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The Inner Man of the Heart

by T. Austin-Sparks

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THE INNER MAN OF THE HEART Or, The Believer's Sphere of Life and Base of Operations

There is no subject more vital in relation to fulness of life and effectiveness of service in Christ than this that we are now to consider. It embraces all the practical meanings and outworkings of the redemptive purposes of God in and through the Cross of Christ.

The phrase "The inner man" is not infrequently used in the Word of God, and, as we shall see, is but one expression used in connection with a theme of extensive range. But here at once let it be seen as that which first of all discriminates between the "inner" and the "outward" man. This discrimination *in the scriptures*, however, is not that made by the psychologists or philosophers as such, whether they be ancient or modern, pagan or "Christian." These recognise but mind and matter: for them the "inner man" is the soul, and the "outward man" the body. Not so in the Word of God. There the "inner man" is the spirit, and the "outward man" the soul and the body, either or both. These two terms or designations are respectively synonymous with "natural man" and "spiritual man," and these two are put asunder by the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Hebrews 4:12). It is just as dangerous to yoke together what God puts asunder as it is to put asunder "what God hath joined together," and in this particular matter more chaos, paralysis, and defeat are due to the confusing of these two than ever we shall be able to measure in this life.

The only oneness of the three, spirit, soul, and body, is in that they compose or comprise one man. The literal translation of 1 Thessalonians 5:23, is "Your whole person," or "Your whole man," or "The whole of you, spirit, soul, and body"; and three distinct Greek words are used, as elsewhere. The Word of God does not use words at random, just for variety's sake. Basic spiritual laws are involved in its words. The very word "natural" as applied to man, as we know, is the Greek word *psuchekos*, the Anglicised form of which is psychical. "Spiritual" is the adjective of "spirit," and "soulish" is the adjective of "soul." In James 3:15, "sensual" is used, but "soulish" is more accurate, and it is interesting and significant to note in passing that these two descriptions are given to *wisdom*.

That which makes man unique in the whole realm of creation is not that he is or has a soul, but that he has a spirit, and it may be that the union in one personality of soul and spirit makes him unique beyond this creation, in the whole universe. Soul is never spoken of in relation to God as God. Angels are spirits. Christ did not pour out His spirit, but His soul unto death; His Spirit He handed back to the Father of spirits. It is hardly necessary to describe the soul here, although we want to help from the very foundations.

What a great - and in most people - almost complete place and dominance is held by feelings and emotions. On the one hand, fear, grief, pity, curiosity, pleasure, pride, admiration, shame, surprise, love, regret, remorse, excitement, etc. Or in another direction; imagination, apprehensiveness, fancy, doubt, introspection, superstition, analysis, reasonings, investigation, etc. Or in a third direction, desires; for possession, knowledge, power, influence, position, praise, society, liberty, etc. And still in another direction; determination, reliance, courage, independence, endurance, impulse, caprice, indecision, obstinacy etc. These all in their respective directions representing the emotional, the intellectual, the volitional, are the components of the *soul*. Now consider how much of this has its place in Christian life and service, from the first step in relation to the gospel through all the course of Christian activity. It is here that we ask for patience in pursuing the subject when we make the tremendous affirmation that all this - the sum total of human feeling, reasoning, and willing may be placed to the account of the matter of salvation, either for ourselves or for others, and yet be *utterly unprofitable and of NO account*.

We recognise that if the full impact of this declaration, with all its implications, was to come by revelation to the "inner man" of Christian people and workers, it would be nothing short of revolutionary in all methods, means, and motives. Surely, for instance, we know by now that remorse and regret for sin, leading to tears and resolutions, does not mean salvation. Decisions, confessions, and religious feelings, are no criteria, any more than are reasoned conclusions, intellectual convictions, mental acceptances, aspirations after the sublime, the beautiful, the "good." Does someone enquire then "do you rule out the intellect, the reason, the emotions, the human will or resolution?" and our answer is emphatically, we do rule all this out as an initial and basic factor in the matter of salvation; it is secondary, later, and even then only a bond-slave and not a master.

Let us ask some questions which will clarify the matter. What was it or where was it that death took place when "death passed upon all," and it came true that was said, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"? Was it the body? Obviously not. Was it the soul? If our foregoing description truly represents the soul, then, again, obviously not. Repudiating the suggestion that the words were but a sentence of death to be carried out at some future time, there remains but the third part of man's "whole," namely his spirit. That was the topstone of God's creative work. The

organ in man of all the Divine activity; the sphere and instrument of all the operations of God. God is a spirit, and only spirit can have access to or fellowship with spirit.

Only spirit can know spirit. 1 Corinthians 2:9-11.

Only spirit can serve spirit. Romans 1:9, 7:6, 12:11.

Only spirit can worship God Who is Spirit. John 4:23,24. Philippians 3:3.

Only spirit can receive revelation from God Who is spirit. Revelation 1:10, 1 Corinthians 2:10. We shall return to this later.

Let it be clearly recognised that God determined to have all His dealings with man and to fulfil all His purposes through man by means of that in man which was "after His own likeness," that is, his spirit; but this spirit of man for all such Divine intentions must be kept in living union with Himself, and never for one instant infringe the laws of its Divine union by crossing over to the outer circle of the soul at the call of any emotion, suggestion, argument or desire coming from without. When this took place death entered, and the nature of death, as the word is used in the scriptures, is severance in the Divine union of spirit. This does not mean that man no longer had a spirit, but that the ascendancy of the spirit was surrendered to the soul, and this at a time when the soul had accepted from without by desire, and reason, that which was intended to draw away from fellowship with God.

"Drawn away by his own lusts (desires)."

This is where the "fall" begins, all else follows. From that time the inclusive designation of man in a state of separation from spirit union and life with God is "flesh."

When Paul speaks of the "flesh" he does not refer to flesh and blood in the natural body, but thus denotes the principle of human life which takes the place of the spirit in its primary state and purpose; and this "flesh" principle or state - variably called "the old man," "the body of sin," "the body of flesh," "the body of death," "the natural man," is the centre of the residence of the enmity against God. This enmity is there, even in such as sing hymns, say prayers, delight in God after an outward manner, go to church, have a passion or genius for religion, and it only requires the true spiritual meaning of the cross of Christ to be applied in order to make it manifest. Death then, in scriptural meaning, is loss of correspondence with God in spirit, and the spirit of man falling out of that union ceases to be for man the vehicle of God's revelation, the sphere of God's life in man, and the instrument of God's activities through man: and there is no other. This leads to another question: What is the nature of the spirit? There are three main departments or faculties of the spirit: conscience, intuition, communion; but there are numerous other capacities, as we may see later.

It is here that we find the scriptural description of man runs entirely counter to the conclusions of "scientific" psychology. We have observed that the psychologist will not allow the threefold description of man as spirit, soul and body, but only soul - or mind - and body. And yet now he has to confess to the existence of a third element. He recognises it, finds his chief fascination and interest in it, builds up a whole system of philosophy around it, and often borders on calling it by its right name. He, however, recoils and calls it "the subconscious mind," "the subjective mind," "the

subliminal self," "the secondary personality," etc. Listen to some of the things which indicate the length to which such teachers go: "The soul consists of two parts, the one being addicted to the truth, and loving honesty and reason, the other brutish, deceitful, sensuous."

"There is a schism in the soul." "The existence of a schism in the soul is not a mere dogma of theology, but a fact of science." *"Man is endowed with two minds, each of which is capable of independent action, and they are also capable of simultaneous action; but, in the main, they possess independent powers and perform independent functions. The distinctive faculties of one pertain to this life, those of the other are specially adapted to a higher plane of existence. I distinguish them by designating one as the Objective Mind, and the other as the Subjective Mind."*

"Whatever faculties are found to exist in the subjective mind of any sentient being, necessarily existed potentially in the ancestry of that being, near or remote. *It is a corollary of this proposition that whatever faculties we may find to exist in the SUBJECTIVE MIND of man must necessarily exist, in its possibility, potentially, in the mind of God the Father Almighty.*"

When one reads things like this, two things press for expression: first the exclamation "O why don't you name it aright and call it 'the spirit'?" The other, "What a tragedy that such men should have gone to pagan philosophers such as Plato, who never heard the men of the Bible or read them, for the basis of their system, instead of going to the Bible itself." What a peril it is for "Christian" men to preach the results of human research and learning and bring the Bible to these instead of bringing them to the Bible!

For us here the Bible name and nature of this third reality is held to. It may be thought to be immaterial what it is called if the result is the same, but we hold that it is vital to recognise that we are dealing with two things absolutely distinct and separate and not with two sides of one thing. This will be seen as we go on.

There is a peril in speaking of "Divine union in *the upper reaches of the soul*," for there is no such thing. Divine union is with spirit, "He that is joined to the Lord is one *spirit*," and however highly developed soul life is, there is no "Divine union" until the spirit has been brought back to life.

This then opens a further question: "What is it that is 'born again': when that essential and indispensable experience takes place? (John 3:3,5, etc.).

Nicodemus stumbles on the physical question but is soon told that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is SPIRIT."

It is not the body then, neither is it the soul. "The sinful body of the old man was destroyed" Romans 6:6, and "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the *affections* thereof." The passages on this are too many to quote, but look up "Flesh," "Old man," "Natural man," etc.

The answer to the question is emphatically that new birth is the impartation of Divine life to the spirit of man. That spirit, because of atonement made for the sin of the *soul*, and the carrying away of the dominant flesh principle by Christ into His death, is begotten again of God in the resurrection of Christ from the dead to share His resurrection - deathless-life. Only on the ground of Christ's resurrection and our incorporation into it as the superlative act of Almighty power is there union with God, and this act initially takes place in our spirit. From that time it is "in the newness of the

spirit," "walking in the spirit"; in fact, as the Word makes clear, everything is to be in the spirit *for those that are now "spiritual."*

So far we have done little more than emphasise the fact that the supreme concern of the Lord is with the spirit of His children, for it is there that the fact and nature of sonship has its beginning, its growth, and its expression. We shall see more about this later, but for the moment it will be as well if we dwell a little longer upon the nature of the spirit. The body, we know, has its own threefold components. The soul also is a trinity, i.e., reason, emotion, and volition. We have also shown that the spirit is tripartite. Its main departments or faculties being conscience, worship (or communion with that which is Spirit) and intuition.

Let us re-emphasise that while all men have these in a greater or less degree of consciousness, this does not set aside the fact that all are "dead" in trespasses and sins apart from the new birth. There is no salvation in the New Testament sense of the word in having a conscience very much alive, or in being keenly attuned to the spiritual; and it is no argument that Divine revelation has been imparted because intuitions have eventually proved true. All this only shows that all men have a spirit which acts independently of the rest of their being. For the spirit in its different faculties to be the instrument of Divine purposes it has, as we have said, to be joined to the Lord, and the uniting factors are

1. The indwelling life of God as a gift at new birth.
2. The indwelling Spirit of God as the intelligent, executive member of the Godhead.

There are many passages in the scriptures which indicate the difference between the outer "I" of the soul and the inner "I" of the spirit. For instance Paul says "my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." 1 Corinthians 14:14.

Then in 1 Corinthians 2 the Apostle says that "The psychical (soul) man receiveth not, neither *can* he know the things of the Spirit of God, but God reveals them to the spiritual (or spirit) ones, and only the spirit ones discern them!"

This distinction is very marked in Paul's recounting of the reception of his special revelation. "I will come to *revelations of the Lord*. I (the outer man) knew a *man* (the inner man) in Christ above fourteen years ago; whether in the body I (the outer man) cannot tell; or whether out of the body I (the outer man) cannot tell; God knoweth; such an one (the inner man) caught up to the third heaven. And I (the outer man) knew such a *man* (the inner man) whether in the body or out of the body, I (the outer man) cannot tell: God knoweth. How that he (the inner man) was caught up to Paradise, and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man (the outer man) to utter. Of such an one (the inner man) I (the outer man) will glory; yet of myself (the outer man) I (the outer man) will not glory."

Here we see, amongst other things, that, unless the Lord gives the gift of utterance the things revealed to the spirit cannot be expressed by the outer man. In another place the Apostle asked the prayers of the Lord's people that he might have "utterance."

Many other instances might be given, such as "I delight in the law of God after *the inward man*," and Romans 7 as a whole, but this is sufficient to lead such as desire to do so to follow this truth

through. Here are one or two references: 1 Cor. 16:17,18; 1 Cor. 6:20; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Cor. 7:34; Heb. 12:23.

Now we proceed to speak of the Lord's special concern with the inner man. Firstly we must realise that His supreme quest is for sons of His Spirit. The underlying and all inclusive truth of what has come to be called the "parable of the Prodigal Son," is the transition from one kind of sonship, e.g., on the ground of law, to another, e.g., that on the ground of grace. From the flesh to the Spirit. There is a sonship of God by creation on the basis of law. In this sense "we are all the offspring of God." But by "the fall," the "going astray" or "deviating" (Genesis 6:3), all the Divine purposes and possibilities of that relationship have broken down, and that relationship is no longer of value. "He has become flesh," hence is separated "from God," in "a far country," and "dead," as well as "lost." Here grace enters and the Spirit through grace. The Spirit begins operations in that realm of death and distance, convicting of sin "*against heaven*" (the only adequate conviction), compassing the end of the works of the flesh in despair and destruction, constraining, assuring, producing penitence and confession, and at length bringing to the place of forgiveness and acceptance. From death unto life, but not the same life as before; there is no "again" in the original of the last clause of Luke 15, it is a life which never was before. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is *spirit*."

This man is the product of the travail and energising of the Spirit, and everything in the relationship afterward is new. A "new robe," the robe of Divine righteousness. "New Shoes," a walk and a way in the Spirit. Rom. 8:2,4. A ring, the symbol of authority, the jurisdiction of sons, John 1:12,13. The fattened calf; food such as never was before, the best of the Father's house. Each of these points has in the scriptures a whole system of teaching.

The spirit of man being then the place of the new birth and the seat of this only true sonship (Galatians 4:5,6), it also therefore being "The new man" - for it is "in the newness of the Spirit" that we are to live (Romans 7:6, etc.) - here it is that all the operations of God in our education, fellowship, and co-operation have their base.

The only knowledge of God which is of spiritual value for ourselves or for others is that which we have by revelation of the Holy Spirit within our own spirit. God never explains Himself in the first instance to man's reason. Man can never know God in the first instance by his reason. Christianity is a revelation or it is nothing, and it has to come by revelation to every new child of God, or their faith rests upon a foundation which will not stand in the day of the ordeal.

"The Christian Faith" embraced as a philosophy or a system of truth, or as a system of moral or ethical doctrine may carry the stimulus of a great ideal, but it will not result in the regeneration of the life, and the new birth of the spirit. There are multitudes of such "Christians" (?) in the world today, but their spiritual effectiveness is nil.

The apostle Paul makes it very clear that the secret of everything in his life and service was the fact that he received his Gospel "by revelation." We may even know the Bible most perfectly as a book, and be spiritually dead and ineffective. When the scriptures say so much about the knowledge of God and the Truth as the basis of Eternal life, being set free, doing exploits, etc., they also affirm that "man cannot by searching find out God," and they make it abundantly clear that it is knowledge in the spirit, not in the natural mind.

Now it is just here that we come to recognise the nature of spiritual knowledge. How does God know things, by what means does He come to His decisions, on what basis of knowledge does He run the universe? Is it by reasoning inductively, deductively, philosophically, logically, comparatively? Does He think things out? Has Omniscience a brain? Surely not! All this laboriousness is unknown to God. His knowledge and conclusions are intuitive. Intuition is that faculty of spiritual intelligence by which all spiritual beings work. Angels serve the will of God by intuitive discernment of that will, not by argued and reasoned conviction. The difference between these two is witnessed to by the whole monument of spiritual achievement. If human reason, the natural judgment, and "common sense" had been the ruling law, most, if not all, of the great pieces of work inspired of God would never have been undertaken. Men who had a close walk with God and a keen spirit union with Him received intuitively a revelation or leading to such purposes, and their vindication came, not by the approval of worldly human reason, but usually with all such positively opposed. "Madness" was usually the verdict of the wise. Whenever, like Abraham, they allowed themselves to drop out of the spirit into their own natural mind and reasoning, they became bewildered, paralysed, and looked round for some Egypt of the senses to which to go down for help. In all this we are "justified in the spirit" not in the flesh. The spirit and the soul act independently and, until the spiritual mind has established the ascendancy and absolute dominion, they are constantly in conflict and contradiction.

In all the things which are out from God and therefore spiritual "the mind of the flesh is death," "but the mind of the spirit is life, and PEACE." This then is the nature of spiritual knowledge, which is the only saving knowledge. We said at the commencement that this recognition of the difference between the "inner man" and the "outward man" would be absolutely revolutionary. Perhaps we can see this a little more clearly now. A rich knowledge of the scriptures, an accurate technical grasp of Christian doctrine, a doing of Christian work by all the resources of "worldly wisdom" or natural ability, a clever manipulation and interesting presentation of Bible content and themes, may get not one whit beyond the natural life of men and still remain within the realm of spiritual death. Men cannot be argued, reasoned, fascinated, interested, 'emotional,' willed, enthused, impassioned, into the Kingdom of the heavens; they can only be born, and that is by spiritual quickening. This new birth brings with it new capacities of every kind, and amongst the most vital is a new and different faculty of Divine knowledge, understanding, and apprehension. But some may ask, where does our brain come in? Do we understand you to mean that our human intellectual faculties are ruled out? No, not at all! But we do affirm again that this is not primary but secondary. The human intellect is not the first instrument of our apprehension of spiritual things, the things of God, but its function is that of giving them intelligent form to ourselves and to others.

Paul's intellectual power was not that which gave him his knowledge of truth, but it was joined to the spirit for passing that truth on to others. Someone has said that the brain may act as a prism and give a spectrum of the Eternal light, but it is not the first organ of spiritual knowledge.

The spirit of man is that by which he reaches out into the Eternal and unseen. Intuition, then, is the mental organ of the spirit. It is in this sense, that is, the deadness of the spirit Godward, and the going on with religion in its manifold forms of expression merely from the human mind, that God says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," and the measure of the difference is the heaven from the earth; the heavenly and the earthly. One of the chief lessons that we have to learn, and which God takes pains to teach us is that spiritual ends demand spiritual means. The breaking down of our natural life, its mind, its resources, its energies, in the bitterness of disappointment through futility, failure, ineffectiveness, and deadlock in real spiritual achievement,

is a life work; but the truth mentioned above is the explanation and key to the whole thing. What is true of spiritual knowledge is true in every other connection and direction as we shall see.

Reverting to our illustration in that transition which is the underlying truth of the parable of 'The Prodigal Son,' namely the transition from a relationship on the ground of law, in the flesh, to that on the ground of grace, in the spirit, we have come to see that his knowledge of the Father in the spirit was such as he had never possessed before. He never knew his Father before grace was revealed and the gift and operation of the Father's Spirit was manifested as he knew Him afterward. His spirit had been brought from death, darkness, distance, desolation, and now he had not merely an objective knowledge of one whom he had termed Father, but a subjective understanding and appreciation of the Father because the spirit of sonship had now been put within him whereby he cried "Father." There is no *saving* relationship to, or knowledge of God, only through grace and by new birth. Such knowledge is spiritual not "natural."

So, then, those who by being born again have become "little children," Matthew 18:3, or "babes" in spiritual things, 1 Corinthians 3:1 (not wrong if we do not unduly remain so) have to learn everything afresh because "all things are new," and - now - "all things are of God," 2 Corinthians 5:17-18. Such have to learn a new kind of knowledge, as we have shown. But before this, and ever and always, such have to learn to live by a new life - "to walk in newness of life." This life is always related to the resurrection of Christ, and is "the life whereby Jesus conquered death." This subject is treated more fully elsewhere, especially in booklet No. 2 of ['Incorporated into Christ.'](#) and we shall do no more than mention it here. The Apostle Paul says that our conduct is to be "as those who are alive from the dead," and so saying he means that the manifestation in and by us is to be that of the shared power and triumph of the mighty resurrection life of Christ. Again, in order that we may learn how to live by this life, which is a superlative purpose of God concerning us, He is bound to bring our natural life to an end in all its effectiveness and value in the sphere of spiritual achievement, both in life and service. WE cannot be or do what God requires: His life alone can produce after its kind. But while this is a law and a test, it is also a blessed truth that Christ came that we might have *this* life and have it abundantly. Read through your New Testament with the object of seeing how the Divine life is manifested by and in the enforced insufficiency of natural life, and you will see it to be the secret of the romance of New Testament accomplishments.

An element of offence in this teaching is that it demands a recognised and acknowledged weakness; it requires that we have to confess that in ourselves, for all Divine purposes, we are powerless and worthless, and of ourselves we can do nothing. The natural man's worship of strength, efficiency, fitness, ability, meets with a terrible rebuff when it is confronted with the declaration that the universal triumph of Christ over hierarchies more mighty than those of flesh and blood was because "He was crucified through weakness" - God reduced to a certain impotence! - and "God hath chosen the weak things to confound the mighty," 2 Corinthians 13:4; 1 Corinthians 1:25-27.

To "glory in infirmity that His power may be the more manifest" is a far cry from the original Saul of Tarsus, but what an extraordinary change in mentality. God has, however, always drawn a very broad line between natural "might and power" on the one hand, and "My Spirit" on the other, and for evermore the law abides that He that hateth his life (*psuche*, natural life) shall find it unto life eternal (*aiōnian-zoe*, Divine life of the ages), John 12:25. This is said, of course, in relation to the interests of Christ.

There are two other lessons that we might mention as being set the "new man," which are a part of the education and training of the spirit or "inner man of the heart." He has to learn a new walk. Many slips and, perhaps, tumbles may be his experience here, but such are honourable if they are marks of a stepping out at the behest of God, rather than to sit still in fleshly disobedience or fear. The "Prodigal's" new relationship meant new shoes, and in later significance this meant "walking after the spirit and not after the flesh," Romans 8:4. We have shown that the nature of this walk is that reason, feeling, and natural choice are no longer the directive laws or criteria of the spiritual man. For, such an one there are frequent experiences of a collision and contradiction between soul and spirit. The reason would dictate a certain course, the affections would urge in a certain direction, the will would seek to fulfil these judgments and desires, but there is a catch somewhere within, a dull, leaden, lifeless, numbed something at the centre of us which spoils everything, contradicts us, and all the time in *effect*, says no! Or it may be the other way round. An inward urge and constraint, finds no encouragement from our natural judgment or reason, and is flatly contrary to our natural desires, likings, inclinations, preferences, or affections; while in that same natural realm we are not at all willing for such a course. In this case it is not the judgment against the desire as is frequently the case in everybody's life, but judgment, desire, and volition all joined against intuition. Now is the crisis. Now is to be seen who is to rule the life, or which road is to be chosen. Now the natural man or the outer man of sense and the spiritual or inner man have to settle affairs. To learn to walk after the spirit is a life lesson of the new man, and as he is vindicated - as he always will be *in the long run* - he will come to take the absolute ascendancy over the "natural" man and his mind, and so by the energising of the Holy Spirit in the spirit of the new man the Cross will be wrought out to the nullifying of the mind of the flesh - which in spiritual things always ends in death, and in the enthroning of the spiritual mind which is life and peace, Romans 8:6.

This, then, is the nature of the walk after the spirit, and its application is many-sided. But we must remember the law of this walk, which is faith. We "walk *in* the spirit," but "we walk *by* faith."

To walk by faith there must, in the very nature of the case, be a stripping off of all that the outer man of the senses clings to, demands, craves for, as a security and an assurance. When the spiritual life of God's people is in the ascendant, they are not troubled by either the absence of human resources on the one hand, or by the presence of humanly overwhelming odds against them on the other.

This is patent in their history as recorded in the Scriptures. But it is also true that when the spiritual life is weak, undeveloped, or at the ebb, they look round for some tangible, seen resource, upon which to fasten. Egypt is the alternative to God whenever and wherever spiritual life is low. To believe in and trust to the intuitive leadings of the Holy Spirit in our spirit, even though all is so different from the ways of men, and even though such bring us to a Canaan which for the time being is full of idolatry and where a mighty famine reigns; where Satan seems to be lord, and no fruit is found; where all is so contrary to what our outer man had decided must be in keeping with a leading and a promise of God; to leave our old sphere of life in the "world," to break with our kindred, our father's house, for *this - this!* and then have to wait through much continuous stripping off of those means, and methods, and habits, and judgments, which are the very constitution of the natural man - this is the law of the spiritual walk, but this is God's chosen and appointed way of the mightiest vindication. Spiritual children and riches, and fruitfulness, and service, permanence, and the friendship of God are for such Abrahams of faith or such children of Abraham in the spirit. God has laid a faith basis for His superstructure of spiritual glory, and only that which is built upon such a foundation can serve spiritual ends. Let this be the test of our walk in all personal, domestic, business, and church affairs. Here, again, we have a principle which if applied would be

revolutionary, and would call for the abandonment of a tremendous amount of carnal "natural," worldly stuff in our resources and methods. "Faith without works is dead," true, but the works of faith - of the spirit - are not those of the flesh, the difference is incomparable. The walk of the flesh is one thing but the walk in the spirit is quite another. The things of the Spirit are foolishness to the flesh. Men of faith see what others do not and act accordingly. This also being true of men who have lost their reason, the two are often confused and the children of the flesh think the children of the spirit mad or insane. They are unable to discriminate between even the insanity of men and "the foolishness of God which is wiser than men."

Abraham was fortified by his faith, but his walk in faith was intensely practical, though so different from the walk in the flesh. A writer has said that faith brings us into difficulties which are unknown to men who walk in the flesh, or who never go out in faith, but such difficulties, placing us beyond the power of the flesh to help make special Divine revelations necessary, and God always takes advantage of such times to give such needed education of the spirit. It is thus that the men of the spirit are taught and come to know God as no others know Him. Thus faith is the law of the walk of the new man - the inner man - which brings him by successive stages into the very heart of God, Who crowns this progress with the matchless designation "My friend!" One other thing in general has to be mentioned. The new man of the spirit has to learn a new speech. There is the language of the spirit, and he will have to realise increasingly that "speech in the enticing words of man's wisdom," or what man calls "excellency of speech" (1 Cor. 2:1) will avail nothing in spiritual service. If all the religious speech and preaching and talking about the Gospel which goes on in one week was the utterance of the Holy Spirit, what tremendous impact of God upon the world would be registered. But it is obviously not so and this impact is not felt.

It is impossible to speak in and by the Holy Spirit without something happening which is related to Eternity. But this capacity belongs only to the "born of the Spirit" ones, whose spirit has been joined to the Lord, and even they have to learn how to cease from their own words and "speak as they are moved by the Spirit." It is a part of the education of the inner man to have his outer man slain in the matter of speech, and to be brought to the state to which Jeremiah was brought, "I am *but a child, I cannot speak*." Not only as sinners have we to be crucified with Christ, but as preachers, or speakers, or talkers. The circumcision of Christ, which Paul says is the cutting off of the whole body of the flesh, has to be applied to our lips, and our spirit has to be so much in dominion that on all matters where God cannot be glorified we "*cannot speak*." A natural facility of speech is no strength in itself to spiritual ministry, it may be a positive menace. It is a stage of real spiritual development when there is a genuine fear of speaking unless it is in "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." On the other hand a natural inability to speak need be no handicap. To be present "in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling" (1 Cor. 1:3) may be a mood which becomes an apostolic, nay rather, a Holy Spirit ministry. The utterance of God is a very different thing in every way from that of men. How much is said in the Scriptures about "conversation," "the tongue," "words," etc., and ever with the emphasis that these are to be in charge of the spirit and not merely expressions of the soul in any of its departments.

If it is true that only the quickened spirit can receive Divine revelation, it is equally true that such revelation requires a Divine gift of utterance in order to realise its spiritual end.

Many there are who preach or teach the truth as out from a mental apprehension with the natural ability, but the vital potentialities of that truth are not being manifest either in their own lives or in the lives of those who hear. The spiritual results are hardly worth the effort and expenditure. The

virtue of speech resulting in abiding fruit to the glory of God, whether that speech be preaching, teaching, conversation, prayer, is not in its lucidity, eloquence, subtlety, cleverness, wit, thoughtfulness, passion, earnestness, forcefulness, pathos, etc., but only in that it is an utterance of the Holy Ghost.

"Thy speech betrayeth thee" may be applied in many ways, for whether one lives in the flesh or in the spirit, in the natural man or in the spiritual man, will always be made manifest by how we speak and the spiritual effect of the fruit of our lips.

O, for crucified lips amongst God's people, and O for lips among God's prophets touched with the blood-soaked fire-charged coal from that one great altar of Calvary.

Having at some length dealt with the difference, nature, and characteristics of the inner and the outer man, we must now come to some specific emphases. The first of these is all inclusive, and relates to

The Ascendancy of the Spiritual Man Over the Natural Man

This is illustrated by the simple diagram herewith. [Next page]. There is marked the creation of man in his tripartite being, with his spirit as the sphere of his union with God for all Divine purposes. The nature of this union is set forth below, and is fivefold. In the fall the soul was allowed to take the ascendancy over the spirit; the spirit with conscience, communion, and intuition being subjected to the soul with its reason, desire, and volition. This ascendancy of the soul made man what he is afterward called; the "natural" i.e., soulish (Gk. *psukikos*) man, and inasmuch as it was the reasoning and desiring and choosing that were inspired and prompted by the devil, and the capitulation was to him, and the spirit union with God was rejected and violated in all its claims, the result is that man is not only separated from God but in his natural state is horizoned by a lower life than was intended. But more, he is then called "flesh"; this is the active law of his fallen condition. It is not something in him, it is himself, the real principle of his being, and it is always set over against "spirit" which is the real principle of life re-united with God by *re*-generation.

Further, as he capitulated, not only to the soul life, but to the devil, he is ever after, until delivered by Christ, actuated and influenced by "the god of this age," whose methods are not always *manifestly* against God, but are always in the place *of* God, even to the extent of projecting a counterfeit religion, with similar phraseology and means. The result of all this, as we have seen, is spirit, or spiritual, death; and the nature of death in the Bible is primarily the separation of the spirit from God. All else that is called death results from this. Lost likeness, fellowship, knowledge, co-operation, dominion, with all that God meant and intended by them - this is the foundation of death. So thus "in Adam all died" "death passed upon all." This may be represented by lines which narrow down as they move towards the Cross. This movement indicates how through the Old Testament age God by types and figures is ever preaching the fact that death is His sentence and must be carried out. There may be seen also lines which widen out from the point of the fall and death. These represent the natural man's mind about himself. He refuses the Divine verdict, and believing and preaching a gospel of the inherent goodness of human nature, seeks to develop a system of improvement by all manner of means. For him, salvation is in himself, and civilisation, education, social reconstruction, mutual improvement, etc., will at length bring in a golden age. He refutes the word of God which demands new birth. He makes sin and evil a negative thing, and so on. Thus man's estimate of himself is ever growing, and the opposite of the mind of God.

"The Day that God Created Man"
Genesis 5:1

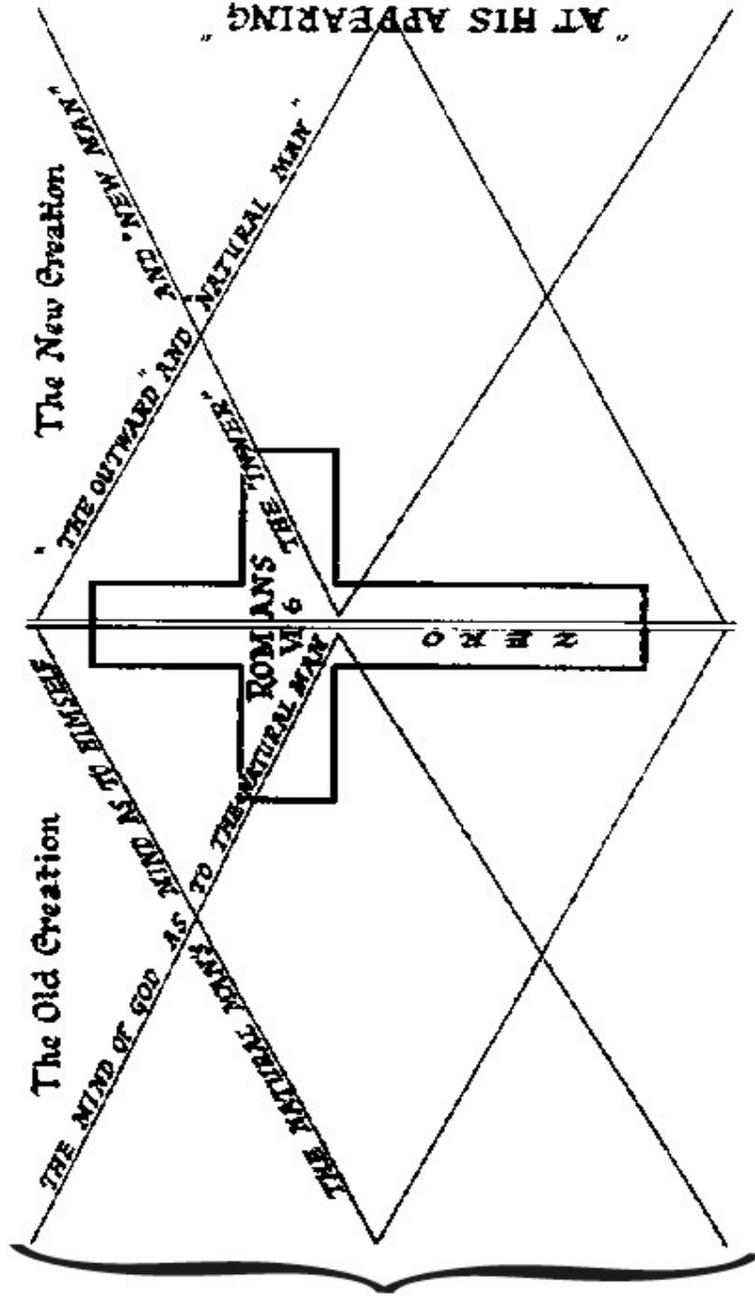
MAN

- | | | |
|--------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| SPIRIT | 1 Conscience | } Spiritual apprehension |
| | 2 Communion (Worship) | |
| | 3 Intuition | |
| SOUL | 1 Reason | } Interpretation for human life |
| | 2 Emotion | |
| | 3 Volition | |
| BODY | 1 Flesh | } Execution or transaction |
| | 2 Blood | |
| | 3 Bone | |

The relationship to God by the Spirit:

- 1 Likeness (Basic "spirit," John 3:6, 6:63)
- 2 Fellowship (1 Cor. 6:17)
- 3 Knowledge (Revelation to spirit by intuition faculty, 1 Cor. 2:14)
- 4 Co-operation (1 Cor. 3:9)
- 5 Dominion (Heb 2:6)

- The Fall
- The spirit subjected to the soul.
 - The soul the sphere of Satanic attack and triumph.
 - The body the instrument of the soul under influence of Satan.
 - The spirit in "death." The relationships break down at every point.
 - "Death" is basically spirit separation from God.



In the centre of history God places the Cross and in the representative Person of Christ gathers the whole race under His own sentence and takes it into the full outworking thereof in death. Down through the centre of the Cross is a black zero line. This marks in God's settled judgment the end of the natural man. From that point God has nothing to do with man only on the ground of that life which is begotten from the dead (Rev. 1:5). He demands that there shall be both an acceptance of and a witness born to the fact that when Christ died we died, that we were "crucified with Christ," (Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 2:12, etc.). This has been dealt with at length in ["Incorporated into Christ."](#) No. 1. Then we come to this side of the Cross and the lines cross once again. First there is the beginning of the new man - the inner man - the spiritual man. He is "begotten again by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead," 1 Peter 1:3. Here begins that spiritual life, walk, knowledge, etc., of which we have spoken, and here therefore begins that life process by which the new or spiritual man takes the ascendancy over the old or natural man by the power of the Cross.

As we "walk in the spirit" we cease to "fulfil the lusts of the flesh." Thus in the spirit by the indwelling of God's Spirit there is, through Calvary, a restoration, and more than a restoration, of the lost likeness, fellowship, knowledge, co-operation, and spiritual dominion.

As the spiritual and inner man is renewed, strengthened, educated, the natural and outer man is brought into subjection and robbed of his dominance, until slowly the soul is made the servant of the renewed spirit, and the body is harnessed as the instrument for doing what the soul has come to understand as the will of the spirit, which in its turn has been "joined to the Lord One Spirit."

There is no time limit to this process or progress. Some have more to unlearn than others. The spirits of many are not as pure as some because they have been muffled and beclouded by much mental and emotional apprehension. One often sees people in a meeting to whose spirit very little gets through because they are judging with their heads according to some accepted tenets, or they are prejudiced, suspicious, biased, or the slaves of a system and not at liberty in the spirit. It is a joy to meet a pure and open spirit. In this sense we have to "turn and become as little children." How pure the spirit of a child is! Therefore how true its intuitions or discernment. Some of us remember now the judgment we passed upon certain people when we were quite young. Our conclusions were quite clear and definite, although we could never have stated them, but looking back with the larger understanding, how perfectly right we were, and time has only corroborated our "feelings." We did not arrive at these by reasoning, or knowledge, or even studied observation, we could never have given our reasons or explained ourselves in the matter. These were the pure intuitions of an unbecloved spirit. Such is to be our state, *not in the natural* but in the Divine realm. Lord, make us in this matter to have the spirit of a child, for of such is the realm of the heavenlies!

We now see why it is that the Lord is primarily concerned with our spirit. It is here that the new life resides; it is here that the Holy Spirit operates: it is here that our true education takes place: it is here that we have fellowship with God: it is here that we are to be made strong: it is here that resistance of the enemy is to be established: it is here that authority over malignant spiritual forces is to function. It is this spirit possessed of the resurrection life of Christ which is the germ of the resurrection body; it is here that we are saved in trial: it is here that that sinless, inviolate, life of God is (1 John 3:9, 5:18) not in our "outer" or "old man." It is only as we come to the outer man that the enemy has power over us.

May we just strike a note of warning here. There is a peril that we might live too much in our own human spirit as a thing by itself. For the born again child of God, the Holy Spirit is the Divine

indweller of the human spirit, and it is not our spirit but His presence in our spirit that has to be our direction and government. A larger reason for this warning will be mentioned later, but as one very vital principle for safety in this matter let us here emphasize the corporate nature of the Holy Spirit's work. He is essentially the gift to the Body of Christ as a whole, and only indwells individual members relatively. It is Christ corporate Who is anointed in this age to fulfil the eternal purpose, and the Holy Spirit resting in and upon the "Body" (1 Cor. 12:12) energises and endows each member in relation to the whole and to the "Head" (Eph. 1:22). Hence spiritual guidance should be corporate, and the complement, corroboration, and confirmation should be sought in the spirits of "two or three" members. This "discerning of the Body" (1 Cor. 10:16,17; 11:29) is important in the matter of service as in fellowship. God is jealous of proper order in the Body of Christ, and failure to note this is the traceable cause of very much error, chaos, and disruption; as also of failure, suffering, and shame. There are also "joints of supply" in the "Body," and while they do not compose a priestly or ecclesiastical class or order, they are in - by the appointment of God and the seal of the Spirit - a representative position and capacity. God will not have these set aside, but requires that those who are within the sphere of their oversight (1 Peter 5:2, etc.) shall consult with them, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual" in the matter of service and conduct, as in matters of truth and doctrine. Where this is possible God locks up His direction to this law, and only trouble can follow sooner or later if the law is ignored. We must not overlook the Divine appointments within the "Body" (Eph. 4:11-14). These appointments were made and these personal gifts were given for the "perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministry, for the building up of the Body of Christ *till*" - till when, the end of the Apostolic age? - "till we attain... unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," and that has not taken place yet.

Having been so definite in pointing out that all the Divine operations in the "New Man" are directed toward the complete ascendancy of the spirit over the soul and body, and that the anointing of God rests within and upon the "Inner Man," we can only stress two things. One is that whatever may appear to the contrary in emotion, pleasure, gratification, enjoyment, activity, resolve, etc., only that which comes out from the Holy-Spirit-indwelt-spirit is spiritual and effects spiritual ends. The natural - soulish-man *can* make an oil which is an imitation of "The Holy Anointing Oil," or fire which is "False Fire," which seems to serve the same purpose and produce similar results. Thus in the same meeting one may speak by revelation under the anointing of the Spirit of God, bringing those present face to face with issues of tremendous significance, and another may launch out on to a churning sea of beautiful ideas and strong emotional currents, and capture the meeting, but for any spiritually discerning people present. The pressure and strenuousness of life lay many open to the peril of such emotional, mental, and volitional stimulants, but it may only be in the religious realm what alcohol or drugs are in the physical realm. The pernicious results are that people must have more and more, and they select such as can produce them, and gather round a man. This is clearly shown by Paul to be "carnal." It is the opposite of "The anointing which ye have received abiding *within* you, and ye have no need that any should teach you." This makes necessary the second thing, namely, spiritual discernment. We must seek more and more from the Lord a quickening and purifying of spirit, and we must walk after the spirit in whatever discernment we have so that we are saved from the imitation "oil" which deceives and at length lands us either into error or gets us into a spiritual cul-de-sac. Such are they that are "carried about by every *wind* of teaching." *Spiritual discernment is one of the most vital needs of God's people today.* Nothing can take its place, not even the wisest and best teaching or counsel. Only those who have it will be saved from the distraction and despair of the bewildering mass of conflicting teaching, "manifestations," and movements of these and the coming days.

There is another thing that Christian workers should remember. It is always a dangerous and paralysing thing to allow soulish human feelings to come in and take precedence over the spirit in relationships, where spiritual help is needed. Compassion, love, sympathy, concern, interest, desire to help, etc., *must be absolutely under the control and direction of the spirit*. Failure to observe this law has resulted in some of the most ghastly moral and spiritual tragedies in the lives of Christian workers. If we allow either natural attraction or human desire on the one hand, or natural repulsion and human distaste on the other to have any ruling place the consequences may be disastrous, and the result will certainly be spiritual failure. Very often even in the case of a loved relative the human interest has to be made quite secondary - sometimes ruled out altogether - before a spiritual issue can be effected. OUR will and wish has to be surrendered to God's.

Before closing there are just two things which one feels should be mentioned. Having seen that the basis of all fellowship and co-operation with God is spiritual, in and through the born-again spirit, we must realise that this at once defines the real nature of our service. The background of all cosmic conditions is spiritual. Behind the things seen are the things unseen. The things which do appeal are not the ultimate things.

"The whole world lieth in the wicked one." There is a spiritual hierarchy which, before this world was, revolted against the equality of the Son with the Father in the Throne, and in spite of the hurling out of heaven and the eternal doom which followed, has been in active revolt and antagonism to that "eternal purpose" right through the ages. A certain judicial hold upon this earth and the race in Adam was gained by Satan through the consent of that first Adam, through whom the purpose of God should have been realised on this earth.

Thus we have Paul telling the members of the Body of Christ - The Last Adam - that their "warfare is not with mere flesh and blood, but with principalities, and powers, the world-rulers of this darkness, and spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies."

What a lot is gathered up into that inclusive phrase "This darkness." How much is said about it in the scriptures. The need for having eyes opened is ever basic to emancipation (see Acts 26:18). The cause of all "this darkness" is said to be "Spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies." Literally translated the words are "the spiritualities" or "the spirituals," meaning, spiritual beings. "Wickedness" here does not just mean merely inherent wickedness or evil, but malignance; destructive, harmful.

"In the heavenlies" simply means inhabiting a realm beyond the earthly, not limited to earthly geographical localities; moving in the realm surrounding the earth and human habitation.

"World rulers" means that these malignant spiritual hosts are directing and governing the world wherever the government of Christ has not been superimposed through His Body - the spiritual Church.

"Principalities and Powers" (authorities) represent order, rank, method, system. Satan is not omnipresent, hence he must work through an organised dividing of the world under these principalities and authorities, and he himself "goes to and fro in the earth," and has seats here and there (Job 2:2, Rev. 2:13, etc.).

The Apostle declares that the explanation of situations is to be looked for in the unseen, behind the actual appearance.

What looks like the natural has its rise too often in the supernatural. Man is always trying to give a natural explanation and therefore to put things right by natural means. But when he comes up against a situation in which interests of the Christ of God are involved, he is floored and beaten. Such situations are become the commonplaces - nay more - the overwhelming order of the day amongst "Christian workers" in these days, both abroad and at home. We have no intention of dealing with the subject at length here, but state the fact, and remind the Lord's people especially that in more realms than that of Divine activity, "What is seen hath not been made out of the things which do appear," but that multitudes of the things in daily life which are inimical to spiritual interests must have their explanation from behind. Let us emphasise that this spiritual union with God in the super Cosmic significance of the Cross of Christ means that our supreme effectiveness is in the spiritual realm. We who are the Divine "spirituals" are to be energised by the Holy Spirit to take ascendancy in Christ over the Satanic "spirituals," and thus know something more than mere earthly dominion but "seated together with Him in the heavenlies" (as to our spirit) we are to learn to reign in that greater "kingdom of the heavens" of which the earthly millennial kingdom is only an earthly counterpart.

Again, let us affirm, that all the energies of God in our spirit are toward a corporate spiritual union with Christ whereby the impact of His victory and sovereignty shall be registered among and upon the "principalities and powers," etc., and their domination paralysed, and ultimately destroyed.

The last word is to point out that it is because man has, and centrally is, a spirit that he can have intercourse with fallen spirits. We believe that this explains the whole system of spiritism (spiritualism) and that the supposed departed with whom spiritualists communicate are none other than these "spiritual hosts" impersonating the departed, whom they knew in lifetime. Leaving the many phases of this thing in its outworkings and issues at the end of the age, let us note the terrible nemesis in wrecked minds and bodies; haunted, driven, distraught, reason-bereft souls; crowded asylums, prisons; suicides, moral and spiritual wrecks, etc., is because that which was given to man specifically for union, communion and co-operation with God, namely the spirit of man, has been used as the medium and instrument for this demon invasion and control of his life. The tremendous warnings and terrible judgments associated with all kinds of spiritism; necromancy, witches, "familiar spirits," etc., are because of the spirit complicity, dalliance, consorting, with fallen spirits whose purpose is always to capture men and women through their spirits. This they will do even by adopting the guise of an angel of light, and talking religion. Strange, isn't it, that fifty years ago men threw off the belief in the supernatural in the scriptures, and today they and their school so strongly embrace spiritism? Surely this is "the working of error" sent that they who received not the truth for the love of it "might believe A LIE" "in order that they might be condemned" (2 Thess. 2:11).

It was the spiritual background of their life which led to the destruction of the Egyptians, Canaanites, etc., and this was spiritism in different forms; but it was their being joined to demons that involved them.

The most spiritual people apart from new birth union with God are in the greatest peril here, and even the Lord's own people by reason of their very spirituality need to constantly abide in the Cross of Christ that they shall not become exposed to "The wiles of the devil."