

A gravel path leads from the bottom center towards a bright light on the horizon. The path is flanked by grassy areas and rows of trees on both sides. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the path.

Press on to Spirituality

Life in the Image and Likeness of God

B.P. HARRIS

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TO
SPIRITUALITY

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B.P. Harris

Assembly Bookshelf
Sacramento

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PREFACE

Paul tells the Corinthian saints, in I Cor. 3:1a that he could not speak unto them as unto spiritual Christians. They were saints, indeed, but they were yet carnal, soulical, babes in Christ.

What would be Paul's assessment of the churches today? Would he praise us as being spiritual Christians, or would he chastise us for our carnality, or souliness?

This study is prayerfully given to the Church to consider these issues. We are in a spiritual warfare and our enemy is ever masterful and deceptive. Much that passes for spirituality today is not spiritual at all, but a mixture of man's wisdom and God's truth. It is a mixture of the things of the world and the things of God. The unfortunate thing, however, is that many are blinded to this condition.

The principle stands firm, you cannot mix the wool and the linen in the things of God. "Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, *as* of woollen and linen together." (Deuteronomy 22:11 KJV). God has ever admonished His children, since the days of Cain and Abel that we must walk before Him in a pure, unmixed manner, not with a mixture of our own thoughts, ideas, or ways mixed with His ways. He desires that we be a spiritual people, filled with His Spirit and Word, but, alas, how the opposite is true in so many churches.

Just as the children of Israel cried out, "...My God, we of Israel know You!" (Hosea 8:2), so too, the Church cries out today. However, I'm afraid we are in danger of the Lord declaring back to us, as He did to Israel in olden times, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..." (Hosea 4:16a). And, as Isaiah the prophet says, lack of knowledge leads into

captivity (Isa. 5:13).

How Christianity is held captive today to the things of the world. We are held captive to the rhythm of the world in our music, to the philosophies of the intellect in our thinking, and to the self-assertiveness of our “rights” in our walking. We have become a mixture of the cold and the hot and thus have become lukewarm. We sleep in our slumber and do not realize our lives are overgrown with the things of the world. As the proverb declares,

“I passed by the field of the sluggard and by the vineyard of the man lacking sense, and behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles; its surface was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, *and* received instruction. A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, then your poverty will come *as* a robber and your want like an armed man.” (Prov. 24:30-34).

Poverty has come upon the church of God today and we are in much want, yet because of our lack of knowledge, we think the opposite is true. We think we are rich, but we are poor. We think we are spiritual, but we are carnal.

May we see ourselves through the eyes of our Saviour and not through the eyes of our own estimation. We say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” yet the Lord tells us, “... you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.” (Rev. 3:17). May we all take the advice of the Lord as seen in the book of Revelation.

“I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and *that* the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed;

and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.” (Rev. 3:18).

Moreover, when we do so - when we see and know our true condition - let us declare with the prophet of old, “So let us know, let us press on to know the LORD...” (Hosea 6:3a).

Let us press on to know the Lord, for knowledge of the Lord is necessary, if we would truly be a spiritual people. Why is this so? Because we are made in the image and likeness of God, and with such knowledge of Him in our hearts, we can truly *press on to spirituality*.

May this be our prayer, not just for our self, but also for all the churches of God.

THE CONDITION OF SPIRITUALITY

"For this saith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name *is* Holy; I dwell in the high and holy *place*, with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" Isa. 57:15 KJV

"For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give *it*; thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Ps. 51: 16-17 KJV

When Peter first heard of the Lord Jesus Christ and was brought to him by his brother Andrew, we are told the first thing Jesus did was to "look" at him or "behold" him (Jn. 1:42 NASB). Many have written about this "look" of the Saviour, and I would like to share a few of my thoughts and their thoughts about this precious passage of Scripture in the beginning of our study on spirituality.

Stephan Kaung, in his booklet *Discipled to Christ*, mentions that the word "look" in this verse does not mean to glance at or to look upon briefly, but means to look or gaze upon intently. We are told the first thing the Lord did with Peter was to "look intently" upon him. What a look of the Saviour that must have been. Peter's heart must have melted in love for Jesus as a result of that look, because Peter more than any other disciple, as recorded in the Gospels, earnestly and exuberantly followed the Lord with all his being, with all the strength and love he could muster. Oh, how he loved the Lord. It must have seemed at times that the whole world could not contain the love he had for the Master - and oh, how

the Lord loved Peter. Peter was taken by the Lord into the innermost circle of disciples, indeed it seems that the Lord had a special love for Peter, for in Peter he found someone who loved Him with all his heart, soul, and might. Such is the type of followers the Lord desires.

Have you responded to the gaze of the Master, with your entire being? Remember that day when Jesus looked upon you with His gaze of love and mercy, that day when Jesus first saved you and forgave you of all your sins? Wasn't that a glorious day? Did you respond like Peter? Oh, how we should love our Saviour with all our heart. Without such an all-consuming love, we can never go on to spirituality and full maturity.

Such was the heart of Peter. When Peter finally found the One in whom his soul so long had sought, he determined to follow the Lord wherever the Lord might lead. And we find the Lord did not discourage Peter in his exuberance, but began to mold and make him into one of His most preeminent apostles - but oh how much Peter had to learn.

Andrew Murray states, in his book *Absolute Surrender*, that -

"Peter was a man of absolute surrender; he gave up all to follow Jesus. Peter was also a man of ready obedience. You remember Christ said to him, 'Launch out into the deep, and let down the net.' Peter the fisherman knew there were no fish there, for they had been toiling all night and had caught nothing; but he said: 'At thy word I will let down the net.' He submitted to the word of Jesus. Further, he was a man of great faith. When he saw Christ walking on the sea, he said; 'Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee'; and at the voice of Christ he stepped out of the boat and walked upon the water....Peter was a splendid man, a devoted

disciple of Jesus, and if he were living nowadays, everyone would say that he was an advanced Christian. And yet how much there was wanting in Peter!"¹

Why?

"...Because he had not been brought to an end of himself; he did not know himself."²

This is the *condition* that needs to be met if we want to live in true spirituality. We must be brought to an *end of ourselves*; an end to our own ingenuity and strength; an end to our own natural abilities and creativity carried over and used in place of the power of the Holy Spirit in the work of God. And this end can only be brought about by a complete self-disclosure of our self by the skillful hand of our Master. This is what it means to be broken in spirit. We're often so full of ourselves as we live the Christian life, so sure of our methods, so sure of our own abilities to get the job done, so sure of our intellect to comprehend the Word of God. Yet, one cannot be brought to full spirituality as long as one is still so confident in himself. And this is what Peter had to learn.

Peter followed the Lord in his own strength, with his own natural abilities. He followed the Lord with all his heart, but he did not understand that the Lord desired more of His disciples. He wanted disciples to follow Him not only with all their heart, but also disciples who followed Him in the way of the cross. Jesus said a disciple could not follow Him completely unless a disciple was willing to "...deny himself, and take up his cross..." (Matt. 16:24). Self, with all its

¹ Andrew Murry, *Absolute Surrender* (Moody Press, Chicago, IL) pg. 52

² Ibid. pg.51

confidence, strength, and ability had to be denied. It had to be left at the cross. This is what Peter still had to learn, and it is what we must still learn, if we would follow Jesus.

Stephan Kaung, in his booklet *Discipled to Christ*, says it this way -

"...The greatest hindrance to following the Lord lies in ourselves. If only Christ can be granted the permission to deal with our self-life, then He can do anything and everything with us - which is exactly what we will eventually find in the story of Simon Peter."³

Peter had said in Matt. 26:33-35 that "*Even* though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away." Oh, the love, yet also self-confidence of Peter! He said he never would desert the Lord, yet Jesus says in the next verse, "Truly I say to you that this *very* night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." But Peter was still so sure of himself, for he had not been broken in spirit.

Peter responds to the prophetic word of Jesus in this way. "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" Such was the life of Peter up to this point of his walk with the Lord. But all that was going to change.

Stephan Kaung continues in his booklet about this incident,

"...So confident was Peter in himself here. Yet the result was that he fell to the bottom. He could not even watch with his

³ Stephen Kaung, *Discipled to Christ*, (Christian Fellowship Publishers, New York, 1976) pg.56

Master in the Garden of Gethsemane! Where was his self-confidence there? His flesh could not even endure an hour's test. And ultimately, we shall find that Peter denied his Lord repeatedly. (See Matt. 26:69-75). In other words, this man's pride and boasting fell so completely that he came to the very end of himself."⁴

Not only did Peter not die for the Lord, he did not even acknowledge that he knew the Saviour. Yet in all this, Peter still did not recognize his weakness or frailty, and so the Lord did something that totally undid him. We are told in Luke 22:61 that immediately after Peter's final denial that the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Scripture does not tell us the Lord said anything, it says simply that He looked upon Peter, and what is interesting, is that this word for look is the same word used in John 1:42 when the Lord first looked upon Peter. It was not a mere glance, but a penetrating gaze. The Lord did not have to say anything when Peter's eyes met the eyes of the Saviour. Luke tells us, when their eyes met, Peter remembered the word of the Lord that he would deny Him, and it was then that Peter finally saw himself for what he really was. Peter had a full self-disclosure of himself by the searching look of his Master's gaze and Scripture tells us he immediately went out and wept bitterly.

What a look of the Lord that must have been to Peter. The same look, which years before, had so captured Peter and filled him with so much love for the Master, now completely undid him and broke him. That penetrating look of the Master changed Peter forever. No longer would he trust in himself or his own abilities. He was broken in spirit forever. Have you ever had that second look of the Lord? We've all

⁴ Ibid., pg.61-62

had the first look of the Lord, that wonderful look of love and mercy. But have you seen the second look of the Lord? We can never hear the voice of the Lord, as long as we are still filled with the voice of self. We can never sense the promptings of the Holy Spirit, if we are still prompted by self. If we would go on with the Lord, we must not hide our face from His second look. We must allow Him to do His work of love within our heart. We need a full self-disclosure by the Spirit of God. We need our Lord's second look. But God never leaves us with just a second look. Our Lord is not a hard Master - all that He brings us through springs out of His great and tender love for us. It is not pleasant to see the second look of the Master and be broken, but it is necessary. The way of the cross will always lead to the end of our self, but beyond this end is the third look of the Master. And this look brings our focus back to Him. The Lord doesn't want us to continually dwell on the awfulness of self, but rather would have us gaze back into His wonderful face. This is His third look.

Paul tells us in I Cor. 15:5 that after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, the first apostle He appeared to was Peter. We do not know anything of this third look of Jesus. What a tender meeting it must have been, I'm sure there was much weeping and sorrow. But you know the third look of Jesus completely restored Peter. No longer was Peter so boisterous in his relationship to the Lord. At a later time, he couldn't even say that he loved Jesus (with the same Greek word for love the Saviour used), as seen in John chapter 21; he could only say he had "affection" for Jesus (a lesser Greek word for love). But you know, I think Peter's love had never been stronger than it was at that time. It is just that he didn't know it, but the Lord knew it! And that is why He told Peter to feed His

sheep. It is only as God brings us to the end of ourselves that we can truly be useful to the Master's Work, because it is only then that we can truly be filled with His Holy Spirit, and begin a life of spirituality.

This is the first condition of spirituality - brokenness. Let's not trust in ourselves any longer in our personal walk, or in our own natural ability to do God's Work, because God wants to bring us to an end of ourselves and fill us with His Spirit. And it is through this discipline and filling of the Holy Spirit that we gain our entrance into spirituality - an entrance that will allow us not only to understand the nature of God, but also will allow us to understand our own nature.

By understanding the nature of God, we gain an understanding of ourselves. God created us according to His image and likeness. It is of utmost importance to understand the nature with which God created us, for such an understanding will be the beginning of a truly spiritual life - a life that is in the image and likeness of God. May He truly have His way in our lives.

THE BEGINNING OF SPIRITUALITY

According to Romans 1:20, creation is a reflection of the divine nature of God, and since we know that the nature of God is triune - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - the nature of creation must be triune. This, of course, is self-evident. We live in a triune universe of space, matter, and time. Space is three-dimensional. Matter is a threefoldness of energy, motion, and phenomena. Time is the unfolding of future, present and past. God has not left Himself without a witness. He desires to express Himself in all that He is and all that He does, and so we live in a triune universe.

The same truth applies, of course, when we come to God's highest creation in the universe - Man. Man is triune because the God who created him is triune. Man was created in the image and likeness of God. Man was created with a threefold nature to reflect the triunity of the God who made him.

As the Divine Being of God acts in unity with all three persons of the Godhead, so Man was created to walk and live in the unity of his threefold nature. Such was the case until the fall, at which time Man died spiritually and began to walk, not in a triunity to reflect the image of God, but in a distorted triunity, which reflected his own sin.

We were created to give God glory in all that we do or think. We were to be a reflection of the One who made us, but unfortunately, we became a reflection not of God, but of the sin within us. Man truly died with the fall. Instead of having God fill our hearts, sin filled our hearts. We became alive to sin in our bodies and dead to God in our spirits.

This is the condition of mankind today until we hear the good news of salvation; until we hear the good news of forgiveness of sin; until we are made alive through trust in Christ and receive a new spirit capable of receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit, in order to once again walk in such a manner to reflect the glory of God. This is the gift of salvation. This is the life we are called upon to walk. This is the life, which gives God glory, but alas, how often we still walk after fallen Adam and not after Christ. We still walk after the law of sin and death and not after Christ. Oh, we may pride ourselves that we do not walk after the sin of adultery, murder, or robbery, but what of the other works of the flesh like pride, greed, self-love and anger? Or we may pride ourselves that we control our anger and greed, but what of the other works of the flesh that we even bring into the work of God, our self-assertiveness, our creative ability or our own human wisdom - which may indeed build a big organization - but not the church of God that will survive the testing fires to come. Do not be confused, an entire church may be built of beautiful woodwork, but wood still burns. Many may admire it, but only that work wrought by the indwelling Spirit of God - the gold, silver, and precious stones will survive the testing fire of God. All the wood, hay and stubble will be burned away. (I Cor. 3:10-15). Wood, hay and stubble - works performed, indeed, in the name of God, but not performed in the power of God. All this is because we, as Christians, do not understand the utter depths to which we have fallen, not only in our body, but also in our soul and spirit.

As such, there are three types of Christianity: carnal Christianity, natural Christianity, and spiritual Christianity. We understand the first and try to avoid it, as we should. We

strive for the third and pray that it may be so, but unfortunately we too often live in the second totally oblivious to its damaging effect. Natural Christianity is that which arises from Christians who trust in their own ingenuity to do God's work and not in the Word of God. It arises from Christians who do God's work with their own natural abilities and not by the strength of the indwelling Spirit of God. It arises in Christians who use the wisdom of their own understanding, walking in the power of their soul to live the Christian life and to build the Lord's church, rather than denying the power of the soul, and instead, being careful to walk by the power of the Holy Spirit, in accordance with God's Word.

J. Gregory Mantle addresses this very point in his book entitled *Beyond Humiliation: The Way of the Cross*. I will first quote a part from a later portion in his book and then I will quote something from an earlier portion.

He writes:

"The two great pillars upon which true Scriptural Christianity rests are the greatness of our fall and the greatness of our redemption....Nothing is easier than self-deception; few things are so difficult as real self-disclosure. We may be claiming and even professing the experience of holiness, and yet know nothing of a total death to the carnal or natural life..."⁵

And now from an earlier portion—

"For obvious reasons no branch of knowledge is so neglected as knowledge of ourselves. In other sciences, knowledge flatters the vanity of the unsanctified heart...But true self-discovery wounds our pride, and spoils the good opinion we had formed and cherished

⁵ J. Gregory Mantle, *Beyond Humiliation, The Way of the Cross*, (Moody Press, Chicago, IL) Pg.28-29

of ourselves. We may be skilled in every other science and ignorant in this...."

"Self -love conspires with trust in our own hearts to make dupes of us as regards our spiritual account. Proverbially, and in the verdict of all experience, love is blind; and if love be blind, self-love being the strongest, the most subtle, the most changeless, the most difficult to eradicate of all loves, is blinder still. Self-love will not see, as self-trust cannot see, anything against us.... What is necessary then, since self-love will cause us to live in such a fool's paradise ... is the searchlight of God..."

"Our love of ease and our unwillingness to be disturbed, lead us to avoid the prayer: 'Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any way of pain in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23, 24).'"

"Painful and humiliating as the searching and exposure may be, the very beginning of a life that is all for God hinges upon our being absolutely honest with Him about our present spiritual condition."⁶

This honesty can only be known as we conform ourselves to the Word of God. And as we understand the things of God as recorded in the Word of God, we soon realize that our spiritual growth is in direct proportion to our knowledge of God (II Pet. 1:2-11).

Consequently, it is important to understand our God if we would be spiritual and this is now the point with which we would like to turn our attention.

As one grows in his knowledge of God, one is immediately aware that within the Godhead there is an order of Persons. The Person of the Father is the source, the Person of the Son is the manifestation, and the Person of the Holy Spirit is the affirmation. All three Persons of the Trinity are

⁶ Ibid. pg. 26-28

co-eternal, consubstantial, and co-equal. They are all equally God for they all possess the same substance without diminution. The Father and Son existed from all eternity along with the Holy Spirit - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit existing in perfect love, unity, and communion. However, this does not preclude the fact that the Scripture tells us there is an order *within* the Godhead of first, the Father, then the Son, and then the Holy Spirit (Matt.28:19). All things proceed from the Father, to the Son and by the Holy Spirit. The Son could do nothing from Himself, but only from the Father (Jn 5:19). It would be wrong to say the Son ever told the Father what to do. There is a definite order within the Godhead. There is subordination of order, *but not of substance.* As such, the Son takes a subordinate position of *order* and defers to the Father in all things (Jn. 5:19; 6:38). This leads to the perfect harmony and unity within the Godhead. The same should be so in Man who was created in the image and likeness of God.

Man was created a human being subsisting as spirit, body, and soul. As the Father is invisible and the source of Life within the Divine Being (Jn. 5:26; I Cor. 8:6), so, in an analogous manner, the spirit is invisible and the source of life within the human being (Jam.2:26). As the Son is the visible image or manifestation of the invisible Father (Col. 1:15; Jn. 14:9), so the body is the visible manifestation of man's invisible spirit. Moreover, as the Holy Spirit is the unseen Person, who affirms all that which the Father and Son are in their own Persons (I Cor. 2:9; Jn. 16:14), so the soul is the unseen evidence of man's personality and human thinking. *Man was created with an order of being.*

Everything that man was to do was to proceed from his spirit or his heart. Out of the heart proceed the issues of life

(Prov. 4:23). In the fall, however, all order was destroyed. Rather than following the lead of the human spirit, man now followed the leading of human flesh. Rather than following the life of the spirit, man now followed the rationality of his soul. He walked by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, rather than by the tree of life. Man continued in his degraded state until such a time that his heart was filled with nothing but evil thoughts and as such, even when he did something from the proper order of his heart first - he still was led in the way of sin. The order of Man was completely destroyed. Some men would let their bodies rule and, as such, would participate in gross immorality. Others, being more stoical, let their souls rule, and as such created the manifold philosophies of human wisdom and conduct; while yet others being more religious, indeed, let their spirits rule, but it was too late, their spirits were defiled, filled with sin, and dead to God, and so theirs was not a true religion of holiness, but a man-made religion and worship devoid of all truth and life. This is the consequence of the fall, but God be praised, He left us not in our fallen state, but provided a salvation - a salvation that would restore the proper order of life within Man. Through the propitious sacrifice of Christ upon the tree, God provided a cleansing and justification through the blood of Christ. Through faith in Christ, man could be born again. Old things passed away, and all things became new. Through the new birth man's spirit was cleansed and created anew. The Holy Spirit could now indwell man's heart. Through the new birth, the soul could now be renewed and be transformed from the subtle deceptions of human thought and philosophy and be filled with the ever-abiding Word of God. And through the new birth that old body of sin was *crucified with Christ upon the*

cross; one day to be glorified and raised an incorruptible body of purity and holiness. Oh, the wonders of salvation! God has provided for the proper order of life in man to be restored.

If we walk in the order of the blessed Trinity with our spirits, being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, directing our steps (in the same way that the Father, who is the source of all things in the Godhead, directs the Son and the Holy Spirit), the body will then be able to manifest the purity and holiness of a renewed spirit indwelt by the Spirit of God, and the soul, transformed by the Word of God will be able to affirm to others the truth and reality of that regenerated spirit and show forth the purified body as a temple of God.

The goal of all believers is to live a spiritual life - a life that is characterized by the rule of the Holy Spirit through the agency of the human spirit in accordance with God's Word. Carnal living, where the lusts of the body with its passions and desires hold sway, must be *consigned to the cross* where it was crucified with Christ. Natural or soulical Christianity, which is so prevalent today, where man's soul with its intellect, emotion and volition is continually cajoled and nurtured, must also be *nailed to the cross*. Man's rationality and logic manifested in such things today as Christian Psychology must be denied and *relegated to the cross*. The modern Christians emotional addiction to an entertainment-oriented worship, where worship is judged by how good we feel rather than by how it makes our Saviour feel, must be denied. And finally, the misguided, though well intentioned, will of the "purpose driven" Christian must be denied and substituted with the will of God as revealed in His Holy Word.

O the blessedness of the cross! Through the cross all that we inherited from Adam came to an end! Through the

cross “the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” (Gal. 6:14). The world with all its culture and glamour was crucified on the cross. The world with all its wisdom and philosophy was crucified on the cross. The world with all its goodness and religiosity was crucified on the cross! The world is not the answer for the Christian. And what is the world? - All that proceeded from Adam, both directly and indirectly.

All men and women descended physically from Adam, and every art, science, philosophy or religion proceeded from the fallen flesh inherited from our first parents. And what is God’s estimation of it? It must be counted crucified. It must die. Art cannot save us, science cannot save us, philosophy cannot save us, because all that is in the world is “in Adam,” and in Adam all die! (I Cor. 15:22). Only Christ can save us!

When Christ hung on the cross, He took all the sins of the world and bore them in His own body (I Pet. 2: 24; Isa. 53: 5-6). And what does Scripture mean by sins? What does the word mean? It means “missing the mark.” No one in the world could measure up to God. We all “missed the mark” of righteousness (Rom. 3:23).

Man did not measure up in his body. He could not keep his body as a temple of God - holy and pure. He missed the mark! Man did not measure up in his soul. His logic and wisdom failed him as he sought to please his Maker and Creator. His wisdom was foolishness to God (I Cor. 1: 20). Man missed the mark again! And finally, Mankind did not measure up in his spirit. His religious desire to worship and please God was done in ignorance and contradiction to all revelation. Man became vain in his imaginations and “exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed

forever. Amen.” (Rom. 1:25). He missed the mark in every way! The world is not the answer for the Christian, and the world is none other than all that we inherited from Adam.

We must understand that spirituality is not returning to the first Adam, but following the last Adam - the Lord Jesus Christ. It's not returning to the old creation but beginning anew in the new creation (II Cor. 5:17). Salvation does not restore us to walk as the first Man, but restores us to walk as the Second Man (I Cor. 15:45). Yes, we see the correct order of being, (as God intended), in Adam on the day he was created. He was constituted spirit, body, and soul, but Adam failed, and it is a mistake for the Christian, once saved, to think, “Now that I am saved all I need to do is roll up my sleeves and get to work for God, doing what I know is right, using all the natural talents and abilities that I inherited from Adam.” After all, as we often hear, since all that God created was good it cannot be wrong to use such power and abilities. But, to do so puts one in great risk and peril because it causes one to make the same mistake that Adam made - that God can be pleased by walking by the tree of knowledge of good and evil, rather than the tree of life.

God does not desire us to serve Him in our heavenly work with our own natural strength and wisdom. It is wrong to think if it's “good” it must be all right and acceptable to God, or if my “motives” are right, God must accept it! Consider Cain, whose “motive” was right - to give to God, and who did a “good” thing - worship. Yet God was not pleased with him. Or consider Uzzah, (II Sam. 6: 1-7) who God judged with death after he grabbed hold of the Ark of the Covenant to keep it from falling to the ground and perhaps breaking in pieces. Was it not a good thing, out of love for God, to protect the Ark of God from danger? Was not his motive pure? Yet, what

was God's estimation of his action? - Presumption and death. Why? - Because he sought to follow and serve God according to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, rather than by the tree of life. If he was following God, not just by his own perception of right and wrong, he would have known that God forbid him to touch the Ark. (Num. 1: 51; 4: 15). As God tells us in His Word, the things we do in service to God, we should do not by our own might, strength, or ideas but by His Spirit (Zech. 4: 6.).

God saved us to follow the last Adam, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Christ walked as Adam *should have walked*. Our Saviour had a strong spirit (Lu. 2:40 KJV). His soul was in complete submission to His Father (Jn. 5: 30; Matt. 26:39). And, as we know, our Lord's body was pure and undefiled - a perfect Temple of God (Jn. 2: 19-21; Heb. 7:26; II Cor. 5: 21).

As the last Adam, Christ had no defect in Himself. He had the perfect personality. He had perfect abilities. He had all the natural talent one could desire. He was a perfect Man in every way. If anyone could roll up his sleeves and get to work for God using all His natural talent, it was the Lord Jesus Christ. Anything He decided to do would have been good, for He was sinless, yet Christ did not walk that way. He refused to walk by the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but instead walked every moment of the day in complete obedience and dependence upon God. He went forth in the power of the Spirit and not by His own strength (Luke 4:14; Jn. 14:10; Acts 10:38). The things He did was not the result of His own creativity and wisdom, but instead was a perfect response and obedience to the leading of the Father through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "the Son can do nothing of himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing." (Jn 5:19). And in Jn. 8:28 "I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these

things as the Father taught Me.” Even the very words He spoke proceeded from the Father and not from His own desires (Jn. 12: 49).

Now if the Eternal Son of God walked in this way, how much more should we walk in this manner - not trusting in our own natural abilities and creativity to do God’s Work, nor trusting in our own perceptions of right and wrong - but ever relegating to the cross our ways and self in all its manifestations, whether it be a good religious self or a bad worldly self. Self is self in any of its manifestations and it must *not* be nurtured and loved, but rather denied.

The Lord tells us if we love Him then we must keep His commandments (Jn. 14: 15). And one of the earliest and foremost commandments the Lord gave to His disciples was, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny *himself*, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.” (Lu. 9:23). Yet this commandment is often ignored by many Christians today, for *self* is loved and esteemed rather than denied. The natural abilities of *self* are daily utilized in service to God, rather than being consigned to the cross of Christ.

Perhaps we should take to heart the warning of the Apostle John, “He that saith, I know Him and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” (I Jn. 2:4 KJV). John is not saying that such a person is not saved, but that such a person is denying Him in their living. How ironic! When we do not deny ourselves, we end up denying our Saviour.

May we all learn to take up our cross daily as our Lord commanded us and not trust in the strengths and activities of self, but rather trust in the strength and activity of the Lord who lives in us. May we abound in the work of the Lord, living and walking by His Holy Spirit, denying self and

obeying His Word. May we all glory in the cross of Christ and with Paul confess, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2: 20 KJV).

That is the beginning of spirituality. It is a goal that must cause us to follow God according to His way, truth, and life. And, as we know in John's gospel, Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. The Lord Jesus came not only to save us but also to show us the way we should walk. The *way* the Lord walked is the *way* we should walk.

We should walk in utter dependence on God, putting no confidence in ourselves, or our own natural talents, but rather we should walk with full confidence in God and His Word. As we mentioned before, Jesus said, "the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing." (Jn 5:19). And in Jn. 8:28 "I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. The *way* of Jesus was the way of the cross."

Secondly, Jesus walked in *truth* or reality. He lived in truth in all its glory. Do we want to walk in truth? Then we must walk by Christ, for Christ is the truth. We must be able to confess with Paul in Gal. 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Only when Christ lives His life through us will we then be able to walk a life of truth. Christ, who is truth, dwells in your heart unseen to the rest of the world. In Him is *true* love. In Him is *true* humility. In Him is *true* concern for a dying world. In Him is *true* power and wisdom.

Do you wish your life to be the same outwardly as it is inwardly in Christ? Then let Him live His life out from your heart through your soul and body by your denying of self. His

mind will be made visible to others when you have the mind of Christ. And when you have His mind, you will find your mind will be filled with the Word of God, for the mind of Christ is the same as the Word of God. If we have the mind of Christ, we will always cling to the Word of God and ever abide and walk according to His doctrine (II Jn. 1:9; Col. 3:16; I Tim. 6:3).

In the same way, if we let Him live His life in us, His love will be made visible to a dying world, and His “will” will be made visible to us, as we yield our will to Him. That walk will be a true walk in truth.

Lastly, we should walk in *life*. Paul says that Christ is our *life*. Christ, who dwells in our hearts, or spirits, is all that we need to live a life of godliness. All the riches of Christ dwell within our hearts; we only need to draw them out. Proverbs 20:5 says, "A plan in the heart of a man is like deep water, but a man of understanding draws it out." God has a plan for our lives and that plan has been put in our heart in Christ Jesus. All that we are to be, all that we are to do is all contained in that plan, and it is only as we draw it out that it will begin to unfold and Christ who is there in our hearts will be ready to live that plan out in our lives if we only let Him. For if Christ Jesus is living His life out through us, then we will be walking in the *way* of God's choosing, doing the will of God. Only as Christ lives His life out through us, will we be walking in *truth*, and only as He lives His life out through us, will we be walking in *life*.

This is the walk we need to be mindful of, but this walk can only come, in its fullness, from a complete self-disclosure of the utter depths to which we have fallen in Adam, and by an understanding of the nature given to us by God in creation.

We are triune in our nature because all that God created is

triune, and in understanding that nature will we be able to see the utter depths to which we have fallen, but also the great heights to which we have risen in Christ. It is the knowledge of that nature that will allow us to walk in the complete fullness of Christ, and it is that desire that has prompted this study. So with that in mind let us see how our nature is created in the image and likeness of our Triune God in order that we may walk like Him.

THE BASIS OF SPIRITUALITY

Deut. 6:5 KJV says "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and all thy might." Here we see the threefold nature of man - heart, soul, and might (body).

Heart is a word in Hebrew that can have many shades of meaning, but generally speaking, the most common expression for heart in the Old Testament is what in the New Testament we call "spirit." Perhaps it would be best to quote Franz Delitzsch one of the leading Old Testament scholars of the 19th century when he states in his book *A System of Biblical Psychology*:

"Heart, soul, and flesh, is the Old Testament trichotomy (Ps. 84:3; 16:9); heart and soul, the Old Testament designation of the pneumatic-psychical [spiritual-soulical] inner life."⁷

In other words, whenever you read "heart" in the Old Testament, you, for the most part, are reading what in the New Testament is called "spirit."

The same similarity can be seen in the New Testament. Paul was a Hebrew and, as such, he still used Hebrew phraseology. Paul could say he was there in spirit, (I Cor. 5:3) or he could say he was there in heart, (I Thess. 2:17 KJV). This is not to say the word is never used of physical heart or of the spirit and soul combined, but simply that in most places it means the human spirit. Perhaps it may have been the

⁷ Franz Delitzsch, *A System of Biblical Psychology*, (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI), 1966, pg. 297

Hebrew way to distinguish a human spirit from the spirit of animals. Animals are spoken of in the Old Testament as having a soul (Gen. 1:24 "creature" is the word "soul" in Heb.), and of having a spirit -

"Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" Eccl. 3:21 KJV

But animals are never spoken of having a heart in its spiritual sense. Perhaps heart was the Hebrew term for the spirit of man to differentiate it from the spirit of animals.

In any case, one can see that man was spoken of in the Old Testament as existing in a triune way. The same can be seen in the New Testament. Paul says in I Thess. 5:23, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

So if man is a threefold being reflecting the triune existence of our Triune God, what is the difference between all three parts of man? We can easily distinguish our body from our soul and spirit. But what is the difference between our soul and spirit?

This question has occupied the minds of many men of God since the earliest times. Most biblical scholars saw man as a threefold being in the early church. It was not until the rise of Latin Theology that men of God began to see man as simply a two-fold being of soul and body (with spirit being just another name for the soul). This idea, known as dichotomy, has continued as the majority opinion down through the centuries and still is the most common view held by the Roman Catholic Church and most Protestant churches. It was not until the Protestant Reformation that trichotomy

was once again revived. It was championed by many men of God in the 19th century, the foremost of whom, was Franz Delitzsch. This view became widely accepted by Evangelical Christianity. Lately, however, most in the evangelical world have been reverting back to the dichotomous view, if not in theory, at least in practice.

Which viewpoint is correct then? Man must be a threefold being, if indeed he is created in the image and likeness of God, because our God is Triune. If creation, according to Romans 1:20, is a reflection of our Triune God, then most assuredly Man, God's highest creation, reflects that trinity. And there, I think, we will find the answer.

As we saw in our last chapter, creation is triune because it consists of three basic properties: space, matter, and time. There is no way to get around it. Our universe is triune. However, did you know our universe could also be seen as two-fold or dichotomous? Our universe can also be seen as the material and the immaterial. There's the answer.

Man is threefold since he is spirit, soul, and body, but he is also two-fold since he consists of the corporeal and the incorporeal. Just as our universe is threefold yet also twofold, so man is threefold yet also twofold. Man is trichotomous, but he is also dichotomous.

Even Augustine, who most people think was dichotomous in his view of man, was really both, He states in his "Treatise on Faith and the Creed," (X, X, 23), "...there are three things of which man consist, - namely, spirit, soul, and body, - which again are spoken of as two, because frequently the soul is named along with the spirit..."⁸

Franz Delitzsch put it this way. Man is -

⁸ Philip Schaff, ed. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 3* (T&T Clark, Edinburgh; Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1993) pg. 331

"...trichotomous (Ps. 16:9; I Thess. 5:23), and yet dichotomous."⁹

Man is "...spirit, soul, and body; but spirit and soul belong to each other as principium ad principia... the former has its life immediately from God, the latter mediately from the spirit."¹⁰

He also says -

"...The soul must be more than...the individualization of the spirit; for the Scripture certainly appropriates to the spirit and to the soul distinct functions..."¹¹

Therefore, we see that while man is dichotomous since he has an inner man and an outward man, man is also trichotomous since that inner man is made up of two distinct parts: spirit and soul. (See Fig.1)

An analogy we see in Scripture would be the Tabernacle, which, while being two-fold with the Tabernacle Proper and the Outer Court, was also threefold since the Tabernacle was made up of the Outer Court, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies. (See Fig. 2)

⁹ Franz Delitzsch, *New Commentary of Genesis, vol. 1* (Klock and Klock Christian Publishers, Minneapolis, 1978) pg. 120

¹⁰ Ibid., Vol. 1 pg. 120

¹¹ Franz Delitzsch, *A System of Biblical Psychology*, (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1966), pg. 99

Fig.1

Inner and Outward Man

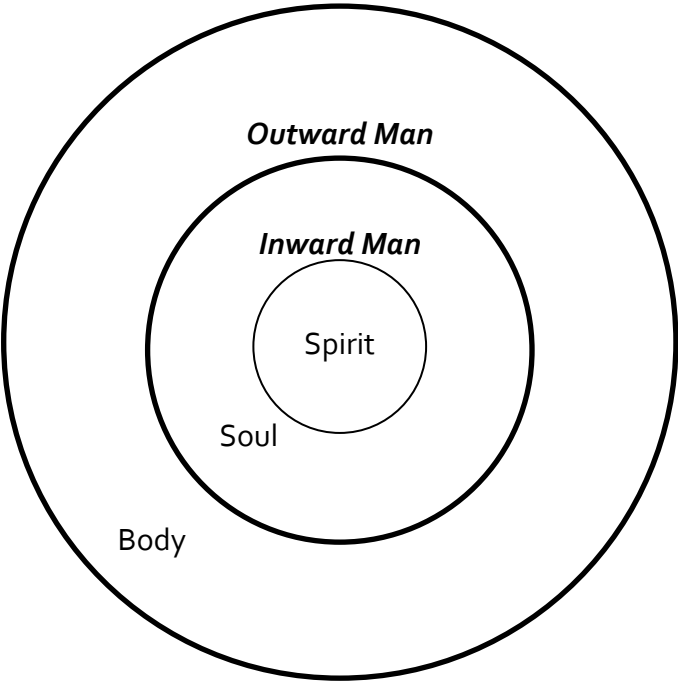
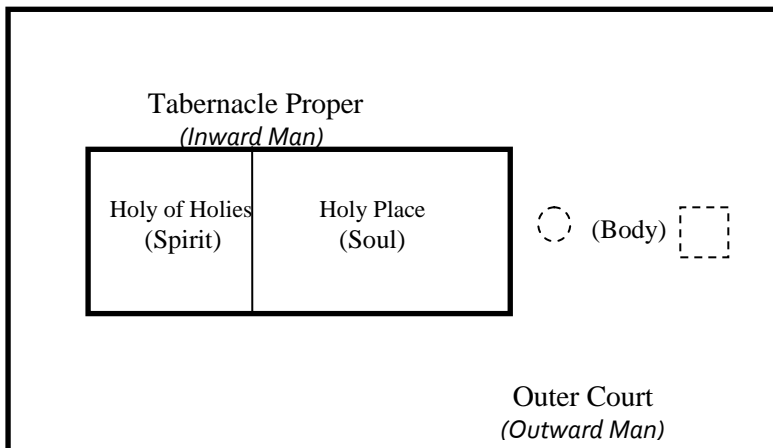


Fig. 2

Tabernacle in the Wilderness



So with that groundwork laid, let's go on with our study.

The verses that show that man has a spirit are shown in such verses as these:

"The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord." Prov. 20:27

"The spirit indeed is willing" Matt. 26:41KJV

"Jesus perceiving in his spirit" Mark 2:8 KJV

"He sighed deeply in his spirit" Mark 8:12KJV

"My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior" Luke 1:47

"He was deeply moved in spirit" John 11:33

"Being fervent in spirit" Acts 18:25

"And now, behold, bound in the spirit" Acts 20:22

"Whom I serve in my spirit" Rom. 1:9

"The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit" Rom. 8:16

"What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him" I Cor. 2:11 KJV

"They have refreshed my spirit and yours" I Cor. 16:18

"His spirit has been refreshed by you all" 2 Cor. 7:13

"The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit" 2 Tim. 4:22 KJV

The verses that show that man has a soul are shown in such verses as these:

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul" Ps. 42:5 KJV

"My soul is deeply grieved" Matt. 26:38

"My soul doth magnify the Lord" Luke 1:46 KJV

"Now my soul has become troubled" John 12:27

"Were of one heart and soul" Acts 4:32

"I call God as witness to my soul" 2 Cor. 1:23

"For they keep watch over your souls" Heb. 13:17

"Ye have purified your souls" I Pet. 1:22 KJV

"Which war against your soul" I Pet. 2:11

That man has a body, of course, is self-evident.

So if man has a spirit that is different from his soul, "What is the spirit?" The spirit is our innermost being, like the holiest of all in the Tabernacle. It is deeper than our soul. It is our heart, or as Peter says, "the hidden person of the heart" (I Pet. 3:4). It is deeper than our random thoughts. It is the real you - how you really feel, which no one knows but yourself (I Cor. 2:11). It is deeper than your outward emotions that you might project to others, but it's your real feelings deep inside. This inward spirit is what Paul referred to in II Cor. 6:10 when he says that as servants of Christ they were "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." They were sorrowful in their soul, due to certain circumstances, but they were always rejoicing down deep in their spirits.

In II Cor. 4:8 he says it this way, "*we are* afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed." Nothing could shake Paul from his deep abiding trust and peace, which was his experience down deep in his spirit, although in his soul, he might have been confused and distressed.

Some have likened it to a storm raging on the ocean, but if you go down beneath the raging storm, you will find quiet beneath the waters. This is the peace that passes all understanding - the peace down deep in our spirits, which is ours, because Christ dwells there. But how often we forget,

(the writer included), and try to ride out the storms of life in the raging waves of confusion, fear, and distress that we experience in our souls, instead of trusting Christ down deep in our spirits.

It is in our spirits where this consciousness is found. Some have said that our spirit is where we are conscious of God, our soul where we are conscious of self and our bodies where we are conscious of this physical world of senses. It was in your spirit where you first met God when the Holy Spirit convicted you of your sin. Wasn't it glorious when you first came to know the Lord? It might not have made sense in your mind or soul, but down deep inside you knew the gospel was true and that you needed a Saviour. That was God speaking to you in your spirit.

So if our spirit and soul are different, what is the purpose for them? What are their functions? Basically, the spirit and soul are both made up of three parts. The spirit contains our conscience, affections, and will. The soul contains our mind, emotions, and volition (the volition of the soul is distinguished from the will of the spirit in that the volition of the soul is simply the outward exercise of the will of the spirit - what we "will" in our spirit or heart is put into action by the "volition" of the soul. In the same way, the emotions of the soul are the outward manifestation of the affections of the spirit).

Now let us look at the verses of the Bible that show us these aspects.

Some verses that show us the function of conscience in man's spirit are:

"The Lord thy God hardened his spirit" Deut. 2:30 KJV

"Renew a right spirit within me" Ps. 51:10 KJV

"His spirit was stirred in him when he saw that the city wholly given to idolatry" Acts 17:16 KJV

"The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit" Rom. 8:16 NKJV

"The Law written in their hearts (spirits), their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts (soul) alternately accusing or else defending themselves." Rom.2: 15

"My conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit."
Rom. 9:1 KJV

"Hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." Heb. 10:22 KJV

Some verses that speak of the function of affections in our spirit are:

"My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." Luke 1:47 KJV

"Worship the Father in spirit and truth." Jn. 4:23

"I will sing with the spirit" I Cor. 14:15 KJV

"Why is your spirit so sad" I Kings 21:5 KJV

"I will speak in the anguish of my spirit." Job 7:11 KJV

"When my spirit was overwhelmed within me." Ps. 142:3 KJV

Some verses that show the function of the will of our spirit are:

"Everyone whose heart made them willing." Ex. 35:29 KJV

"The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation." II Chron. 36:22 KJV

"The spirit within me constraineth me." Job 32:18 KJV

"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matt. 26:41 KJV

In regards to the soul, some verses that show the mind or intellect of the soul are:

"How long shall I take counsel in my soul" Ps. 13:2 KJV

"That my soul knoweth right well" Ps. 139:14 KJV

"He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul" Prov.15:32. KJV

"Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good" Prov. 19:2 KJV

"My soul hath *them* still in remembrance" Lam. 3:20 KJV

Some verses that show the emotion of the soul are:

"And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD" Ps. 35:9 KJV

"My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the LORD" Ps. 84:2 KJV

"My soul melteth for heaviness" Ps. 119:28 KJV

"O thou whom my soul loveth" Song of Sol. 1:7 KJV

"My soul is exceeding sorrowful" Matt. 26:38 KJV

Some verses that show the volition of the soul are:

"...you shall let her go wherever she wishes" (lit. according to her soul) Deut. 21:14 (NASB)

"My soul refuses to touch them" Job 6:7 (NASB)

"My soul chooseth strangling" Job 7:15 KJV

"Unto the will (lit. the soul) of mine enemies" Ps. 27:12 KJV

"Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will (lit. the soul) of his enemies." Ps. 41:2 KJV

Lets now look how all these functions related together.

All that man is flows from his spirit or heart. Solomon says to guard your heart "...for from it flows the springs of life." (Prov. 4:23). The spirit is the deepest part of man and the soul affirms what is in the heart or spirit. The Lord Jesus said that "The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good: and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart." (Luke 6:45). Man can only know the revealed personality of another individual - only that which that person reveals through his soul, but the innermost thoughts of the spirit of man can only be known by the man himself (I Cor. 2:11).

This procession should make sense to us, because as we said, we are created in the image and likeness of God. As there is a procession or movement within the Godhead, so within man there is a procession or movement. All things flow from the Father, who is the source, unto the Son and the Holy Spirit who image and affirm, respectively, all that they receive from the Father. This is theologically known as procession. Although, this has been part of the historic

Christian Faith down through the centuries, this aspect of Trinitarian Theology has of late been ignored or denied, and it has affected Christianity's concept of spirituality.

The Son was eternally begotten of the Father before all ages and the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father through the Son, was eternally spirated - all three Persons being co-eternal, co-equal, and consubstantial. Therefore, as the Father is the source of all things within the Divine Being, so the human spirit should be the source of all things within the human being. As the Son and the Holy Spirit image and affirm the will of the Father, respectively, so the body and the soul should image and affirm, respectively, all that which is in the human spirit.

This is why it is important to understand the differences between our soul and spirit, because it is in our spirit where we are conscious of God and where the Holy Spirit leads us. It should be the source of our living. All things should *proceed* from the guidance of God in our spirit. It is the spirit where our fellowship with God begins, and it is in our spirit where we must worship God in truth (Jn. 4:24). So with that in mind, let's continue with our study.

THE MEANS OF SPIRITUALITY

Conscience

As we mentioned before, the spirit is made up with three different functions: conscience, affection, and will. The conscience is the highest part of man's spirit. The word "conscience" in the Greek language is made up of two words – "sun," which means "with," and "oida," which means, "to know." One could say it means "with knowledge."

The Greek word here for knowledge, though, is not the same type of knowledge we might think of. In Greek, there are two basic words for knowledge - "ginosko" and "oida." According to Abbott-Smith, in his *Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*, "ginosko" refers to knowledge gained through experience, and "oida" can refer to intuitive knowledge¹², and it is this root word that is used in the construction of the word for conscience.

Most only think of our conscience, as that part of us that tells us when we have done right or wrong, but that is not doing justice to the New Testament word used by Paul. Conscience, in the New Testament sense, is not only the intuitive comprehension of good and evil; it is also the intuitive comprehension of God, so that conscience, in the biblical sense, is also that part of our spirit where we are conscious of God Himself. (In fact, the Old English word conscience carried with it the meaning of consciousness, so that the KJV translators used a word that contained the meaning of "consciousness" to translate that Greek word for

¹² Abbott-Smith, *Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*, (T.&T. Clark, Edinburgh), 1968, pg.92-93.

conscience).

Conscience, therefore, also means consciousness. That is why we are told to have a good conscience, a pure conscience, and a clear conscience (I Tim. 1:5,19; 3:9; Acts 24:16). When our conscience is good, pure and clear, we are not only conscious of God's will and those things that are contrary to God's will, but we are also conscious of God Himself, in an intuitive sense. This is the difference between walking by the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and walking by the tree of life.

If a Christian walks by a conscience that is not good, pure and clear, such a one may soon find themselves doing the right things at the wrong time, or the wrong things at the right time. They do not understand that just because something is right does not mean it should necessarily be done. The Lord Jesus, of course, is our example for this. Anything He would have chosen to do would have been right and good, but that was not the determining factor for Him. What guided Him was, "Is this the will of my Father?" (see Jn. 5:19-20,30; 8:28-29). The Son did not do things just because it was the right thing to do, but He did them because the Father was ever guiding His footsteps (Lu. 4:1, 14).

When we do things *only* based upon our perception that something is not wrong and so must be right, rather than upon the leading of God, we are not able to do those things in the power of the Spirit. We will end up doing those things in the power of our soul with its natural abilities. Such works will not last but will be burnt up. Only those things done under the guidance of the Holy Spirit will last. And the only way we can be sure we are perceiving the guidance of the Holy Spirit is to have a conscience that is good, pure and clear. In that way, we can have a consciousness of God in our spirit - in our

conscience. This is walking by the tree of life.

This intuitive knowledge is also spoken of in I John 2:20, "But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know." This in Greek, again, is the word "oida." The same root word used in conscience. We all have an anointing from God, the earnest of our inheritance - the Holy Spirit, and we all know God because of that anointing. We do not need anyone to teach us to know God because we all know God in our spirit, in the innermost depths of our being, in our conscience.

"And they shall not teach every one his fellow citizen, and every one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know (oida) me, from the least to the greatest of them." (Heb. 8:11).

This is not the knowledge we gain of God from experience (ginosko). This is the very basic knowledge we have of God intuitively, whereby we cry "Abba, Father." Do a little test on yourself. Try not to believe in God. Can you do it? No, of course not, because down deeper than your mind or soul, in your spirit, you have an "anointing" and you know God apart from all reason or explanation. That intuitive knowledge you have of God is from the conscience of your spirit.

Another verse, which shows this, is I Cor. 2:11-15, which states:

"For who among men knows (oida) the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows (oida) except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit who is from God, that we might know (oida) the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human

wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised."

Only we ourselves know intuitively our own thoughts. Others cannot know them. So too, only the Spirit of God knows the things of God. And it is only by our spirit that we can know the "things of God" revealed to us by His Spirit, because they are spiritually discerned. It is those "things" that Paul taught to the church in Corinth, but they did not receive all the things Paul taught to them as the "things of God." Why? - Because the things of God can only be spiritually discerned in our conscience and they were not all spiritual, but were natural and carnal.

Paul says in this passage that the "natural" man cannot receive the things of God, because they can only be discerned spiritually. Who is the natural man? The word natural here is not really understood by most English speaking Christians, perhaps because of the way it was translated. The word in the Greek is "psuchikos," and is the adjective for the Greek word "psuche," which we translate soul. In the same way the Greek word "pneumatikos," which we translate spiritual, is the adjective of the Greek word "pneuma," which we translate spirit. In other words, one could properly translate "psuchikos," as "soulical," which perhaps it should, for it would better define the word to English speaking Christians. (See Fig.3)

To be a natural man is to be a soulical man, in other words, a man who is primarily controlled by his soul. To be a carnal man is to be a man who is primarily controlled by his flesh, and to be a spiritual man is to be one who is primarily controlled by his spirit, having first been indwelt by the Spirit

of God.

Fig. 3

THREE DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHRISTIANS ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES		
<u>Noun</u>		<u>Adjective</u>
Characterized by a renewed spirit		
Pneuma (spirit)	-----> I Cor. 2:15; 3:1; 14:37	Pneumatikos (spiritual)
Characterized by a fleshly soul		
Psuche (soul)	-----> I Cor. 2:14 cf. 3:3	Psuchikos* (soulical)
Characterized by the flesh or body		
Sarx (flesh)	-----> I Cor. 3:1 & 3	Sarkikos (carnal)
*translated “natural” in most translations, but as seen above it is simply the adjective of the Greek word “soul” as “spiritual” is the adjective of the Greek word for “spirit”, and, consequently, would be better understood if translated as “soulical.”		

Now many argue that Paul is not talking here about Christians, but about the unsaved, and therefore conclude this does not apply to Christians. Now that viewpoint is open to discussion, but assume that such a viewpoint is correct and Paul is referring in verse 14 to the unsaved man who trusts in his own intellect, with its own wisdom and philosophy. Does

that mean it cannot apply also to a Christian? Indeed it can, because everything an unsaved man can do, a Christian can do. In fact, Paul implies this when he says they are walking like “mere men” in I Cor. 3:3. Who are the “mere men” in the context? The ones that were called “natural,” or “soulical” in the previous verses; they were the “mere men.”

Let us ask, “Can the unsaved man be carnal?” Indeed, he can and is, but so can a Christian be carnal as Paul says they are in chapter 3 verse 1. Everything an unsaved man can practice (save a total life of continual sin, absent the chastening of the Lord), a Christian can practice. That is the problem in modern Christianity. We may not be carnal in our Christianity, but we sure are natural or soulical in our Christianity. We are acting like “mere men.” (See Chart)

We are governed by the wisdom and creativity of our soul in our approach to the things of God, instead of being governed by the Holy Spirit speaking through the Word of God to our human spirit, and thus, rather than being a “spiritual” people, we are a “soulical” people. That is why Paul always prays for Christians that they may have a proper spirit, strengthened and pure (Eph. 1:17; 3:16; I Cor. 7:1). It is only as we have a proper spirit strengthened, pure, and filled with the Holy Spirit that we can have a good and pure conscience that can correctly apprehend the complete and perfect will of God.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOULICAL CHRISTIAN AS SEEN IN THE BOOK OF CORINTHIANS

“...are you not walking like *mere* men?” I Cor. 3:3b

They will be ones who trust in the wisdom of men rather than the power of God. I Cor. 2:5

They will be characterized by envy, strife and division. I Cor. 3:3

They will be puffed up with self-inflated pride. I Cor. 4:6

They will pride themselves in their toleration. I Cor. 5:6

They will not allow themselves to be taken “advantaged of” or cheated. I Cor. 6:7

They will be puffed up in their knowledge. I Cor. 8:1; 13:2

They’ll tend to ask for money, either for themselves or for their ministry. I Cor. 9: 6-8,15, 18

Their faith in the power of God will be sporadic. I Cor. 10:9 cf. Num 21: 1-6

They will complain or grumble against authority. I Cor. 10:10 cf. Num 16

They will be self-centered and not care about others feelings. I Cor. 10:24

They will not discern the Lord’s body and tend to be “snobbish.” I Cor. 11:29

They will be impatient. They will behave rudely. They are glad when someone they do not like fails or sins. They will not give someone “the benefit of the doubt.” They do not show much hope for the future. I Cor. 13: 4-7

They think that possession of “gifts of God’s grace” is proof of spiritual maturity, rather than the proof being the exercise of “Christian love and grace.” I Cor. 13 & 14

They seek to edify themselves, rather than seek to edify others. I Cor. 14

They thrive on outward excitement and entertainment, rather than on the order of God. Although they do not realize it, their focus is on themselves, rather than on God. I Cor. 14: 40

They would be the one who thinks, “None of this applies to me!” I Cor. 3:18; 8:2

One last passage we wish to look at concerning this intuitive knowledge is found in the Gospel of John 10:2-5:

"But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens; and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."

John uses the same Greek word here for know (*oida*), as he does in his first epistle. As we have an anointing that allows us to intuitively discern between truth and error, so we have an anointing that allows us to intuitively know the voice of our Shepherd and not the voice of a stranger.

Have you heard the voice of the Shepherd speak to you down deep in your conscience, your spirit? He longs to commune with us there. It is so important to have a strong spirit (Luke 1:80), and a clear conscience (II Tim. 1:3). Only as we are thus strengthened and clear can we clearly follow the leading of our Great Shepherd and Saviour, Jesus Christ. With a clear conscience, our walk will be pure before the Lord. As we take a wrong path for our lives, His Holy Spirit will speak to us in the conscience of our spirit and direct us back to the right path. To walk by the spirit (Gal. 5:16), is to walk by the conscience in conjunction with God's Word and God's Spirit. It is by our conscience that we are to serve God, because it is by our conscience that we can know God Himself and affirm His will in our lives. It is only through a clear and pure conscience that we can serve the living God and do the works of God.

Hebrews 9:14 says, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" This is a continual process of constant watching and care.

Andrew Murray states in his book on Hebrews the following regarding this process:

"We must not regard the cleansing in the blood of Christ as the end, the final aim, of redemption. It is only the beginning, the means to a higher end - the fitness for the service of the living God....The blood gives cleansing from dead works, the works of the law and of self, with its own efforts; it brings us into a living relation to the living God....He is the living God! He speaks and hears. He feels and acts. He has the power to make us know that He is near to us, and that He receives us when we come near to Him.

The knowledge of the living God is the ground of a living faith, a living fellowship, and a living service. As the living God, He is all, and does all and fills all - the ever present, ever working God...It is for this our conscience is cleansed in the blood... A life in the Holiest of All is a life in which everything is done under the sense of God's glory and presence....

We still have outer-court Christians, who look at Calvary, and trust for forgiveness, but know nothing of the access to God which the more direct and powerful application of the blood from heaven by the Holy Spirit gives.... That blood brings the life of the Holiest into our hearts, cleanses our conscience from every dead work, from every attempt and every hope to do anything in our *own strength*, give the consciousness that we are now ransomed and set free and empowered from heaven to serve the God of heaven in the *power of a life* that comes from heaven. The blood of Christ doth indeed cleanse us to serve the living God!"¹³

¹³ Andrew Murry, *The Holiest of All*, (Fleming H. Revell Company, Old Tappan, NJ), Pg. 307-310

May we always have a clear conscience so that we can clearly apprehend God's presence and will for our lives.

Affections

In addition, we saw that the spirit consisted of the function of affections. Affections give feeling to what we intuitively know in our conscience. If we have a clear conscience before God, sprinkled clean by His blood, then we can enter into the Holy of Holies and sense the presence of God down deep in our spirits. (Heb. 10:19-22). What we intuitively *know* in our conscience we *sense* in our affections. True worship, Jesus said, is those who worship in spirit and truth. True worship begins down deep in our spirit and proceeds out through our soul and body. How often do we sometimes find ourselves singing a song and not being enthralled with our Lord, but thinking of what we will have for lunch that day? That is not worship in the spirit but a shallow, perfunctory, worship of the soul.

The worship our Lord desires will be a worship that will command our entire being. The worship of our soul, with its mind, emotions and volition, should spring forth from the worship of our spirit, with its conscience, affections and will. The proper order of "worship in spirit" is - spirit, soul, and body.

One can see this in Luke 1:46, 47: "And Mary said: [body - her mouth] 'My soul exalts [exalts, in the Greek, is in the present tense] the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced [in the Greek, has rejoiced is an aorist, which, in the indicative, is similar to our English past tense] in God my Savior.'" Mary's worship began first in her spirit and then proceeded to

her soul and then outward through her lips. That is true worship of the spirit. Mary's faith produced a joy in her heart, down deep in her spirit, in her affections. Our spirit has the capability of feeling and that is where our true feelings originate. Mary felt that joy in her spirit. She then gave form to that joy in the exaltation of her soul, which was expressed in the praise of her lips.

Oh, for the rapturous joy of worship in the spirit! If we come to Sunday worship and have our minds occupied with a thousand other things, let's humbly bow before our God to cleanse our conscience so that we can sense His presence and thus worship in spirit and truth.

Will

The last function of the spirit we see is will. This is perhaps the easiest to see. When we apprehend God's will in our conscience, in conjunction with His Word, and sense that will in our affections, it produces a will or intention in our spirit to either obey or ignore His promptings. When we obey, then we purpose in our spirit to do God's will (Acts 19:21 NASB), and that will is exercised by the volition of our soul. The volition of our soul is the completion of the intention or will of our spirit. According to Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary, intention means, "purpose conceived."¹⁴ Purpose conceived is the intention or will of the spirit. The spirit is where our will *begins*. The volition of the soul is where the will *ends* or is completed. Volition, according to Funk and Wagnalls, means "exercise of the

¹⁴ Funk & Wagnalls, *Standard Dictionary of the English Language*, (JG. Ferguson Publishing Co. Chicago, IL), 1976, pg. 661

will"¹⁵(intention). When we use the volition of our soul, we are exercising the will or intention of our spirits. If we would do God's will in our life, then we must purpose in our spirits to do that will and then exercise our volition to accomplish that will.

However, we must be careful that what we purpose begins in our spirit and not in our soul. Because of the fall, man is able to purpose in his soul. This purposing does not originate from the Holy Spirit speaking to our spirits, but, rather originates from outward influences and ideas. In some cases, it might even originate from verses of the Bible. But because such verses or principles are not being apprehended in our spirit, but are rather being apprehended by our intellect or mind, one soon finds that the purposes made do not last but soon falter. Consider the experiences of Paul in Romans chapter seven. Lasting spiritual changes will not be experienced by God's people until they learn to purpose in their spirits and not in their souls. If we desire to go on to spirituality we must be careful that all things begin by the Holy Spirit speaking to our spirit. The spirit should be the ruling factor in our being, not our soul or flesh.

Thus, we see the varied functions of the human spirit. The spirit is that part of man where our walk with the Lord must begin. It is through the Holy Spirit guiding and directing us in our spirit, in conjunction with His Word that we can truly learn to walk in the spirit and worship our God in spirit and truth. It is such worshippers the Father desires. May we be such worshippers, and be such servants who serve Him in our spirit (Rom. 1:9).

¹⁵ Ibid., pg. 1408

THE SOUL

The soul, as we saw, is made up of the mind, emotions, and volition. The soul is that part of us that allows us to express our personality. The soul takes the real you, and allows it to be expressed outward to other people.

With some, who are more intellectually inclined, one finds the mind of his soul playing a most important part. Others perhaps will find their emotions playing the more important part, while others will find themselves strong willed. Now it does not matter what part of our soul is more prevalent than the other parts, as long as we remember we are not to walk by our soul, but by our spirit in our service to God. God will use any type of person as long as we are yielded to Him through our spirit.

However, to walk apart from the Holy Spirit through our spirit is to walk by one's own self or soul, and that is what makes a soulical or natural person. Scripture identifies the soul with self (See Fig. 4), and as such, if we would “deny our self,” as our Lord enjoins us, then we must deny our soul with its unrenewed mind, with its emotions which are contrary to faith, and with its desires which are often in opposition to God’s will. (See Fig. 5)

Fig. 4 – THE SOUL IDENTIFIED WITH SELF

<p>Matt. 16:24-26a</p> <p>“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his <u>soul</u>?’”</p>	<p>Luke 9:23-25</p> <p>“And He was saying to <i>them</i> all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits <u>himself</u>?’”</p>
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Fig. 5 - DENIAL OF SELF

If we are to deny “ourselves” in order to follow the Lord Jesus, and Jesus identifies the “self” with the “soul”, then in order to deny ourselves, we must be willing to deny those thoughts (mind) which are contrary to the mind of Christ, those feelings (emotions) which are opposed to the sure Word of God, and those desires (volition), which do not originate from the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The denial of our unrenewed mind:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ declares the LORD, ‘for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.’” Isa. 55: 8-9

“I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts.” Isa. 65:2

“And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying ‘God forbid *it*, Lord! This shall never happen to You.’ But He turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s.’” Matt. 16: 22-23

The denial of those feelings opposed to the Word of God:

“Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance and my God.” Ps 42: 11

“... Though the fig tree should not blossom and there be no fruit on the vines, *though* the yield of the olive should fail and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold and there be no cattle in the stalls, yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.” Hab. 3:16-17

“As sorrowful yet always rejoicing...” II Cor. 6:10a

The denial of our own desires:

“...nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” Luke 22: 42 KJV

“I can of mine **own self** do nothing: as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just because; I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.” John 5:30 KJV

the Holy Spirit through our spirit. One must remember, though, that sanctification is an ongoing process ever dependent on the Holy Spirit. We can never always be spiritual this side of heaven, until that day comes when we shall be like Him.

Some Christians, who know nothing at all of spirit, soul, or body, may still be very spiritual Christians because they are humble before God, and walked by what truly is "spirit," although they do not know it as such. On the other hand, some Christians who know all the verses of spirit, soul, and body, may yet be very carnal, or soulical, because they had never been broken in spirit by the discipline of the Holy Spirit.

Carnality sometimes means much more than just being controlled by the body. Carnality in the full New Testament sense can also mean to be controlled by the soul. We must be careful not to foolishly judge others, but seek that which moves us to love and good works. Many think we are not carnal Christians because we keep ourselves from murder, fornication or drunkenness, but what of the other sins of the flesh? The works of the flesh also include the sins of the soul like enmities or strife, which relate to the volition of the soul, or jealousy and outburst of anger, which relate to the emotions of the soul, or dissensions or heresies, which relate to the mind of the soul (Gal. 5: 19-21).

The word heresies ("factions" in the more modern translations) originally did not mean false doctrine as opposed to orthodox doctrines as it does now. When Paul wrote down the Greek word "hairesis" from which we get heresy, he did not mean heretical viewpoints in the sense of unorthodox, what he meant was divisions based on self-made opinions.

W.E. Vine in his Expository of New Testament Words

defines heresy thus:

“...denotes a choosing, choice (from haireomai, to choose); then, that which is chosen, and hence, an opinion, especially a self-willed opinion, which is substituted for submission to the power of truth, and leads to division and the formation of sects.”¹⁶

Those who are walking by their own soul and not the Holy Spirit of God many times will emphasize a truth out of balance to other truths and thereby produce what ultimately becomes a division or denomination. Oh, how we are plagued by that today, churches within churches dividing from other churches because of some disagreement of opinion on a non-essential doctrine of the faith. Such are the ways of a carnal soul.

It is most important to know, though, that the soul is not evil in itself. It was created by God and such is good. It is the soul walking in its fallen state that is wrong. Sanctification is the restoring of our souls to a proper walk, and it is through the Spirit that such sanctification occurs. Peter says in I Pet. 1:22 KJV,

"Seeing that ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."

and in 2:11 -

"...abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."

¹⁶ W.E. Vine, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, (Fleming Revell Company, Old Tappan, NJ), pg.217

Consequently, sanctification of the soul continues and is maintained by a submissive heart or spirit (I Pet. 2:13, 18; 3: 1-8; 5: 6), because only through humbleness or brokenness can we walk by the Spirit.

Paul says it another way. He says we must be renewed in our mind (Rom. 12:2). Our mind, which is part of the soul, needs to be sanctified, and this sanctification is accomplished by not being conformed to the world. Oh, how we need sanctified minds today in the Church that aren't conformed to this age we live in. My wife made a very insightful observation one day. She said that it seems the Church does whatever the world does, except it does it about 10 years later.

The Church needs renewed minds because we have too easily adopted the ways of the world. For example, in the seventies the fad of the world was to have seminars to solve your problems. In the eighties, the Church followed suit and created a seminar to solve any type of problem: from the family, to marriages, to finances, to church growth, etc. The problem, though, is that in the nineties the problems did not go away, but only got worse.

Spirituality is the answer to our problems, not seminars. Spirituality is the solution to our failures, not weekend retreats. What has happened to our churches and ministries? Spirituality is the answer! Spirituality will save our marriages. Spirituality is the answer to broken families. Spirituality is the answer, not natural Christianity that relies on the strengths and wisdom of the soul and self.

We need to deny our self if we are to follow Christ. If people would learn to walk by their spirit, having been filled with the Holy Spirit of God, a sanctification would occur which would solve our problems.

However, one's soul cannot be purified or sanctified

without a renewed mind, and one cannot renew ones mind if one conforms to the world, and one will not have strength to withstand conformity to the world if one is not renewed in the "spirit" of his mind (Eph. 4:23).

A renewed mind is one that is filled with the desires of the Spirit. And a renewed "spirit" of the mind is one whose spirit is submitted to the leading of the Holy Spirit. That is why Paul says we must be renewed in the spirit of our mind. The mind can only be renewed as it obeys the Holy Spirit through the conscience or intuition of the spirit. As God leads us through the conscience of our spirit, a renewed mind can perceive and understand that leading and be filled with the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. That is what it means to be led by the Spirit, and that brings us to our next section - walking by the Spirit. What does Paul mean to walk by the Spirit?

THE PRACTICE OF SPIRITUALITY

There have been many different opinions concerning what Paul meant when he told the Galatian believers to "Walk by the Spirit" in chapter 5, verse 16. In our modern Bibles, we see the word "Spirit" capitalized to indicate that Paul is referring to the Holy Spirit. However, one could also correctly, leave the word in lower case to indicate the human spirit and not the Holy Spirit. You see, in Greek, one did not utilize a capital to indicate a proper noun as we do in English. All words were written in lower case, and in some Greek copies of the New Testament all Greek words were all written in upper case, but never do we find an original Greek copy that would utilize upper and lower case letters together to indicate a proper noun. A Greek-speaking person would determine by the context or use of the definite article whether a word should be considered a proper noun or not.

So, unfortunately, only the apostle Paul knows for sure whether he was referring to the Holy Spirit or the human spirit. If Paul meant walk by the human spirit, it would greatly change the meaning of the text. Martin Luther is one Christian who thought so and the original translators of the King James Version apparently thought that Paul meant here the human spirit and so left the word "spirit" in lower case.

Of course, if such a translation is correct then Paul is telling us to walk by our own regenerated spirit. There is some element of truth to this, since it is through our conscience that God speaks to us. However, I do not think the Holy Spirit would inspire Paul to write the Book of Galatians on such an important issue as this in such an

ambiguous way. If Paul meant the Holy Spirit, he could have said, "Walk by the *Spirit of God*," and thereby settle forever what he meant for future Christians. On the other hand, he could have written, "Walk by *your spirit*" if he meant our human spirit, as he did in chapter 6 verse 18, when he said "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with *your spirit*." However, Paul did not say that - he just said, "Walk by the Spirit," he did not say the Holy Spirit, or your spirit, just "spirit." And therein, I think, is the answer as to what Paul did mean.

If one were to translate that phrase literally one would say, "walk by spirit." The definite article is not in the original, and in the Greek language, the absence of an article can mean the author wants us to focus on the essential character of the object or person. Paul just says, by spirit - walk.

I believe Paul is telling us in Gal. 5:16, and I think this was purposely inspired by the Holy Spirit, to walk not just necessarily by the Holy Spirit, nor just necessarily by the human spirit, but to walk by "spirit." In other words, the reason Paul left off the definite article "the," when referring to spirit, was because Paul was referring to the essential qualities or character of "spirit." He was telling us to walk by that which is essentially "spirit."

Walk by Spirit, then, means to walk by the Holy Spirit as well as by your human spirit. Indeed one cannot walk by the Holy Spirit alone, because we can only walk by the Holy Spirit if we are walking by our own spirit. As we said before, I Cor. 2: 14 says, "a natural (soulical) man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God...nor can he know them, because they are *spiritually discerned*." We cannot perceive the things of the Holy Spirit by our own mind or soul directly; they can

only be understood in our mind or soul after they have been perceived by the human spirit - after they have been *spiritually discerned*. We can only perceive the leading of the Holy Spirit, if our spirit is undefiled (II Cor. 7:1), renewed (Eph. 4:23) and strong (Lu. 2:40 KJV). Why? - Because our spirit is that part of us, given by God, to discern spiritual things.

But that is not all, there is one other thing I think Paul was referring to when he said, "Walk by spirit", and this is most important, because without this many have been led astray, claiming to be led by the Holy Spirit.

If Paul means spirit in its essential characteristics, then when Paul tells us to walk by "spirit", he also means for us to walk by the Word of God, for the Word of God is "spirit" and life. (Jn. 6: 63). The Holy Spirit will never lead anyone contrary to the Word of God. The Bible must be the basis of our walk in God, for it is the Bible that God has given to us to know His ways.

"... And that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." (II Tim. 3: 15-17).

Would you walk by the Spirit? Then you must walk by the Word of God. The Word of God should be our daily delight. The Word of God should be hidden down deep in our heart (Ps. 119:11). The Word of God should be our total nourishment so that we may grow in respect to our salvation (I Pet. 2:2). The Holy Spirit will never lead us contrary to His Word; indeed, He will lead us through His Word.

Therefore, when Paul tells us to walk by the Spirit, he is telling us that we must have a clear conscience before God, with a strong and pure spirit that will be able to discern the leading of the Holy Spirit. With such a pure spirit, the Lord will be able to lead us in the way we should walk, and we will be always seeking to do that will from the heart. Moreover, with such a renewed spirit and mind we will be able to understand the promptings of the Holy Spirit in the light of the unchanging Word of God and be a vessel sanctified, useful to the Masters own use. May we so walk before God.

THE REST OF SPIRITUALITY

“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, *and* not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isa. 40:31-30 NKJV

“Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy- laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you will find rest unto your souls.” Matt. 11:28-29 KJV

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus.” Eph. 2:4-6

The rest of spirituality will lead us to the sanctification of the soul. The work of the Holy Spirit during this dispensation of the church is to lead God’s children into a life of sanctification (I Thess. 5:23). However, this sanctification process cannot begin in earnest until we learn to rest in Christ. Our Lord has saved our spirit in justification, is saving our soul in sanctification, and will save our body in glorification. If you are already a believer in Christ then God now desires to save your soul, not from the lake of fire, but from self! If you are a believer, you are already saved from eternal judgment through the justification of faith. Your future is secure. You cannot lose your salvation. What a blessed gift is eternal salvation! But now that you are saved eternally, you are being saved from self. This is part of our sanctification. James says it this way:

“Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.” James 1:21

And Peter tells us:

“...and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.” I Pet. 1:8-9

Our souls are in need of purification, transformation, and sanctification. We became so full of our self in our fallen state that we truly are in need of deliverance. This deliverance begins when we begin to deny our self, take up our cross and follow Christ. However, this process sometimes can lead to a difficult state.

After one begins a life of spirituality and one learns to deny himself, learns to deny the unrenewed soul and learns to take up his cross, one may soon find much dryness of life, a sorrow of soul, and a cry of despair. This is not unusual, for the way of the cross leads to death.

Denying our self, (which includes our will), is not a pleasant experience. It may bring the soul into a sorrowful state. However, the Lord never intended our souls to remain in such a state, He wants to bring us to rest, nevertheless, as we have learned, such a state is necessary if we would go on to spirituality. The soul needs to be starved of self and be filled with the Bread of Life, and this process in some cases can be very difficult.

But praise to the Lord, as we said before, the Lord does not desire our souls to remain sorrowful and weary, but desires our souls to find rest and strength. It is nothing but

false humility and asceticism to think our souls are evil and must forever exist in a straitened state (Col. 2:20 - 3:3). He does not desire our sorrow or heaviness to last forever, but only for a season, until the purpose for which He allowed such sorrow is accomplished. (I Pet. 1:6-7; Heb. 12:11). He desires our souls to find rest.

Jesus speaks of this in Matthew 11:28-29. He calls all those who are weary or heavy laden to come to Him, and He says He will give *rest to their souls*. The word “rest” means to “refresh,” “to cease from striving.” Our Saviour does not desire our souls to subsist in a continual state of strife or despair, but to be refreshed and to subsist in a state of happiness and peace. The writer of Psalms 42:11 saw this when he wrote,

“Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance and my God.”

The word translated “hope” carries the idea of waiting, resting, trusting. It is only when we trust in God, and what he accomplished for us in Christ, that we can cease striving and find this rest for our souls.

Paul speaks of this rest in the book of Ephesians. He tells us that we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing *in Christ* (Eph. 1:3). He tells us that grace has been bestowed upon us *in Christ* (vs.6), and that forgiveness and redemption are ours *in Him* (vs. 7). No wonder he prays that the Ephesian Christians may be spiritual and have a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him (vs. 17). As we see Him, and that we are *in Him*, we can find rest for our souls.

This heavenly litany continues by Paul and is brought to a rising crescendo to the point when Paul finally reveals that we have been raised up with Christ and have been made to “sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6). What better place of rest is there than this?

Psalms 16:11 tells us, “...in Thy presence *is* fullness of joy; at Thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.” This is the rest of spirituality.

In I Cor. 1:30, Paul tells us that it was by God’s doing that we were placed in Christ Jesus. God placed us safe and secure in the Lord Jesus Christ, and when He was crucified, we were crucified, when He was buried, we were buried, when He was raised, we were raised, and when he ascended to the right hand of God and sat down, we were made to sit down *in Him*. This is our place of rest, far above all rule and authority and power. What can now harm us? We are far above the raging storms of life. What can now disquiet us?

As the hymnist declares:

Shut in with Thee far, far above
The restless world that wars below;
We seek to learn and prove Thy love,
Thy wisdom and Thy grace to know.

Alexander Stewart

However, we must believe this is so. We must press on to spirituality. We must exercise faith in the work of God if we desire it to be ours in experience. We must walk by faith and

not by our feelings.

If we do this, we will soon find our souls gaining that rest. We will find that first we are happy by faith in our spirit, even though we may still be sorrowful by feeling in our soul (II Cor. 6:10). But if we press on, strong in faith, we will soon find that the feeling of sorrow will end and our souls will find rest and be transformed out of such sorrow and into great joy.

Our souls should ever follow the lead of the spirit, not our spirits following the lead of our souls. We must be firm, and endure till we reach the other side, no matter how long the trial may last. Our Saviour, though He was *sorrowful* in His soul, even to the point of death, endured the cross, because of the *joy* set before Him. This is what it means to *walk by faith*.

Habakkuk speaks of this in chapter 3:16-19:

“... Decay enters my bones, and in my place I tremble. Because I must wait quietly for the day of distress, for the people to arise who will invade us. Though the fig tree should not blossom and there be no fruit on the vines, *though* the yield of the olive should fail and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold and there be no cattle in the stalls, yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds’ *feet*, and makes me walk on my high places.”

Take courage! If you stand firm in spirit and endure, your soul will enjoy the promised rest and happiness. Christ wants us to be happy not sorrowful. He desires our souls to be transformed, emptied of the joys and pleasures of the world, and filled with the joys and pleasures of His life.

Somehow, and I do not know how, it is a great mystery - but, since Scripture says we are in Christ in the heavenlies, I

believe it to be true - our spirits are within us and also in Christ in the heavenlies - both at the same time! Perhaps it is through the Holy Spirit, for "...he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." (I Cor. 6:17 KJV cf. Col. 3:3).

And, as our spirits are affected by the things around us on earth, to the point it can even become defiled, (II Cor. 7:1), so too, if we learn to dwell in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, our spirits can be affected by the things in heaven and be at peace (Col. 3: 1-3).

This position of rest will also give us rest in our walk. It is interesting to note, as one Christian observed, that God worked before He rested, but Adam who was created on the sixth day, rested before he worked. Even as a baby, (before the exertion and trial of walking comes), must first learn to rest - to sit - so too, Paul tells us we are seated in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6), before he tells us how we are to walk in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:10; 4:1).

So many times, we try to walk so that we may sit! We exert such tremendous amounts of energy to reach the place of resting and peace. Yet, that is living the Christian life backwards. Christ has already provided a place of rest and peace! That is our starting point. Do we believe it in our spirit!?

When we learn to sit before we walk, we will see that we walk not by our power and natural strength, but by His power and divine strength. Resting means trusting.

Did we not first have to cease our own striving, coming to rest in Christ's finished work on the cross, before we could be saved in justification? The answer is yes. Well, so too we have to cease our striving to live the Christian life in our own strength, coming to rest in our position in Christ Jesus in the heavenlies, before our soul can be sanctified. The same is

true in regard to our bodies. We cannot glorify our bodies, by our own strength, but must wait and rest upon His promise that He will "...transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory..." (Phil. 3:21).

May we learn that we cannot sanctify ourselves, we cannot save our own souls by our own strength, but we must rest upon His promise that He will sanctify us and conform us and our souls to the image of His Son (Rom 8:29). Everything must begin with rest and rest is obtained by trust or faith (Heb. 3:19).

When we see and believe that this rest is ours in Christ Jesus, this becomes the joy that is set before us. This allows us to endure the cross that the Holy Spirit, in His wisdom and grace, brings into our lives. This allows the grievousness that can result from denying self to be turned into joy. Our souls simply need to be expunged of self and filled with Christ. Our souls are not evil; it is selfishness that is evil. Our souls simply need to be cleansed and transformed.

When such a transformation occurs and we see our position in Christ, our souls find the rest that is ours in Him, and our souls can then be used to glorify the Lord in all things, *even in our earthly occupations.*

Our spirit is ever needed to serve and worship the Lord. The New Testament does not call us to worship God "in soul," but "in spirit" (Jn 4:24). In the Old Testament, worship was external, but in the New Testament, it is internal. In the Old, it was very physical and oriented to our soul and physical senses, but in the New, it is completely the opposite. It is now of the spirit - spiritual (Jn. 4:20-24).

It is the same in our service to the Lord. In the Old Testament, service was external. People would even join in physical warfare. However, in the New Testament, service is

of the heart - we do not take up a physical, but a spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:12). We, like the Lord, should do nothing “out of ourselves” - out of our souls - in our service to God, whether it is the mind with its many creative ideas and plans, or the emotions that many times will epitomize the opposite of faith. Instead, we should serve Him in our spirit with sprinkled consciences, heavenly affections, and surrendered wills. (Rom 1:9).

However, when we come to our earthly occupations, we find that the Lord tells us to serve Him not in our spirits, but in our souls.

“Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.” Col. 3:23-24 KJV

The word translated “heartily” literally means “from your soul.” You see, there is a place to use our natural talents and abilities that God has given to us - our earthly occupations. We can use as much of our creativity, logic, and energy in our earthly occupations, and it will bring glory to God, if we do it as unto the Lord from that position of rest and joy that is ours in spirit. All such work will then be done according to His will.

Our souls are created with legitimate needs that desire to be fulfilled in the same way our bodies are created with legitimate needs that desire to be fulfilled. One example, for the body, is food.

Just as all food, if it is sanctified by prayer and the word of God is clean and proper for use by our body (I Tim. 4:5), so too, in regard to our souls, our natural talents and abilities, like food to the body, are acceptable and proper if sanctified by

Him and used for His glory in our “earthly occupations.” In our “heavenly work,” we use our spirit; in our “earthly work,” we use our soul. In our heavenly work, we use our *spiritual gifts*; in our earthly work, we use our *natural talents*.

Ezekiel says it this way:

“They shall enter My sanctuary; they shall come near to My table to minister to Me and keep My charge. It shall be that when they enter at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and wool shall not be on them while they are ministering in the gates of the inner court and in the house.” Ezekiel 44:16-17

The priests were forbidden to come into the presence of the Lord to serve Him dressed in wool. They needed to be dressed in linen garments. Why? - Because wool, unlike cotton, is more likely to produce sweat, and sweat is a sign of the fall and a *symbol of own natural strength* (Gen. 3:19).

Sweat is the result of our own exertions and natural abilities, and such can never be brought into the presence of God. We serve and worship God in spirit, with spiritual gifts, not with our soulical or natural talents. We must be careful never to mix the wool and linen. *Sweat is proper in our earthly endeavors, but not in our heavenly endeavors.* He has allowed us to use all our talent and natural abilities in our earthly work, but never must we rely upon them in our heavenly service.

Anthony Norris Groves once said it like this –

“I wish it to be distinctly understood that I give no opinion how far the cultivation of natural talent may be allowable or desirable for a Christian in the pursuit of a worldly vocation; but the moment he

approaches ‘the burning bush’ let him lay aside these *shoes*, for it is holy ground – Jehovah is there!”¹⁷

We, in spirit, should come into the Lord’s presence and into the tabernacle made without hands to perform our priestly functions, never in the confidence of our own souls, but always in the confidence of our spirits or hearts that have been sprinkled clean by the blood (Heb. 10:19-22). There is a proper place for our spirit and for our soul and our Saviour desires that we be sanctified wholly, spirit, soul, and body, in our heavenly, as well as our earthly occupations.

May we all learn this rest of spirituality so that our soul may be saved and purified of self. May it find its rest in Jesus and be restored to its proper function, letting the spirit take its proper place in our worship and service to God in heavenly things and it taking its own proper place and function to God in earthly things - so that our entire life may be lived to the glory of God in all that we say or do.

May we all learn by faith to dwell “within the veil” in Christ Jesus our Lord and there find rest for our *spirits*, knowing that such a place is our inheritance. Then, as we learn to live by faith from that position in Christ, we will find that our *souls* will also experience that same rest, that one day, will even be extended to our *bodies*, on that glorious day when we will all be glorified with Him in glory. Amen.

Therefore, we have seen the condition of spirituality, the

¹⁷ Groves, A. N., *On the Nature of Christian Influence*, (American Mission Press, Bombay, 1833), pg. 27

beginning of spirituality, the basis of spirituality, the means of spirituality, the practice of spirituality, and the rest of spirituality.

May we all continue to pray that we will ever meet our Saviour's *condition for spirituality*, by ever looking into His wonderful face in order to always know our true condition. And may our *beginning of spirituality* ever lead us to the final goal of spirituality - our hearing from the lips of our Saviour, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

May our *basis of spirituality* ever be a solid foundation for understanding the utter depths to which we have fallen in Adam, but also the great heights to which we have risen in Christ Jesus, leading us to the *means of spirituality*, whereby we will ever seek to maintain a clear and good conscience before our God and Maker.

And then, as we maintain a pure conscience, may we ever hear that still small voice of the Holy Spirit, as He leads us into the *practice of spirituality* - a walk that's under His guidance, through our spirit, in accordance with the unchanging Word of God - knowing that as we believe His Word and live by faith we will find our *rest of spirituality*.

May "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen" Galatians 6:18

Books from Assembly Bookshelf

Anthony Norris Groves

On the Nature of Christian Influence

B. P. Harris

Bearing Witness to the Original Principles of the Early Brethren: As Found in a Letter Written by A. N. Groves to J. N. Darby in 1836 (Updated Version)

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