "equality before God" and the type of person it produces, describing them as a "dwarfed, almost ludicrous species" that is gregarious, sickly, and mediocre, and suggests that this type of person has swayed the destiny of Europe.

- The text also includes quotes and references to various thinkers, including [[Friedrich Nietzsche]], who is not directly mentioned but is implied to be the author of the text, as well as [[Martin Luther]], who is quoted as saying that he would rather die than continue living in a world that is "full of nothing but devils".

- Furthermore, the author notes that the thought of suicide can be a great consolation for getting through difficult times, and that fighting with monsters can lead to becoming a monster, highlighting the importance of being mindful of one's own nature and the dangers of gazing into the abyss.

- The text concludes by referencing the idea that works are not condemned, but rather devalued because they are earthly, suggesting that there is a tension between the spiritual and the material realms.

The Importance of the Other and Luther's Bondage of the Will

- The text emphasizes that the only thing that truly matters is not of this earth, but rather [[God]], faith in God, contemplation, non-movement, pacifism, and renouncement of earthly things for the Other, as highlighted by quotes such as "The more [[Christianity | Christian]] a man is, the more evils, sufferings, and deaths he must endure" and "Therefore the moment you begin to have faith you learn that all things in you are altogether blameworthy, sinful, and damnable".
- The author discusses the importance of prayer, rituals, and ceremonies as a means to appreciate and possibly experience the Other, but notes that they should not be elevated above their intended purpose, and mentions that Luther, in his work "Bondage of the Will", diminishes the concept of free will in order to emphasize the value and ground of all value in God.
- Luther's argument is that knowing whether or not the will plays a role in salvation is essential to understanding Christian matters, and that if one does not know this, they will be uncertain and ignorant of God's role and ability, as stated in quotes such as "Therefore, it is not irreligious, curious, or superfluous, but essentially wholesome and necessary, for a Christian to know, whether or not the will does any thing in those things which pertain unto Salvation".
- The text also highlights Luther's belief that God foreknows and purposes all things according to His immutable and eternal will, which throws the concept of free will into question, and that those who assert free will must either deny or ignore this aspect of God's nature, as stated in quotes such as "THIS, therefore, is also essentially necessary and wholesome for Christians to know: That God foreknows nothing by contingency, but that He foresees, purposes, and does all things according to His immutable, eternal, and infallible will".
- The author notes that Luther's stance on these issues is not driven by personal gain or vanity, but rather by a deep conviction and commitment to his faith, as evident in quotes such as "For, by the grace of God, I am not so great a fool or madman, as to have desired to sustain and defend this cause so long, with so much fortitude and so much firmness".

Faith, Worldly Powers, and the Word of God

- The author of the text expresses a preference to endure temporal struggles while maintaining their faith in [[God]], rather than facing eternal torment and wrath, and hopes that the reader's heart is not hardened against the Word of God.
- The author criticizes the idea of compromising on the Word of God for the sake of worldly powers, such as the Popes, and instead emphasizes the importance of prioritizing faith and salvation above all else, as instructed by [[Jesus | Christ]].
- The text highlights the contrast between the world's values and the teachings of the [[Gospel]], noting that the Gospel reveals the true nature of the world's evil, and that people often mistakenly blame the Gospel for the world's problems.

- The author discusses the concept of humility and salvation, stating that God promises grace to the humbled, and that true humility can only be achieved when one recognizes that their salvation is entirely dependent on God's will and not on their own efforts or works.
- The text references biblical `[[Religious text | scripture]]`, specifically I Samuel 2:6, to illustrate God's power to both kill and make alive, bring down to the grave and raise up, and notes that this concept is a familiar theme in the author's writings, which suggests that the reader is likely already familiar with these ideas, possibly from the author's previous works, such as those referenced in the larger document titled 'Journal314_Quotes_Final'.

God's Nature, Mercy, and Wrath

- The concept of God's nature is discussed, highlighting the idea that He conceals His eternal mercy and loving-kindness behind His eternal wrath, and His righteousness behind apparent iniquity, as noted in the quotes from the document 'Journal314_Quotes_Final'.
- The highest degree of faith is described as believing that `[[God]]` is merciful, despite saving few and damning many, and believing Him to be just, even when He makes humans necessarily damnable according to His own will, as mentioned by Erasmus, who suggests that God may seem to delight in the torments of the miserable.
- The power of "Free-will" is debated, with the acknowledgment that without the grace of God, it is utterly ineffective, and that if the grace of God is wanting or taken away, human "Free-will" can do nothing good on its own, as stated in the quotes.
- A distinction is made between the use of "Free-will" in earthly matters, where humans have the right to use, act, and omit according to their will, and in spiritual matters, where humans have no "Free-will" and are instead captive to the will of God or `[[Satan]]`, as discussed in the context of the 'Journal314_Quotes_Final' document.
- The human heart is described as being bound by the power of Satan, requiring the quickening of the `[[Holy Spirit | Spirit of God]]` to see or hear things that are manifestly evident, highlighting the limitations of human "Free-will" in spiritual matters, as noted in the quotes from the document.