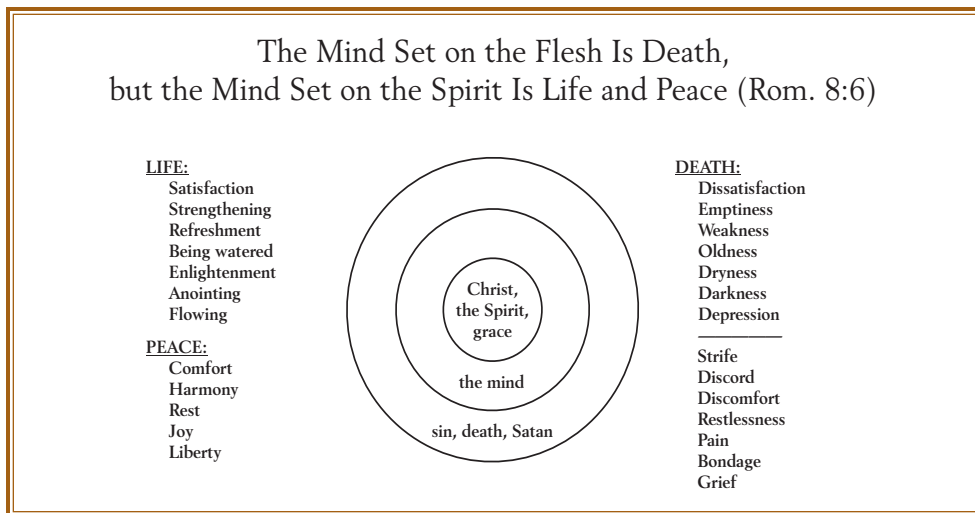


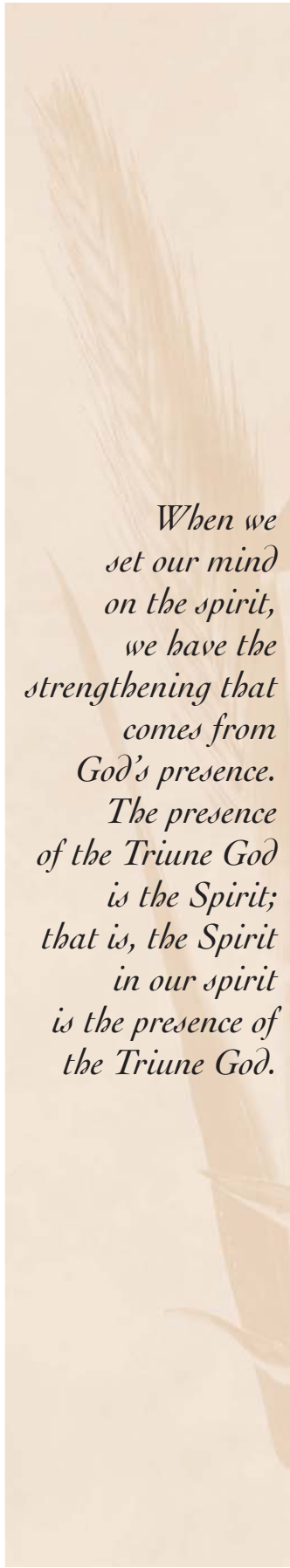
Setting Our Mind on the Spirit

by Ed Marks

We need to consider the diagram on this page. It displays the three parts of a regenerated believer (1 Thes. 5:23) with three concentric circles. The innermost circle is the regenerated spirit of a believer. This spirit is actually a mingled spirit—the divine Spirit mingled with our human spirit to be one spirit (Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17). The next circle is the soul of a believer—his mind, emotion, and will—with the mind being the leading part. The outermost circle represents a believer’s flesh. Romans 8:6 says, “The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.” We are either in the spirit or in the flesh; there is no third place for us to be. Actually, the believer is a miniature garden of Eden—with God as the tree of life in his spirit, Satan as the tree of knowledge in his flesh, and his mind in between. We cannot be in a neutral position. Before the fall, man was in a neutral position, but because of the fall, neutrality is no longer possible. Now our mind is either set on the flesh or set on the spirit.

If we set our mind on our spirit, our mind becomes life, *zoe* (Gk.). *Zoe* is used in the New Testament for the eternal, divine life. This life is equal to the tree of life (Gen. 2:9). When we set our mind on the spirit, our mind not only becomes *zoe*; it also becomes peace. The New Jerusalem in Revelation 21 and 22 is a city of *zoe*, with the light of life, the tree of life, and the river of life. The New Jerusalem is also a city of peace because *Jerusalem* means “foundation of peace.” Thus, when we set our mind on the spirit, our mind actually becomes a part of the New Jerusalem. However, when we set our mind on the flesh, our mind becomes death. This death is equal to death that results from partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17; cf. Eph. 2:1).





*When we
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The presence
of the Triune God
is the Spirit;
that is, the Spirit
in our spirit
is the presence of
the Triune God.*

We may say that both our flesh and our spirit are “compounds” or “meeting halls.” Our flesh is a compound of death, and our spirit is a compound of life. Our flesh is the meeting hall for sin, death, and Satan, and our spirit is the meeting hall for Christ, the Spirit, and grace. We need to live in the meeting hall of the spirit. According to the diagram, sin, death, and Satan are in our flesh. This is a terrible compound, a terrible meeting hall. Our body is a body of sin and a body of death (Rom. 6:6; 7:24). In Romans 7 sin is personified, because it deceives us, kills us, and causes us to do things that we do not want to do (vv. 11, 15-17). Actually, the definition of sin is Satan dwelling in us; it is Satan dwelling in our body and causing our body to be transmuted, corrupted, and polluted with sin and death. But we do not have to remain in the meeting hall of our flesh, because we have another meeting hall—the meeting hall of our spirit.

The diagram also shows that in the meeting hall of our spirit, there are Christ, the Spirit, and grace. First, Christ is with our spirit. Second Timothy 4:22 says, “The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.” The Lord is with our spirit, and grace is with us. When we are in our spirit, we are under the lordship of Christ and under His authority and kingship. He is our Lord, He is our King, He is our Husband, and He is our Ruler. The Lord is with our spirit. Second, we have the Spirit with our spirit. Romans 8:16 says, “The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.” The Spirit with our spirit is the mingled spirit, and the mingled spirit is the key to our entire Christian life and the secret of God’s organic salvation, His salvation in life (5:10). We have the key to the Christian life. To be a Christian without knowing about our mingled spirit is like having a car without a key. If we do not have a key, we can look at the car, but we cannot drive it. We need the key to start the car. Praise the Lord that we know that the key to our entire Christian life is to exercise our mingled spirit (1 Tim. 4:7)! Third, grace is with our spirit. Galatians 6:18 says, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.” Grace is God in Christ as the Spirit for our enjoyment. If we want to enjoy the Lord, we have to be in our spirit, because grace is with our spirit.

Setting Our Mind on the Spirit by Caring for the Sense of Life

The sense of life in our spirit is an inner sense that does two things. First, it causes us to know whether we are living in the natural life or in the divine life by our having an inward sense of life and peace. Second, it causes us to know whether we are living in the flesh or in the spirit by our having an inward sense of death or life. The diagram gives a list of inner sensations that are related to life. The first point listed is satisfaction. When we set our mind on the spirit, we have an inward sense of satisfaction. When we set our mind on the spirit, we have the strengthening that comes from God’s presence. The presence of the Triune God is the Spirit; that is, the Spirit in our spirit is the presence of the Triune God. When we set our mind on the spirit, we have a sense of refreshment, an inner refreshing, a sense that is indescribable. The inner sense of refreshing is like heavenly “air conditioning.” Isaiah 32:2 says that Christ is “like the shadow of a massive rock in a wasted land.” He is our real inward “air conditioner,” our refreshment. When we set our mind on the spirit, we also have a sense of being watered, a sense of enlightenment, a sense of anointing, and a sense of flowing.

The basis for determining what we should do is not a matter of right or wrong but is altogether a matter of life and peace. Therefore, it is good to pray, “Lord, what is Your perfect will for me?” Then as we are setting our mind on the spirit, as we are praying and fellowshiping with the Lord, we will have an inner sense of either satisfaction or dissatisfaction when we consider doing something. If we have an inner sense of dissatisfaction, emptiness, weakness, oldness, dryness, darkness, and depression, we should realize that we should not go that way, because we are setting our mind on the flesh. Rather, we should go in the direction that gives us an inner sense of satisfaction, strengthening, refreshment, watering, enlightenment, anointing, and flowing.

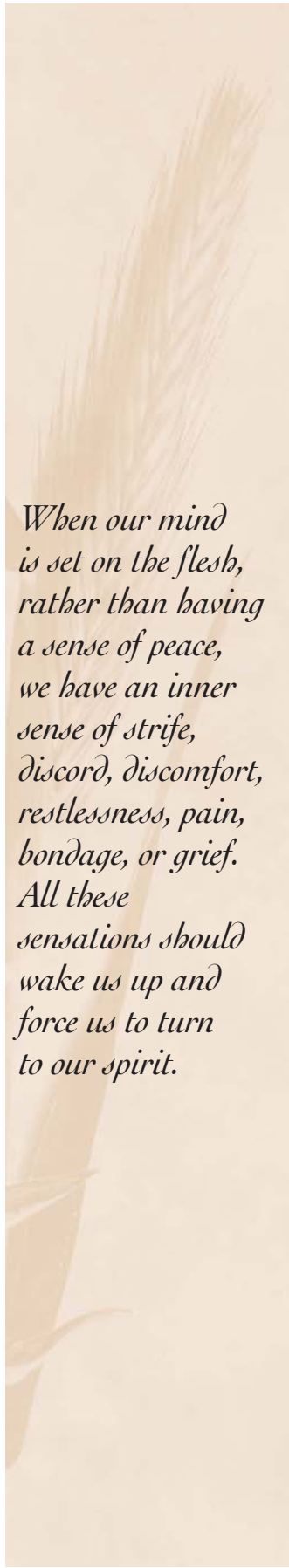
The sense of life also includes the sense of peace. The sense of peace that comes from setting the mind on the spirit includes an inner sense of comfort and harmony. It is wonderful to have an inner sense of harmony instead of a sense of chaos. If we have an inner sense of chaos, we need to say, “Lord Jesus, forgive me. What is wrong? I open to you, Lord.” Then the Lord will shine on us, and He may want us to confess something or clear up something. When we follow His direction, the inner sense of harmony returns. The inner sense of peace also includes rest, joy, and liberty. In 2 Corinthians 2:12-13 Paul says, “When I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ and a door was open to me in the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit.” These are five important words—*no rest in my spirit*. Paul was governed by the rest in his spirit, not by outward circumstances. Even though the outward circumstances were good with a door being opened in the Lord to preach the gospel, he took care of the rest in his spirit. We also have to take care of the joy and liberty in our spirit. This is the inward sense of peace that comes from setting our mind on the spirit.

Negatively, the sense of life lets us know that we are living in the natural life or in the flesh. It is an inward alarm telling us that we need to turn to our spirit. In looking at the diagram, we can see that setting the mind on the flesh issues in death, which is the exact opposite of life and peace. With death there is a sense of dissatisfaction, emptiness, and weakness. The weakness associated with death is not an outward, physical weakness, because it is possible to be outwardly weak but inwardly full of strength. This inner strength, or power, is our inner dynamo—Christ (Phil. 4:13; 2 Cor. 12:10). The sense of weakness associated with death is an inward weakness. Death also involves a sense of oldness, dryness, darkness, and depression. No one likes to be old; we all want to be new, fresh, and young. Neither do we want to be dry, stale, or lukewarm. All these inner sensations are related to the sense of death. The reason there is a line on the diagram, on the side of death, is that the items above the line are versus life, and the items below the line are versus peace. When our mind is set on the flesh, rather than having a sense of peace, we have an inner sense of strife, discord, discomfort, restlessness, pain, bondage, or grief. All these sensations should wake us up and force us to turn to our spirit.

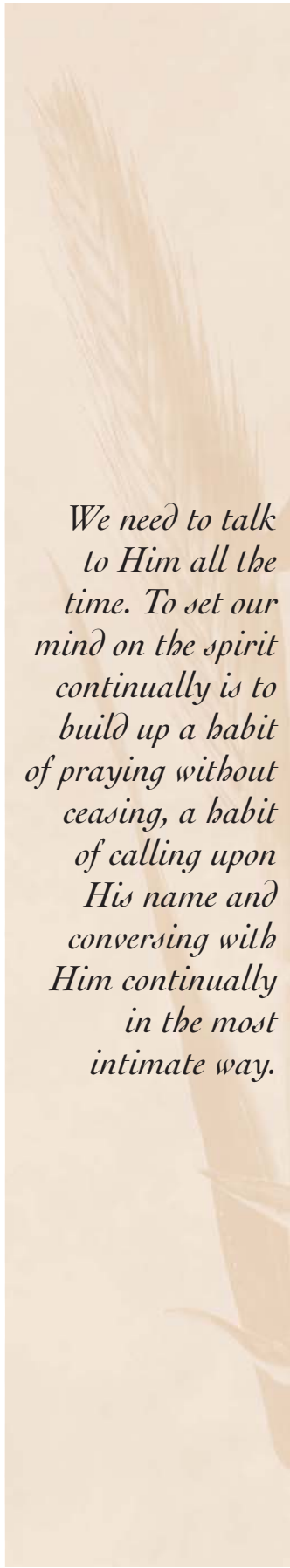
Setting Our Mind on the Spirit by Prayer

The best way to set our mind on the spirit is to pray. In the New Testament one of the first verses that refer to both the spirit and the flesh is Matthew 26:41. When the Lord was with His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, He said, “Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” *Gethsemane* means “oil press.” It was the place where the Lord was pressed so that the oil of the Spirit could be released through Him on the cross. While He was praying and being pressed, however, the disciples were sleeping. *Watch* here means “wakefulness”; that is, “to not sleep, to stay awake.” Colossians 4:2 also speaks of our need to be awake and not sleep in regard to prayer: “Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving.”

When the Bible says that the flesh is weak, it means that the flesh is sleepy. Our spirit is willing, but our flesh is weak; it is sleepy. Note 1 by Witness Lee on Matthew 26:41 in the Recovery Version says, “In spiritual things we are often like this.” We are all sleepy persons. We are physically sleepy, we are psychologically sleepy, and we are spiritually sleepy. This is why Ephesians 5:14 charges us: “Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.” Even in a church meeting, we may be physically awake, but our mind may be somewhere far away. This means not only that our psychological being is sleeping but also that our spiritual perception is dormant. We need to build up a habit of watching, not just physically but with our mind set on the spirit. Our spirit is willing to pray at all times. Prayer is the best way to exercise our spirit. If we intend to build up a habit of prayer, we must be willing to exhaust all our strength. The only way for a car battery to be recharged is for its energy to be spent. The more it spends its energy, the more it can be recharged. In the same way, the more we pray, the more we



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We need to talk to Him all the time. To set our mind on the spirit continually is to build up a habit of praying without ceasing, a habit of calling upon His name and conversing with Him continually in the most intimate way.

will have the ability to pray. Even if we think that we do not know how to pray, we should just start praying. Everyone can say, “O Lord Jesus,” and everyone can say, “Lord Jesus, I do not know how to pray.” This is a good prayer. Then we can say, “Lord Jesus, teach me to pray. Lord Jesus, I need You right now.”

We have to fight against this threefold sleep—physical sleep, psychological sleep, and spiritual sleep. The concluding word in the book of Ephesians, which is concerning the Body of Christ, is a word on prayer: “Receive...the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God, by means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints” (6:17-18). When we pray-read the Word, receive the Word in a spirit and atmosphere of prayer, we should not pray-read simply for our own nourishment and for the killing of the negative things in our being by the sword of the Spirit; we should pray-read for all the saints. We should receive the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God so that we can watch unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints. Then in verse 19 Paul adds, “And for me.” He wanted the saints to pray also for him so that he, as an ambassador in a chain, could speak the mystery of the gospel in boldness and be given utterance in the opening of his mouth to proclaim the gospel. We should pray-read for the saints and for the Lord’s servants. Surely we should pray-read to receive a spiritual supply and to kill the negative things in our being, but we also should use the sword of the Spirit to pray for one another and to pray for the Lord’s servants who are traveling to spread the gospel of God all over the earth.

Colossians, a book on the revelation of the all-extensive, all-inclusive Christ, ends with a word on prayer: “Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving” (4:2). Again, the word *watch* means to not sleep, to stay awake. In our prayer we need to watch and fight against physical sleep, psychological sleep, and spiritual sleep. We need to persevere, because the enemy wants to interrupt our prayer. He will do anything to quench our prayer. We need to build up a habit of prayer. We can pray this simple prayer: “Lord, live through me.” The habit of living Christ by setting our mind on the spirit must be the habit of prayer. If we make this our habit and say, “Lord, live through me; Lord, live through me for the building up of Your Body today,” He will be happy with this prayer. We should continually pray, “Lord, live through me.”

The basic foundation for our prayer is that we love the Lord. Surely we love the Lord and want Him to live through us. We should learn to contact Him constantly and stay in intimate touch with Him. Prayer in actual practice is also to call on the name of the Lord. It is simply to say, “Lord Jesus, I love You. Live through me today.” Watchman Nee wrote a wonderful hymn that says, “Live Thyself, Lord Jesus, through me” (*Hymns*, #403). This is a marvelous prayer of asking the Lord to live Himself through us. We are married to the Lord, and since we love Him, we should not stop talking to Him. The more we talk to Him, the more we will have life and peace. To pray is to talk to the Lord. We should talk to Him all the time. To be perfected in our priesthood (in typology) is to be perfected to present Christ to God at the golden incense altar. This means that we need to be perfected to pray by fellowshiping with God in a conversational way to enjoy His presence, to enjoy the Triune God Himself. Being perfected to pray at the incense altar means to enjoy Him in a conversational way, and being perfected to pray is equal to setting our mind on the spirit. We need to talk to Him all the time. To set our mind on the spirit continually is to build up a habit of praying without ceasing, a habit of calling upon His name and conversing with Him continually in the most intimate way.

Watchman Nee says, “We should realize that when we have a thorough talk with the Lord and pour out our heart to Him, our intimacy with the Lord is one step further, and we know Him a little more” (*Collected* 18: 329). The more we talk to the Lord, the more we gain Him, and the more He works Himself into us. Watchman Nee says,

Intimate contact with Him at these times is hundreds of time better than our ordinary fellowship with Him. By these contacts we advance in life. We should bring our problems to the Lord and tell Him about them. He can comfort us and help us. If a person has never shed tears before the Lord, if he has never shared his joy or sorrow with the Lord, and if he has never talked with the Lord about his private matters, he has never had any intimate fellowship with the Lord; he has never had any deep acquaintance with Him. We are not saying that you cannot ask others to pray for you or ask others to help you. We are saying that one can only be drawn closer to the Lord through telling Him everything. (*Collected* 18: 329)

We should tell Him everything—tell Him our sorrows and tell Him our joys. When we are happy, we should say, “Lord, I’m so happy.” In this same message by Watchman Nee, he comments on an experience of C. H. Spurgeon:

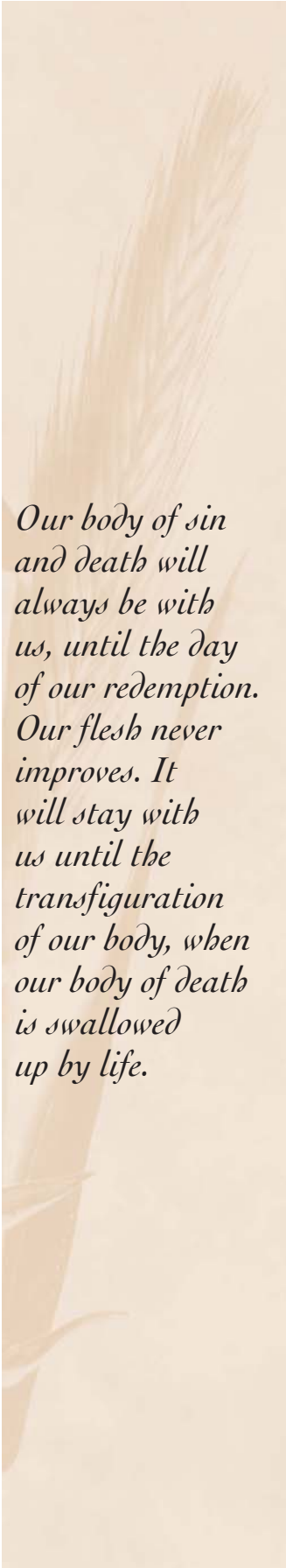
Mr. Charles Spurgeon once went with a friend to the countryside for a horseback ride after he became exhausted from his preaching. At one point he was elated, jumped off his horse, and invited his friend to do the same. His friend was surprised at his move and asked him what he was going to do. He said, “Since God has given us such joy, let us thank Him at this very minute.” The two of them knelt down by the road and prayed. We cannot have laughter all the time, but whenever we have joy we should tell the Lord. We should remember the Lord at the moment of joy and share our joy with Him. The Lord never rebukes us for having too much joy. He cares for our feelings in a spontaneous way. Therefore, we should not forget to tell the Lord our joy. (*Collected* 18: 330)

The Need to See What the Flesh Is

In order to live by the mingled spirit, the Spirit with our spirit (Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17), we must see what the flesh is. The flesh is the corrupted, polluted, and transmuted body. Man’s body was originally pure, but through man’s fall Satan injected himself into man, and man’s body became the flesh (Gen. 3:6; Rom. 7:18). In Romans 7:18 Paul says, “I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, nothing good dwells.” No matter how good we may seem to be or how much good work we have done, nothing good dwells in our flesh. Our body is “the body of sin” (6:6) and “the body of this death” (7:24); the body of sin is very active and full of strength in sinning against God, and the body of this death is weak and powerless in acting to please God. Paul says, “To will is present with me, but to work out the good is not” (v. 18); this was Paul’s experience of the body of death. He seemed to be saying, “I want to do good, but I cannot work out the good.”

As long as we are still living, our body of sin and death will always be with us, until the day of our redemption (cf. 8:23). Our flesh never improves. It will stay with us until the transfiguration of our body, when our body of death is swallowed up by life (Phil. 3:21; 2 Cor. 5:4). If we think that our flesh will get better, we are in a self-deceiving dream and need to be awakened. It does not matter how long we have been believers or how much we have been transformed; our flesh will never improve. Sometimes when a person who has been a Christian for many years has a great failure, we may wonder how it was possible for that person to have done such a thing. It is because our flesh never improves. When we behave outside of the spirit, we are walking in the vanity of our mind, we are alienated from the life of God like the unbelievers, and we are capable of anything (Eph. 4:17-19).

The word *flesh* refers also to our entire fallen being; man is totally flesh because the fallen being today is under the dominion of the fallen flesh (Gen. 6:3). Romans 3:20 says, “Out of the works of the law no flesh shall be justified before Him.” Because fallen man is dominated by the flesh—the dwelling place, the “meeting hall,” of sin, death, and Satan—his entire being in God’s eyes is the flesh, the uttermost expression of the fallen tripartite man. But we thank the Lord that, as regenerated believers, we



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have another “meeting hall,” which is our spirit, the dwelling place of Christ, the Spirit, and grace. There is a meeting of sin, death, and Satan going on in our flesh all the time. Although this meeting has not yet been dismissed, it will be dismissed when we are glorified. However, the meeting of Christ, the Spirit, and grace in our spirit will never be dismissed.

We have pointed out that the flesh is the “meeting hall” and the “compound” of sin, death, and Satan; the flesh is a hopeless case and can never be improved (7:17-18, 21; cf. John 17:15). In Romans 7:18-20 Paul says, “I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but to work out the good is not. For I do not do the good which I will; but the evil which I do not will, this I practice. But if what I do not will, this I do, it is no longer I that work it out but sin that dwells in me.” This indicates that, as with all men, sin was in Paul’s flesh, as another person dwelling within him. Satan entered into fallen man as sin and now forces man to do things that he does not want to do. In Paul’s case it was coveting (v. 7), but with us it can be all manner of things.

When sin is dormant within us, it is merely sin, but when it is aroused in us by our willing to do the good, it becomes “the evil.” By our being willing to do the good, the evil in our flesh becomes aroused.

Paul concludes in verse 21, saying, “I find then the law with me who wills to do the good, that is, the evil is present with me.” Whenever we try to do good, we activate the negative law of sin and of death in our members, and immediately “the evil” is present with us. “The evil” is the evil life, nature, and character of Satan himself, who is the indwelling sin in us. When sin is dormant within us, it is merely sin, but when it is aroused in us by our willing to do the good, it becomes “the evil.” By our being willing to do the good, the evil in our flesh becomes aroused. Instead of trying to do good, we must set our mind on the spirit, exercise our spirit, use our spirit, and pay attention to our spirit by praying, calling on the name of the Lord, talking to the Lord, telling the Lord that we love Him, praising the Lord, singing spiritual songs, pray-reading the Word, and crying “Abba, Father!” The flesh is “enmity against God,” is not “subject to the law of God,” and “cannot please God” (8:7-8). *Enmity against* means “actively opposed to” or “hostile toward.” Thus, the flesh is actively opposed to and hostile toward God. It is not subject to the law of God, and it can never please God.

Sin can deceive us, kill us (7:11), lord it over us, that is, have dominion over us (6:12, 14), and cause us to do things against our will (7:17, 20); all these activities show that sin is a living person. Paul says in Romans 7:11 that “sin, seizing the opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.” In chapter 6 he indicates that sin can reign in us and lord it over us, that is, have dominion over us (vv. 12, 14). Sin causes us to do things against our will; Paul says, “What I will, this I do not practice; but what I hate, this I do” (7:15). This is the real condition of fallen man, and it will be our condition whenever we try to be a good Christian apart from setting our mind on the spirit. Thus, Paul says, “Now then it is no longer I that work it out but sin that dwells in me,” and “If what I do not will, this I do, it is no longer I that work it out but sin that dwells in me” (vv. 17, 20). Sin is a living person.

Sin is the evil nature of Satan, the evil one, who, having injected himself into man through Adam’s fall, has now become the very sinful nature dwelling, acting, and working in fallen man (cf. Matt. 16:22-23). When the Lord asked His disciples who they considered Him to be, Peter received a great revelation from God and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (v. 16). Then the Lord responded, saying, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in the heavens. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (vv. 17-18). The Lord told Peter that he was a stone, and that upon the rock of the revelation that he had just received concerning Him, He would build His church, and the gates of Hades would not prevail against it. This was a great revelation, and surely Peter was in spirit at that moment when he received it. Immediately after speaking concerning

the building of the church, the Lord began to tell His disciples how He would accomplish this building:

Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, God be merciful to You, Lord! This shall by no means 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 the things of God, but on the things of men. (vv. 21-23)

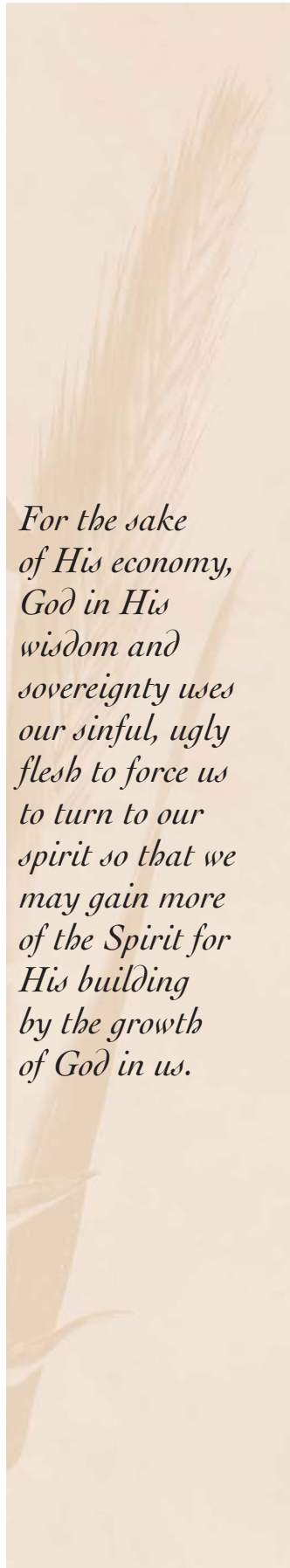
Suddenly, in the eyes of the Lord, Peter was Satan. Thus, in an instant, Peter went from receiving the revelation of who Christ was and of God's heart's desire to being called Satan. In a short span of time he went from being in the spirit to being in the flesh.

In Galatians 2:20 Paul says, "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me"; in Romans 7:17 he says, "It is no longer I...but sin that dwells in me," showing that sin actually is another person dwelling within us. In our flesh no good thing dwells, because the flesh is fully possessed, taken over, by Satan as sin (v. 18). In Romans 7:25 Paul says, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin." Witness Lee's note 1 on this verse in the Recovery Version says, "The phrase *with the mind I myself* indicates that the mind, representing the self, is independently attempting to do good. Although the law of good in the mind (v. 23) gives us the inclination to do good, the mind will be defeated because the law of sin in our members is stronger than the independent mind." We should never be in the realm of "with the mind I myself." Whenever we are in this realm, it means that we are depending on our own power and strength to keep the law of good in our mind. Thus, the law of sin and death will automatically defeat us. Instead, we need to switch on the law of the Spirit of life (8:2) by setting our mind on our spirit. Simply speaking, to set our mind on our spirit is to pay attention to our spirit.

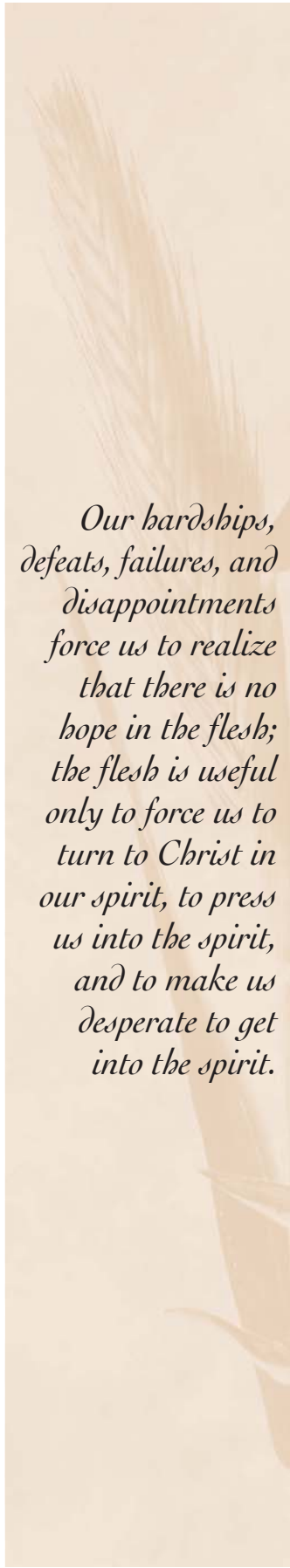
God Sovereignly Using the Flesh to Force Us to Turn to Our Spirit

For the sake of His economy, God in His wisdom and sovereignty uses our sinful, ugly flesh to force us to turn to our spirit so that we may gain more of the Spirit for His building by the growth of God in us (Col. 2:19; Zech. 4:6). God is not interested in our victory, success, or spirituality. God is interested only in our gaining more of Him and in our having Him wrought into us. When we have a spiritual success, we may think that we are wonderful Christians. Our failures, however, make us desperate to turn to the spirit. This does not mean that we should purposely try to fail. It is not a matter of succeeding or failing but a matter of gaining more of Christ and having more of God wrought into us. Zechariah 4:6 says, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says Jehovah of hosts," and Colossians 2:19 says, "Holding the Head, out from whom all the Body...grows with the growth of God." These verses indicate that we need more of the Spirit and more of the growth of God.

Judicially speaking, both Satan and our flesh were condemned once for all on the cross (Rom. 8:3; John 3:14; Heb. 2:14; 2 Cor. 5:21), but God allowed the flesh to remain with us to help us and force us to turn to Christ in our spirit and have no more confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3:3). Because our terrible and ugly flesh—the meeting hall of sin, death, and Satan—is with us all the time, we should be desperate to turn to our spirit and have absolutely no confidence in the flesh. Thus, Paul says in Philippians 3:3, "We are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh." When Paul says, "We are the circumcision," he is saying, "We are the ones who have cut off the flesh." We all need to pray, "Lord, make me one who has cut off the flesh and serves by the Spirit of God, boasts in Christ Jesus, exults in Christ Jesus, glories in Christ Jesus, and has



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Our hardships, defeats, failures, and disappointments force us to realize that there is no hope in the flesh; the flesh is useful only to force us to turn to Christ in our spirit, to press us into the spirit, and to make us desperate to get into the spirit.

no confidence in the flesh.” A practical definition of having no confidence in the flesh is to always have the attitude that we could be wrong. Concerning this, Watchman Nee says,

The less a man is enlightened by God, the more he thinks that he will have no trouble obeying God. The quicker a man makes loud claims, the more it proves that he has never paid any price. Those whose words pretend intimacy with God are probably farthest away from Him. When one does not have the light, it is easy for him to claim intimacy with God. Actually such ones are far from God. A man must go through God’s dealings before he will find out how stubborn and opinionated he is. He always believes in himself and considers his own opinions, feelings, methods, and views to be right. Paul found grace with God in many ways, the chief one of which, I believe, lies in his words in Philippians 3:3: “Have no confidence in the flesh.” This means that he no longer trusted in his flesh. We also have to be led by God to realize that we dare not trust in our own judgment. God allows us to make mistakes again and again until we are forced to confess that we have been wrong in the past and that we will be wrong again in the future. We will acknowledge that we need the Lord’s grace. The Lord often allows our judgment to bring us serious consequences. We make certain judgments, and they turn out to be wrong. We make other judgments, and they turn out to be wrong again, so terribly wrong that we cannot even salvage the loss. Time after time the Lord smites us, until a point is reached when as soon as we need to make a judgment, we will say, “I fear my own judgment as much as I fear hell fire. I am afraid that my judgment is flawed. I am afraid that my view and my methods are flawed. Lord, I am prone to mistakes. I am simply a man of mistakes! Lord, unless You grant me mercy and hold me by my hand and protect me with Your hand, I will fall into mistakes!” When we pray this way, our outer man will begin to crumble. We no longer will dare to trust in ourselves. (*Breaking* 75)

Whenever different brothers gather together to have fellowship concerning various matters, the spirit, attitude, and atmosphere of their fellowship should be that it is possible for them to be wrong. This is why we desperately need the Lord’s presence in our fellowship together; we have this presence by setting our mind on our spirit.

Without the help rendered by the sinful, ugly flesh, we would not be as desperate to gain the Lord or to have Him wrought into us (Rom. 8:6, 13). Verse 13 says, “If you live according to the flesh, you must die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you will live.” “To die” here is a spiritual matter, not physical, and the practices of the body include not only sinful things but also all things practiced by our body apart from the Spirit. We need to repent and by the Spirit put to death the practices of the body so that we may live. Our goal may be holiness or spirituality or victory, but God’s goal is to work Himself into us. Often when we are in a difficult situation, we are more open to the Lord and more willing to turn to Him and allow Him to work Himself into us (vv. 28-29). If we seek Him, even the sinful compound of the flesh will become a help to us in gaining the Lord. Because we fail so often, we are desperate to turn to the spirit, and in this way we gain more of the Spirit. Our hardships, defeats, failures, and disappointments force us to realize that there is no hope in the flesh; the flesh is useful only to force us to turn to Christ in our spirit, to press us into the spirit, to make us desperate to get into the spirit, and to keep us watchful to stay in the spirit (Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:17-18).

In Exodus 17 there is a picture of our war against the flesh. The children of Amalek (representing the flesh) came out to fight against the children of Israel. Hence, Moses asked Joshua to choose men to go out and fight against Amalek, while he, Aaron, and Hur went to the top of a hill overlooking the battle. When Moses lifted his hand up, Israel prevailed; and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed. However, Moses’ hands were heavy, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other side. So his hands

were steady until the going down of the sun. As a result, Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword (vv. 8-15). On the hill there were Moses, signifying the ascended Christ interceding in the heavens (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; cf. 1 Tim. 2:8), with Aaron (representing the priesthood) and Hur (representing the kingship), and below in the battle was Joshua, signifying the fighting Spirit, fighting against Amalek, typifying the flesh as the totality of the fallen old man (Rom. 8:9-11; Gal. 5:16-17).

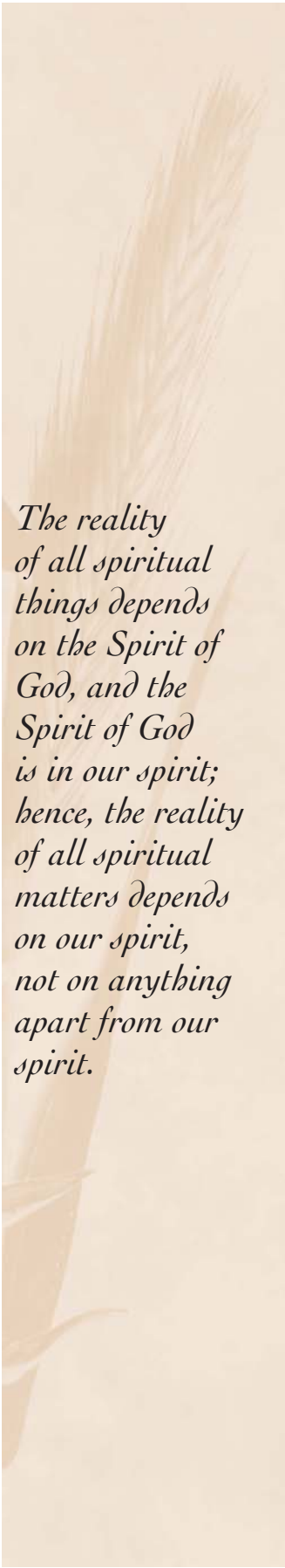
As the one praying on the mountaintop, Moses typifies Christ, but as the one whose hands became heavy, Moses represents us. This signifies that while Christ is praying in the heavens, we too need to pray on earth (1 Tim. 2:8). Because the flesh never changes or improves, in order to prevail against the flesh, we need to pray without ceasing (1 Thes. 5:17; Col. 4:2), joining ourselves to Christ in His intercession. However, often our praying hands become heavy. Thus, we need a stone to support us, and we need the help of Aaron and Hur. The stone, a solid base for our prayer life, refers to our realization that in ourselves we are weak and that in order to sustain our prayer, we need Christ to be our support (cf. John 15:5b). Aaron, the high priest (Exo. 28:1; Heb. 5:1, 4), signifies the priesthood, and Hur, who was of the tribe of Judah (Exo. 31:2), signifies the kingship (Gen. 49:10). The priesthood is related to the Holy of Holies, which in our experience is always related to our spirit...Hence, to sustain our prayer and to thus defeat the flesh, we need the priesthood to strengthen our spirit. We also need to be obedient to the Lord under His authority, the kingship. Furthermore, Hur is related to the building of the tabernacle (Exo. 31:2-5), and the direction of Exodus is toward this goal. This indicates that we need to take the building of the church as the goal of our prayer. (Lee, Recovery Version, Exo. 17:12, note 1)

Exodus 17:14 says, "Jehovah said to Moses, Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven." At the end of the millennial kingdom, Christ will utterly blot out the memory of the flesh forever. However, in this age the flesh helps us by forcing us to turn to the spirit. Eventually, when we are transfigured, the memory of the flesh will be blotted out. The Lord does not care for whether or not we have a victory; the Lord cares for only one thing—that we gain Him as the Spirit (Phil. 3:8; 2 Cor. 3:17-18).

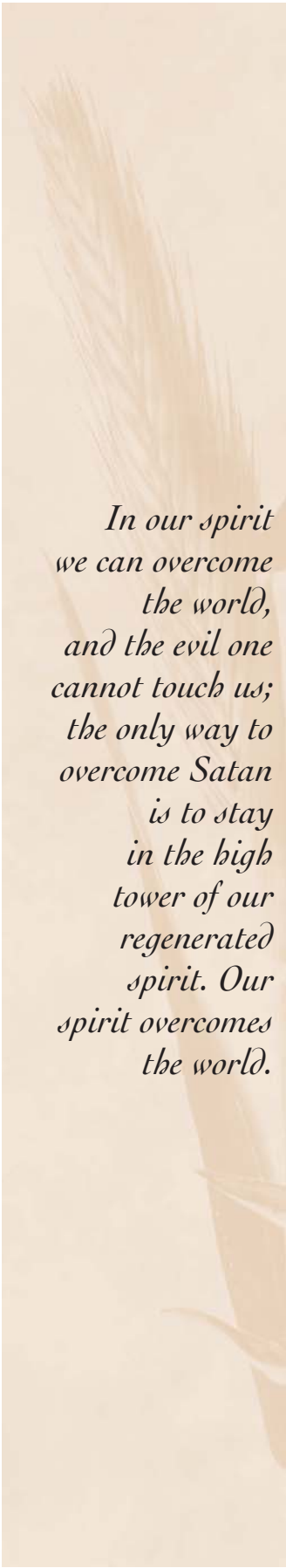
The Need to See and Set Our Mind on Our Wonderful Compound Spirit

We have pointed out that our spirit is a wonderful compound—compounded with Christ, the Spirit, and grace (2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:16; Gal. 6:18). God wants us to set our mind on this spirit. He wants us to walk according to this wonderful compound spirit (to have our being and our living with all that we say and do according to the spirit) (Rom. 8:4; Phil. 1:19; 1 Cor. 6:17; cf. Exo. 30:23-25). Only the persons who walk according to the spirit can be the proper members for the building up of a local church; if we do not have such a walk, sooner or later we will be a problem to the church (Gal. 5:16-26). We need to pray, "Lord, by Your mercy, make me a person who walks according to the spirit. I do not want to be a trouble to my local church. Instead, I want to be a person who walks according to the spirit."

Romans reveals that whatever we are, whatever we do, and whatever we have must be in spirit; this will keep us from the vanity of religion (1:9; 7:6; Phil. 3:3). The reality of all spiritual things depends on the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God is in our spirit; hence, the reality of all spiritual matters depends on our spirit, not on anything apart from our spirit (Rom. 8:5-6, 9-11). Whatever is in us is vanity unless it is "inwardly," in our spirit, not "outwardly," in the flesh (2:28-29; 8:4, 10, 13; 12:11). Everything that God is to us is in our spirit (8:16; 2 Tim. 4:22). When we are in our mingled spirit, there are no problems, so there is never the need of a solution. Whatever we need is in our spirit (Phil 1:19; 4:23).



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God has reserved the human spirit for His purpose (Zech. 12:1; Prov. 20:27). Our spirit today is the real Bethel, the house of God and the gate of heaven; when we turn to our spirit, we are in the third heaven (Eph. 2:22; Gen. 28:12, 17, 19). When we are in our spirit, we are in the Holy of Holies, touching the throne of grace and being sustained by Christ to live a heavenly life on earth (Heb. 10:22; 4:16). In our spirit we can overcome the world, and the evil one cannot touch us; the only way to overcome Satan is to stay in the high tower of our regenerated spirit (1 John 5:4, 18; John 3:6; 14:30). First John 5:4 says, "Everything that has been begotten of God overcomes the world," and John 3:6 says, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." These verses show that our spirit overcomes the world. First John 5:18 says, "Everyone who is begotten of God does not sin, but he who has been begotten of God keeps himself, and the evil one does not touch him." This indicates that when we are in our spirit, the evil one cannot touch us. Thus, the only way to overcome Satan is to stay in the high tower of our regenerated spirit.

Because Christ as the life-giving Spirit has dispensed Himself into our spirit, our spirit is life (Gk. *zoe*, Rom. 8:10). Our spirit is also the place of oneness; we can be one only if we worship God in our spirit, which is today's Jerusalem (John 4:23-24; Psa. 133). Christ, the heavenly and spiritual food, is in our spirit, and we need to eat Him to be His testimony and grow up into Him for the building up of His Body (John 6:57, 63). Even though the mind set on the flesh is death, it is a wonderful fact to subjectively experience the mind being set on the spirit in order to be life and peace. When we set our mind on our spirit, we are in the place of the divine oneness, we are worshipping God in our spirit, and we are enjoying Him as our spiritual food in our spirit for the building up of the Body of Christ. We would like to conclude this fellowship with a wonderful hymn on the significance of minding the spirit:

All I have in Adam is but sin and death, / I in Christ inherit life and righteousness; /
When in flesh abiding, Adam I express, / But when in the spirit Christ is manifest.


When I am in Adam, though I may not sin, / Unto death, a sinner, sentenced I have been; /
When in Christ I need not righteously to act, / I'm already righteous, justified in fact.

In the flesh I need no effort to express / Marks of Adam's nature and its sinfulness; /
In the spirit I need not to strive or strain, / I can live as He is and in spirit reign.

Thru my death with Christ, from Adam I am free, / Thru my life with Christ, new life is given
me! / Minding not the flesh, old Adam cannot move, / Minding just the spirit, life divine I prove.

Minding just the spirit is God's saving way, / Minding just the spirit, Christ we will display; /
Minding just the spirit, we can overcome, / Minding just the spirit, we the race may run.

Minding just the spirit, we the cross will know, / And His resurrection pow'r thru us will flow; /
Minding just the spirit, Christ will live thru me, / And His life within will reach maturity.

In the spirit Christ is life and all to me, / Strengthening and blessing all-inclusively; / Living in the
spirit, holiness I prove, / And the Triune God within my heart doth move. (*Hymns*, #593) 

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