

INNER MAN

Our Spirit

1. **Zechariah 12:1** The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel. Thus says the Lord, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him.
2. **Daniel 7:15** I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.
3. **Isaiah 26:9** With my soul I have desired You in the night, yes, by my spirit within me I will seek You early; for when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.
4. **Ezra 1:1** Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying,
5. **Ezra 1:5** Then the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, with all whose spirits God had moved, arose to go up and build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.
6. **Proverbs 25:28** Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.
7. **Psalms 51:10** Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
8. **Romans 1:9** For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers.

Intuition

As the soul has its senses, so too has the spirit. The spirit is intimately related to the soul and yet is wholly unlike it. The soul possesses various senses; but a spiritual man is able to detect another set of senses—lodged in the innermost part of his being—which is radically dissimilar from his set of soulful senses. There in that innermost recess he can rejoice, grieve, anticipate, love, fear, approve, condemn, decide, discern. These motions are sensed in the spirit and are quite distinct from those expressed by the soul through the body.

We can learn about the sensing of the spirit and its many-sided character from the following verses:

“The spirit indeed is *willing*” Matthew 26:41

“*Perceiving* in his spirit” Mark 2:8

“He *sighed* deeply in his spirit” Mark 8:12

“My spirit *rejoices* in God my Savior” Luke 1:47

“The true worshipers will *worship* the Father in spirit and truth” John 4:23

“He was deeply *moved* in spirit and *troubled*” John 11:33

“When Jesus had thus spoken, he was *troubled* in spirit” John 13:21

“His spirit was *provoked* within him as he saw that the city was full of idols” Acts 17:16

“He had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being *fervent* in spirit” Acts 18:25

“Paul *purposed* in the spirit” Acts 19:21 ASV

“I go *bound* in the spirit unto Jerusalem” Acts 20:22 ASV

“(Be) *fervent* in spirit” Romans 12:11 ASV

“For what person *knows* a man’s thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him” 1 Cor. 2:11

“I will *sing* with the spirit” 1 Corinthians 14:15

“If you *bless* with the spirit” 1 Corinthians 14:16

“I had no *rest* in my spirit” 2 Corinthians 2:13 Darby

“We have the same spirit of *faith*” 2 Corinthians 4:13

“A spirit of *wisdom* and of *revelation*” Ephesians 1:17

“Your *love* in spirit” Colossians 1:8 literal

The Spiritual Man by Watchman Nee

The Inward Man and the Outward Man

Notice how the Bible divides man into two parts: “For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man” (Romans 7:22). Our inward man delights in the Law of God. “. . . To be strengthened with power by his Spirit in the inner man” (Ephesians 3:16). And Paul also tells us, “But if indeed our outward man is consumed, yet the inward is renewed day by day” (2 Corinthians 4:16).

When God comes to indwell us, by His Spirit, Life and power, He comes into our spirit which we are calling the inward man. Outside of this inward man is the soul wherein functions our thoughts, emotions and will. The outermost man is our physical body. Thus we will speak of the inward man as the spirit, the outer man as the soul and the outermost man as the body. We must never forget that our inward man is the human spirit where God dwells, where His Spirit mingles with our spirit. Just as we are dressed in clothes, so our inward man “wears” an outward man: the spirit “wears” the soul. And similarly the spirit and soul “wear” the body. It is quite evident that men are generally more conscious of the outer and outermost man, and they hardly recognize or understand their spirit at all.

We must know that he who can work for God is the one whose inward man can be released. The basic difficulty of a servant of God lies in the failure of the inward man to break through the outward man. Therefore we must recognize before God that the first difficulty to our work is not in others but in ourselves. Our spirit seems to be wrapped in a covering so that it cannot easily break forth. If we have never learned how to release our inward man by breaking through the outward man, we are not

able to serve. Nothing can so hinder us as this outward man. Whether our works are fruitful or not depends upon whether our outward man has been broken by the Lord so that the inward man can pass through that brokenness and come forth. This is the basic problem. The Lord wants to break our outward man in order that the inward man may have a way out. When the inward man is released, both unbelievers and Christians will be blessed.

Nature Has its Way of Breaking

The Lord Jesus tells us in John 12, “Except the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, it abides alone; but if it die, it bears much fruit.” Life is in the grain of wheat, but there is a shell, a very hard shell on the outside. As long as that shell is not split open, the wheat cannot grow. “Except the grain of wheat falling into the ground die . . .” What is this death? It is the cracking open of the shell through the working together of temperature, humidity, etc., in the soil. Once the shell is split open, the wheat begins to grow. So the question here is not whether there is life within, but whether the outside shell is cracked open.

The Scripture continues by saying, “He that loves his life shall lose it, and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal.” The Lord shows us here that the outer shell is our own life, (our soul life) while the life within is the eternal life which He has given to us. To allow the inner life to come forth, it is imperative that the outward life be lost. Should the outward remain unbroken, the inward would never be able to come forth.

It is necessary (in this writing) that we direct ourselves to that group of people who have the Lord’s life. Among those who possess the life of the Lord can be found two distinct conditions: one includes those in whom life is confined, restricted, imprisoned and unable to come forth; the other includes those in whom the Lord has forged a way and life is thus released from them.

The question thus is not how to obtain life, but rather how to allow this life to come forth. When we say we need the Lord to break us, this is not merely a way of speaking, nor is it only a doctrine. It is vital that we be broken by the Lord. It is not that the life of the Lord cannot cover the earth, but rather that His life is imprisoned by us. It is not that the Lord cannot bless the Church, but that the Lord’s life is so confined within us that there is no flowing forth. If the outward man remains unbroken, we can never be a blessing to His Church, and we cannot expect the Word to be blessed by God through us!

Two Reasons for Not Being Destroyed

Why is it that after many years of dealing some remain the same? Some individuals have a forceful will; some have strong emotions, others have a strong mind. Since the Lord is able to destroy these, why is it that after many years some are still unchanged? We believe there are two main reasons.

First, many who live in darkness, are not seeing the hand of God. While God is working, while God is destroying, they do not recognize it as being from Him. They are devoid of light, seeing only

men opposing them. They imagine their environment is just too difficult, that circumstances are to blame. So they continue in darkness and despair.

May God give us a revelation to see what is from His hand, that we may kneel down and say to Him, "It is Thou; since it is Thou, I will accept." At least we must recognize WHOSE hand it is that deals with us. It is not a human hand, nor our family's, nor the brothers' and sisters' in the Church, but God's. We need to learn how to kneel down and kiss the hand, love the hand that deals with us, even as Madame Guyon did. We must have this light to see that whatever the Lord has done, we accept and believe; the Lord can do no wrong.

Second, another great hindrance to the work of destroying the outer man is self-love. We must ask God to take away the heart of self-love. As He deals with us in response to our prayer, we should worship and say, "Oh Lord, if this be Thy hand, let me accept it from my heart." Let us remember that the one reason for all misunderstanding, all fretfulness, all discontent, is that we secretly love ourselves. Thus we plan a way whereby we can deliver ourselves. Many times problems arise due to our seeking a way of escape—an escape from the working of the cross.

The Release of the Spirit by Watchman Nee