

The Digital Desert: The Spiritual Struggle In Virtual Reality

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Abstract:

*This article explores the spiritual challenges faced by individuals in virtual reality, drawing parallels to the temptations experienced by Jesus in the desert. In Orthodox theology, the desert symbolizes a place of testing and spiritual purification, a notion that is transferred to the modern "desert" of virtual environments. The essay examines how humans today, much like Christ in the desert, face temptations in the digital world—temptations that promise immediate gratification, power, and control but ultimately divert them from their spiritual journey and union with God. Central to this struggle is the concept of *prospatheia*, the passionate attachment to the material and digital world, which is countered by the cultivation of *aprosatheia*, or spiritual freedom from such attachments. The article emphasizes the need for spiritual vigilance and highlights the dangers of becoming overly immersed in the illusory experiences of virtual reality, urging a return to spiritual focus and self-restraint.*

Keywords: *Prospatheia, Virtual reality, Spiritual struggle, Aprospatheia, Temptation in the digital age*

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I. Introduction

In Orthodox theology, the desert represents a place of spiritual testing and purification. The Church Fathers, such as St. John of the Ladder, view the desert as a space where the soul confronts temptations and is cleansed of passions, thereby strengthening the individual's devotion to God¹¹. Therefore, the desert is not only a geographical location but also a symbolic reality that signifies the internal struggle of the human being to transcend the material and seek spiritual truth.

In modern times, virtual reality creates a new form of "desert," where humans face different temptations. The digital world offers new opportunities but also traps, leading humans to a different kind of alienation from their spiritual nature. The immersive experience of digital worlds shapes new psychological and spiritual challenges, distancing humans from the reality of union with God.

Studies have shown that prolonged exposure to virtual worlds, such as video games and social media, can lead to psychological phenomena of alienation and addiction, drawing humans away from their true spiritual mission^{8,19}. In this context, the digital world acts as a new "desert," where humans encounter new temptations that distract them from their relationship with God.

This essay seeks to draw parallels between the temptations that Jesus faced in the desert and those that humans encounter in virtual reality, employing the concept of "*prospatheia*" (passionate attachment) and the struggle for "*aprosatheia*" (freedom from passionate attachment), the liberation from intense emotional attachment to virtual reality.

II. The Temptations Of Jesus In The Desert And Their Parallels In Virtual Reality

The experience of Jesus in the desert serves as one of the most fundamental examples of spiritual struggle and endurance in the Orthodox Christian tradition. His confrontation with Satan, where He faced three specific temptations, highlights the perpetual battle between divine truth and diabolic deception. Just as Jesus faced these temptations, modern humans are also called to confront parallel experiences, particularly within virtual reality. Today, virtual reality offers new kinds of enticements that distort spiritual values, replacing a genuine relationship with God with imaginary experiences and virtual promises. In this chapter, we will explore the three core temptations Jesus faced in the desert and draw parallels with the traps that humans encounter in the digital age, highlighting the connection between these spiritual challenges and virtual reality.

The temptation of material satisfaction: Turning stones into bread

The first temptation that Jesus faced in the desert was to turn stones into bread. In a moment of physical weakness after 40 days of fasting, Satan attempted to push Him towards immediate satisfaction of His physical needs, using His divine power for personal gain. Jesus replied: "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God*" (Matthew 4:4). Here, Christ declares the superiority of the spiritual over the material, prioritizing divine truths over physical needs.

In virtual reality, this temptation takes on a new form as technology creates a world of immediate gratification. Virtual worlds are designed to fulfill every desire instantly, without effort or waiting. As researchers note, modern virtual reality amplifies the pursuit of instant gratification, particularly among younger generations, distancing individuals from the process of spiritual growth and patience⁸. Users are lured into continuous satisfaction through technology, removing themselves from the spiritual exercise of restraint and self-control. Dependence on technology as a source of immediate gratification destroys the individual's spiritual journey, creating a void that hinders the capacity to embrace Christian virtues such as patience, temperance, and effort in striving for union with God.

The temptation of displaying power: Falling from the Temple

The temptation to display power, where Jesus was urged to jump from the pinnacle of the temple, focuses on humanity's tendency for self-promotion and affirmation through external proofs of power. Satan tried to provoke Jesus into showcasing His divine nature in a miraculous way, but Jesus responded with respect and obedience to God, rejecting the need for immediate displays of authority and admiration. His answer was a reminder that true power and divine nature do not need to be displayed to be validated, but rather remain in service to God's will and plan.

In virtual reality, users are often enticed to project themselves through achievements and "powers" granted by the digital environment. The ability to acquire fantastical skills or superhuman abilities is especially alluring, as it gives users the illusion of superiority and dominance. However, this display of "power" has no real basis, as it does not affect real life or the individual's spiritual growth. In the digital field, people can create a false image of themselves, based on manipulation of reality, which, though false, provides momentary recognition and reward.

However, as Huxley's analysis in *Brave New World*⁹ reveals, the dependence on artificial means to achieve happiness and recognition ultimately creates a trap of spiritual decay. A person constantly seeking affirmation through external, temporary factors loses true internal freedom, making themselves a prisoner of a fabricated reality. Virtual reality amplifies this void, offering quick but superficial satisfaction, distancing individuals from meaningful spiritual cultivation.

The temptation of authority and glory: The offer of the Kingdoms of the World

The third temptation of Jesus was the promise of global authority and glory if He worshiped Satan. This temptation represents the challenge of absolute dominance over the world in exchange for spiritual submission and estrangement from God. Jesus rejects this temptation with His response: "*You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve*" (Matthew 4:10), showing that true glory and authority come only through submission to God's will, not through worldly conquest by non-spiritual means. Jesus denies worldly authority, emphasizing that spiritual freedom and integrity are superior to any external dominion.

In virtual reality, the search for dominance is expressed through the user's ability to create and control digital worlds, constructing imaginary identities that allow them to "conquer" these digital realms. Similar to the offer of power made to Christ, these virtual experiences provide the illusion of dominance and glory, without, however, having any real spiritual value. Users may be drawn into the apparent power that is offered, losing their real freedom and plunging their minds into illusions of dominance, without spiritual growth.

In Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game*⁴, the virtual world functions as a testing ground for strategic power, where the apparent victory in digital battlefields offers a temporary sense of power. However, the moral ambiguity that exists when power is achieved in a world without moral boundaries reflects the nature of virtual reality. The temptation of power in the digital age appears as a promise of absolute dominion, but just as Christ rejected the delusion of power over the world, modern humans are called to recognize the emptiness of pursuing glory through imaginary environments.

True power and freedom are not found in imaginary conquests or digital achievements, but in the worship of God and adherence to spiritual values. Just as Christ refused worldly authority, so too must humans resist the illusion of digital dominance, recognizing that true freedom lies in spiritual union with God.

III. Prospatheia In Virtual Reality

Just as Jesus resisted temptations in the desert, modern humans are also called to face the temptations presented in the imaginary world of virtual reality. Whether it's the pursuit of immediate satisfaction, power, or

worldly authority, virtual experiences amplify *prospatheia*, distracting the mind from its true spiritual path. Christ's call for spiritual resistance and the cultivation of *aprospatheia*—freedom from intense emotional attachment—can serve as an antidote to the temptations of the digital age.

Definition and conceptual approach of *prospatheia*

In *Hesychastic* theology, the concept of *prospatheia* is crucial, as it refers to a dynamic psychological state where passion and intense desire dominate a person's inner world. The term derives from the Greek word "*prospatho*," meaning "to suffer intensely" or "to endure additional suffering." It describes an internal condition where a person becomes enslaved by an overwhelming attraction to an object or person, turning this emotion into a consuming passion. Through *prospatheia*, individuals come to associate their well-being and happiness with the transient and material, leaving behind their spiritual journey toward God.

Prospatheia, when it takes hold of a person, leads to a gradual intensification of desire and emotion. It is not a static or fleeting state; rather, it evolves and intensifies, ultimately turning into a passion that consumes the whole being. This passionate attachment to the material world acts as a barrier to spiritual development, distancing the soul from its true spiritual mission.

The intensity of this emotional movement should not be underestimated. A person caught in *prospatheia* is not simply driven by a superficial desire but by something that becomes a driving force determining their spiritual condition. According to Saint Isaac the Syrian¹⁰, *prospatheia* is not merely a psychological reaction; it is the mind's complete inclination towards passions, which erodes a person's freedom to seek truth and God.

The concept of passion here should not be understood only in terms of psychological intensity. It is a complete commitment of the human being's psychosomatic forces toward the material and perishable goods. Saint Maximus the Confessor¹⁵ notes that a person who succumbs to *prospatheia* loses their spiritual balance, as the intensity of passion binds them to what is temporary and perishable.

In Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*⁵, it is suggested that when individuals become overly attached to material things, they risk falling into a state of inner desolation, where spiritual life can no longer thrive. This literary observation closely relates to *prospatheia*, where the human soul becomes entangled in the traps of the material world, losing all spiritual orientation.

In *Hesychastic* theology, *prospatheia* is not merely an emotional state or passion; it is the expression of the mind's disposition to turn toward the perishable things of the material world, diverting itself from its natural inclination to contemplate God. Saint Elias the Presbyter explains that *prospatheia* is the moment when the mind—by nature immaterial and destined to focus on God—reverses its course and focuses on the material world. This results in opposition to its very essence.

This disposition of the mind, to turn away from God and become attached to the material world, is described by Saint Symeon the New Theologian as a "friendship with the world" that manifests through an intense attraction to the perishable. The turning of the mind away from God and its focus on the material world is the central problem of *prospatheia*. Thus, *prospatheia* is not just a spiritual fall, but a fundamental stance of human existence that binds individuals to material passions and desires.

Recognizing this fall and the internal division between the spiritual and the material is the first step toward spiritual healing. In *Fear and Trembling*, Kierkegaard¹³ suggests that embracing the inherent contradictions of human existence, which tends toward the material and sin, is essential for achieving spiritual freedom.

***Prospatheia* as passionate attachment to the material world in virtual reality**

Virtual reality constitutes a modern technological tool that brings the human being face to face with new challenges, discovering ways to enhance and prolong existing psychological states. In virtual reality, *prospatheia* manifests as a passionate attachment to virtual objects and relationships that do not have real substance, thus gaining a new dimension. The virtual environment becomes a new form of "world" where the person maintains mental and emotional involvement with virtual objects and situations that lack real substance but bind the psyche just as material goods do.

The technology of immersion offers the user the opportunity to enter a fantasy world where the intense desire for material objects, relationships, and experiences can develop without the natural obstacles set by real life. The user becomes part of a world where their senses are bound by digital stimuli that replace the real world. This sensory "absorption" enhances *prospatheia*, as the virtual environment is designed to tempt the user, offering them imaginary satisfaction and fulfillment of desires. The phenomenon of immersion allows the user to believe, even temporarily, that their imagined experiences are real and that the relationships they create with digital objects are significant.

The desire to engage with these virtual elements, although unrelated to the physical world, becomes more intense as they offer the user the feeling of complete freedom and satisfaction, free from the consequences of the material world. Jean Baudrillard, in his work *Simulacra and Simulation*¹, analyzes how people interact with

the “simulations” of the world, instead of its true essence. In a world filled with images and imaginary representations, reality loses its weight, and individuals primarily relate to the “artificial” world presented to them. This is exactly what happens in virtual reality, where *prospatheia* becomes a process of intense desire to connect with something that has no real, material substance. However, this passion does not decrease in intensity due to its imaginary nature; rather, it intensifies as it offers immediate and unobstructed satisfaction.

Marshall McLuhan had already predicted in works such as *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*¹⁶, that technology would radically change the way humans interact with the world, creating new media that enhance the senses and emotions. Virtual reality, therefore, represents the realization of this prediction, where *prospatheia* not only intensifies but also acquires new forms as the immaterial and material intertwine and are replaced. Albert Camus, in his famous observation in *The Myth of Sisyphus*³, notes that “man is condemned to seek meaning in a world that refuses to offer it.” In the world of virtual reality, humans continue to seek meaning and satisfaction, even though the world itself is imaginary and offers no substantial fulfillment. This is the new danger of *prospatheia* in the digital world: it leads individuals into an illusion of control and happiness, diverting them from their true spiritual path.

The role of imagination in the function of *prospatheia* within virtual reality

Imagination plays a critical role in the spiritual struggle, as it can function both positively and negatively depending on how it is guided. On one hand, imagination has the power to inspire people toward spiritual upliftment, providing visions of a higher spiritual reality. For example, the human ability to imagine God, union with Him, and the Kingdom of Heaven can lead the soul to a deeper spiritual relationship and quest. This type of imagination, when integrated into prayer and guided by the grace of the Holy Spirit, can become a tool for spiritual progress and a pure relationship with God.

Saint John Chrysostom emphasizes the value of imagination in the spiritual life, noting that its proper use can contribute to understanding spiritual truth. When used with a pure heart and in prayer, it can offer important insights into Divine Grace and a person's spiritual development.

However, imagination can also become a serious obstacle on the spiritual path when it is unchecked and subjected to worldly desires. When the mind is surrendered to uncontrollable imaginations and material desires, it can stray far from the reality of God and become misled. This unchecked imagination can lead to spiritual delusion, creating illusions and causing confusion in a person's spiritual life.

In modern times, imagination finds new fields of application through digital platforms and virtual reality, offering humans the ability to create imaginary worlds and “live” in them. This creates a digital world where imagination surpasses reality, providing illusions of fulfillment and well-being while distancing people from their spiritual journey and God.

To combat the danger of misleading imagination, the Church Fathers, such as Saint Isaac the Syrian¹⁰ and Saint Maximus the Confessor¹⁵, propose cultivating *noetic* prayer and spiritual vigilance. Purifying the imagination from worldly images and constantly referencing God through prayer are the only safe ways to use imagination correctly in the spiritual life.

In this context, imagination can be a powerful tool for spiritual ascent, only when it remains under the control of prayer and divine grace, functioning as a bridge between humans and God rather than as a hindrance to their spiritual progress.

The spiritual effects of *prospatheia* on the human being within virtual reality

Strengthening the friendship of the world

Prospatheia, as the mental state in which the mind, detached from the vision of God, focuses on the transient and perishable things of the material world, is dramatically intensified in virtual reality. According to Symeon the New Theologian, the friendship towards the world, as the connection and attachment of the mind through *prospatheia* to the material and perishable objects of the world, constitutes a serious obstacle to human spiritual progress¹⁸.

In virtual reality, *prospatheia* acquires new dimensions. The user is confronted with a digital world where the satisfaction of desires is more immediate and seemingly without consequences. Saint John Climacus, in his work *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*¹¹, warns about the spiritual traps of excessive attachment to “ephemeral things”. The friendship of the world in virtual reality can take on new dimensions, as humans are lured by the imaginary possibilities that technology offers, which may seem innocent but actually distract the mind from God. Saint Maximus the Confessor¹⁵, analyzing the concept of *prospatheia*, points out that it leads to the internal fragmentation of a person and distances them from the spiritual freedom that only union with God can offer.

Thus, the strengthening of the friendship of the world in virtual reality becomes one of the most significant spiritual dangers, as humans move away from cultivating *aprosatheia* (dispassion) and self-control.

The disruption of the mind from God

Virtual experiences are not merely temporary pleasures; they create an environment where the mind is completely reoriented toward a digital universe, which distances it even further from the essential spiritual reality.

The mind, by nature, is designed to contemplate God, to focus on the immaterial world, and to connect with the spiritual dimension of existence. As Saint Gregory Palamas⁷ explains, the contemplation of God is the highest calling of humanity, which connects them with the essence of their being. However, when the mind turns away from this contemplation and becomes bound to transient things, it loses its divine perspective and becomes a prisoner of *prospatheia*. Virtual reality exacerbates this disruption. The user is drawn into imaginary images and virtual relationships, pulling the mind away from understanding the truth.

Prospatheia within virtual reality becomes a powerful tool of entrapment for the mind and the entire psyche of the person, who becomes ensnared by the desire for satisfaction through the digital objects and experiences offered in virtual reality. C.S. Lewis, in his work *The Screwtape Letters*¹⁴, mentions that temptations based on the distraction of the mind from God are the most dangerous, as they trap the person in a cycle of constant searching for something that will never truly satisfy them.

Loss of dispassion (Apatheia)

Prospatheia works against *apatheia*, as it strengthens the passionate inclinations of humans and binds them to the material world. In virtual reality, this process reaches another level, as humans surrender to a world where digital experiences satisfy their desires instantly and without physical limitations.

Saint Maximus the Confessor notes that *apatheia* is not merely abstaining from passions but is the complete freedom from the trap of *prospatheia*. When a person manages to overcome *prospatheia* and achieve *apatheia*, they become capable of contemplating God and living in harmony with their spiritual nature. In contrast, in virtual reality, where the senses and psychological desires dominate the center of existence, *apatheia* becomes more difficult. Individuals develop even stronger psychological bonds with virtual experiences, leading to a deeper state of *prospatheia*.

The loss of *apatheia* means that a person is no longer able to live a spiritual life free from passions and external attachments. In virtual reality, this loss is doubly dangerous, as the digital environment offers a superficial freedom and satisfaction, while in reality, it abolishes the internal freedom necessary for spiritual growth. Aldous Huxley points out in *Brave New World*⁹ that individuals are increasingly drawn to artificial experiences, which divert their attention from the true essence of mental and spiritual liberation.

IV. The Return To The Real World And The Psychological And Spiritual Consequences

Psychological effects

The transition from the immersive experience of virtual reality back to the real world is accompanied by various psychological effects, which can significantly impact a person's mental health and emotional balance. The comparison between the intense imaginary experiences of virtual reality and the inability of the real world to offer similar energy and immediacy may result in various psychological consequences.

One of the primary psychological effects that arise from the return to the real world after a virtual reality experience is the sense of alienation. The user who has been immersed in a digital world, where imagination and technology offer a rich and unlimited space for the satisfaction of desires, faces the "poorer" and simpler nature of the real world upon their return.

Sherry Turkle, a psychologist and researcher at MIT, in her work *Alone Together*¹⁹, notes that virtual reality and technology can lead to deep alienation, as the user returns to a world that seems less impressive. The continuous comparison between the intense virtual experience and the slower pace of everyday life may create feelings of disappointment and detachment from reality.

This sense of alienation is further intensified by the user's inability to find similar satisfaction or meaning in the real world. When imaginary experiences surpass reality in intensity and variety, the user may struggle to adjust to "normal" life, resulting in feelings of disconnection from daily activities and human relationships.

The intense *prospatheia* that develops in the virtual world can also lead to psychological dependence, as the user desires to constantly return to re-experience the false satisfaction of their desires. Virtual reality offers an environment where human desires are immediately fulfilled, something that can create an intense psychological need for repeated participation in this environment.

The concept of addiction to virtual reality has been extensively analyzed by researchers such as Mark Griffiths, who, in his work *Internet Addiction: A Critical Review of the Concept*⁸, notes that continuous participation in digital environments can lead to psychological dependence, with the user dedicating more and more time to the virtual world at the expense of their natural relationships and activities. The intense need to return to this world, which offers immediate satisfaction and avoidance of daily life, makes virtual reality both attractive and dangerous for mental health. Virtual reality creates the conditions for a new form of addiction, where *prospatheia* translates into a passionate attachment not only to the material world but also to the digital

fantasies made accessible by technology. This desire for repeated participation can weaken the user's mental resilience, leading to feelings of isolation and an inability to cope with real life.

Sigmund Freud, in his theories on psychic addiction, mentions that humans tend to repeat behaviors that offer immediate pleasure, even if these behaviors are destructive. This *prospatheia* for immediate pleasure in virtual reality can lead to mental dependence, as users seek a sense of fulfillment in a world of fantasy.

Spiritual effects

Prospatheia is not only an intense mental state linked to the material world but also serves as a significant obstacle to a person's spiritual health. The passionate connection with the material or virtual world distracts the mind from its goal, which is the contemplation of God and union with spiritual reality. This psychic passion disrupts the internal harmony of a person, as the mind, instead of focusing on God, becomes trapped in the transient and perishable pleasures of the world.

Saint Isaac the Syrian¹⁰ describes *prospatheia* as one of the primary factors leading the soul to spiritual turmoil and stagnation. The person dominated by *prospatheia* loses their inner peace and spiritual freedom since the desire for material and virtual objects creates an unending cycle of unfulfilled desire and emotional turmoil.

We can draw significant examples from the Church's tradition, which continuously warns of the danger of being distracted from God by engaging with "ephemeral things." Saint John Climacus¹¹, in his work *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, refers to many such traps that lead the soul away from God, such as the attachment to material pleasures and absorption in daily concerns. Specifically, in the Third Step, he speaks of how earthly pleasures bind the soul and make it lose its vigilance. These pleasures act like "hooks" that lure the soul away from its relationship with God.

Similarly, we can examine the words of Saint Isaac the Syrian, who warns about the mental state of *prospatheia*. The absorption in ephemeral things, according to the Saint, not only distances humans from divine grace but also distorts their ability to see the true purpose of life. Saint Symeon the New Theologian, on the other hand, describes involvement with the perishable as a trap that turns the mind into a "prisoner of the visible world," preventing it from turning toward God.

The Fathers of the Church constantly remind us of the need to remain spiritually vigilant, avoiding the internal estrangement caused by psychic absorption in transient and material concerns. This spiritual vigilance is particularly necessary in virtual reality, where *prospatheia* is intensified, and illusionary experiences can trap the soul in a false world.

In virtual reality, this phenomenon is exacerbated, as continuous participation in imaginary environments strengthens the passionate relationship with illusory pleasures. A person becomes trapped in a process of seeking immediate satisfaction, which, however, does not offer true spiritual fulfillment. This state leads to spiritual stagnation, as the mind can no longer advance in its quest for God and union with the divine.

Prospatheia ends up functioning as a barrier to spiritual health, creating a vicious cycle of mental and emotional tension that distances a person from inner peace. Carl Jung, in his work *Psychology and Religion*¹², emphasizes that passions and intense attachments create inner imbalance, leading humans away from their spiritual development.

V. The Need For Spiritual Vigilance And *Aprospatheia*

Aprospatheia offers a way out of the entrapment caused by *prospatheia*. Through spiritual vigilance and the cultivation of *aprospatheia*, a person can regain their spiritual freedom and maintain their inner peace. *Aprospatheia* is not simply the abstention from passionate desires; it is the conscious and spiritual decision of a person to disconnect from the material and virtual world and to turn toward the true source of psychic and spiritual fulfillment—God.

Spiritual vigilance enables a person to perceive the nature of *prospatheia* and avoid its trap, which keeps them enslaved to passions. Saint Gregory Palamas⁷ emphasizes that *aprospatheia* is not just liberation from passions but also the active effort of the mind to remain focused on God, avoiding the traps of the material world.

The practice of *aprospatheia* in daily life, as well as in virtual reality, allows a person to maintain their spiritual health and mental balance, avoiding the traps of *prospatheia*. Through spiritual vigilance, a person is able to recognize the illusory pleasures offered in the virtual world and reject them, preserving their path toward union with God.

Aprospatheia is one of the central goals of asceticism in the Orthodox Church, as it expresses the liberation of the human mind from passionate attachment to the material world and perishable pleasures. The concept of *aprospatheia* does not merely refer to abstention from desire but to the essential inner freedom of the mind from the passions that bind it to material things, diverting it from its spiritual path.

According to Saint Symeon the New Theologian, *aprospatheia* is the state in which the mind is no longer influenced by impulses arising from *prospatheia* and the desire for worldly things. It is a form of spiritual freedom where a person can direct their mind toward the spiritual contemplation of God, without being bound by

attachments to the material world. Aprospatheia offers a person the ability to return to the natural state of the mind, which is to behold God and not be trapped by the illusions of the material world.

As Saint John Climacus¹¹ observes, "Aprospatheia is the complete release of a person from the slavery of passions, allowing them to live in harmony with God." The struggle to be freed from prospatheia is not simple, as the mind is often swayed by worldly and material desires, which carry an internal tension and passion. Achieving aprospatheia requires a long-term effort of spiritual exercise and vigilance.

In a world where imaginative experiences offer instant gratification and strengthen prospatheia, aprospatheia becomes an even more important spiritual solution. Virtual reality functions as a field where the illusions of digital experiences intensify passionate attachment, creating a new world of temptations. Users of virtual reality can cultivate spiritual vigilance, recognizing that digital experiences are fleeting and superficial, lacking any true spiritual value. As Saint Maximus the Confessor¹⁵ emphasizes, a person must maintain their spiritual sensitivity so that they are not led astray by the illusions of the material or virtual world, diverting them from their journey toward union with God.

Thus, aprospatheia functions as a conscious spiritual strategy that helps a person avoid being trapped by digital fantasies and virtual experiences. Instead of succumbing to the offerings of technology for immediate satisfaction and pleasure, a person is called to exercise self-restraint and cultivate their spiritual stability, focusing on the pursuit of spiritual truth rather than the illusions offered by the digital world.

In virtual reality, a person has the opportunity to apply aprospatheia, recognizing the illusory and fleeting nature of digital objects and relationships while keeping their spiritual path intact from these deceptions. Simone Weil underscores in *Gravity and Grace*² that breaking free from the illusions of the world is a fundamental step on the path toward seeking God.

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