

# Foreword to Karl Jaspers' *Principles for Philosophizing*

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**Abstract** A summary statement about the five principles that define Jaspers' position of 1942/43, and a brief description of the circumstances for this hitherto unpublished writing of Jaspers.

The probate fragment of Karl Jaspers' *Principles of Philosophy: Introduction to Philosophical Life*, which is said to have secretly circulated in 1943 among the students of Heidelberg, consists of ten parts, of which five are transcribed and include about 350 printed pages. The parts VI–X, partly transcribed and partly in notes, consist of about 700 sheets. The project is like the hub of mature themes of Jaspers' philosophy which are then developed in the post-war period. They originate in philosophical faith that Jaspers characterizes in five principles:

1. God is
2. There is Unconditional Demand in Being
3. Man is Finite and Unfinishable
4. Man Can Live By Guidance Through God
5. Reality in the World has Diminishing Being between God and Existenz

Of these five principles he developed three in his later writings, namely, God; unconditional demand; and reality in the world has diminishing being between God and Existenz. The special feature of this writing of 1942/43 is its strong commitment which is otherwise quite atypical of Jaspers. It seems to reflect the crisis situation of the time, and something that he not only softened later, but also subjected to criticism. While the principles pertain to no particular religion, neither are they merely metaphysical, but indicate religious positivity, which may surprise many.

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