

Articles and Sermons :: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion**Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/9/15 7:47**

Watchman Nee
The Spiritual Man

From Volume II:

AN ANALYSIS OF THE SPIRIT**COMMUNION**

We communicate with the material world through the body. We communicate with the spiritual world through the spirit. This communication with the spiritual is not carried on by means of the mind or emotion but through the spirit or its intuitive faculty. It is easy for us to understand the nature of the communion between God and man if we have seen the operation of our intuition. In order to worship and fellowship with God man must possess a nature similar to His. "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4.24). There can be no communication between different natures; hence both the unregenerate whose spirit obviously has not been quickened and the regenerate who does not use his spirit to worship are equally unqualified to have genuine fellowship with God. Lofty sentiments and noble feelings do not bring people into spiritual reality nor do they forge personal communion with God. Our fellowship with Him is experienced in the deepest place of our entire being, deeper than our thought, feeling and will, even in the intuition of our spirit. A close scrutiny of I Corinthians 2.9-3.2 can provide a very clear view of how man communes with God and how man knows the realities of God through the spirit's intuition.

THE HEART OF MAN

"What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" (v.9). The larger context of this one verse speaks of God and the things of God. What He has prepared can neither be seen or heard by man's outward body nor conceived by his inward heart. The "heart of man" includes among other facets man's understanding, mind and intellect. Man's thought cannot envisage God's work, for the latter transcends the former. It is therefore evident that he who desires to know and commune with God cannot depend solely upon his thought.

Re: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/9/15 11:50**THE HOLY SPIRIT**

"God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything; even the depths of God" (v.10). This verse sets forth the fact that the Holy Spirit searches everything and not that our mind conceives all. Only the Holy Spirit knows the depths of God. He knows what man does not know. By His intuition the Spirit searches everything. God is thus able to reveal through Him what our heart has never conceived. This "revealing" is not acquired after much thinking, for our heart cannot even conceive it. It is a revelation; it does not require the help of our thought.

The next two verses tell us how God reveals Himself.

“For what person knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God” (vv.11 and 12). No one knows man's thoughts except the spirit of man; likewise, no one knows the things of God but the Holy Spirit. Man's spirit as well as God's Spirit apprehend things directly, not by deducing or searching. They perceive through the faculty of intuition. Since the Holy Spirit alone knows the things of God, we must receive the Holy Spirit if we also would know those things. The spirit of the world is cut off from communication with God. It is a dead spirit: it cannot effect communion with Him. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, comprehends the things of God; therefore, by receiving in our intuition what the Holy Spirit knows, we too shall

understand the realities of God. "We have received ... the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God."

How then do we know? Verse 11 tells us man knows by his spirit. The Holy Spirit unfolds to our spirit what He knows intuitively so that we too may know intuitively. When the Holy Spirit discloses the matters pertaining to God He does so not to our mind nor to any other organ but to our spirit. God knows this is the sole place in man which can apprehend man's things as well as His things. The mind is not the place for knowing these things. While it is true that the mind can think and conceive many matters, it nonetheless cannot know them.

From this we can appreciate how highly God esteems the regenerated spirit of man. Before new birth man's spirit was dead. God had no way of unfolding His mind to such a man. The cleverest brain fails to know the mind of God. Both God's fellowship with man and man's worship of God are contingent upon the regenerated spirit of man. Without this revitalized component God and man are hopelessly separated-neither can come or go to the other. The first step towards communion between God and man must be this quickening of man's spirit.

Because man enjoys a free will he has authority to decide his own matters. That explains why he continues to encounter many temptations following new birth. Due to his foolishness or perhaps his prejudice he may not yield the rightful position to his spirit and its intuition. God accepts this spirit as the one place where He will commune with man and man with Him. But the believer still walks by his mind or emotion. How many times he completely ignores the voice of intuition. His principle of living is to adhere to what he himself considers reasonable, beautiful, delightful, or interesting. Even should he have a heart to do God's will, he usually will take either his impulsive idea or his more logical thought as the mind of God, not realizing that what he ought to follow is the thought expressed by the Holy Spirit in his intuition. He sometimes may be willing to hear the voice of intuition, but failing to keep his feelings quiet he finds that voice blurred and confused. Walking after the spirit consequently becomes an occasional affair instead of forming a daily continuous experience in the Christian's life.

Re: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/9/15 14:43

If the initial knowing of God's will is so difficult, who can wonder at the lack of further and more profound revelation? How then can we ever truly know in our spirit God's plan for the end of this age, the reality of spiritual warfare, and the deeper truths of the Bible? For our worship merely corresponds to what we think is best or what we feel on the spur of the moment. And to commune with the Lord in our intuition naturally becomes an unheard of phenomenon.

A believer must recognize that the Holy Spirit alone comprehends the things of God-and that intuitively. He is the one Person Who can convey this knowledge to man. But for anyone to obtain such knowledge he must appropriate it through the proper means; namely, he must receive with his intuition what the Holy Spirit intuitively knows. The conjunction of these two intuitions enables man to apprehend the mind of God.

"And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit" (v.13). How are we going to impart to others the things of God which we have discerned in our spirit's intuition? Having come to know the realities of God, our responsibility now is to proclaim them. The Apostle Paul declares he does not transmit them in terms taught by human wisdom. That wisdom belongs to a man's mind and is the product of man's brain. Paul categorically asserts that he does not employ the words which come from the mind to communicate what his spirit knows concerning the things of God. Paul in himself possesses great wisdom. He is perfectly able to formulate many new and wonderful phrases and to deliver his message eloquently with good organization and illustrative parables. He knows how to make his audience understand what he means to say. He nevertheless refuses to use the terminology taught by human wisdom. This declaration and attitude of the Apostle Paul indicate that man's mind is not only useless in knowing the things of God but is also secondary in imparting spiritual knowledge.

Re: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwprayer (), on: 2004/9/16 1:46

The Apostle articulates God's realities in phraseology taught by the Spirit. In his intuition he receives His instruction. Nothing in the life of a Christian is of any value save that which is in his spirit. Even in relating spiritual knowledge he needs to employ spiritual words. Intuition appropriates not only the thing which the Holy Spirit unfolds but also the words taught by the same Spirit, in order to explain to others what has been revealed. How often a believer tries to impart to others what has been revealed so clearly to him by God; yet try as he may, he finds no words to convey the fundamental meaning of what has been disclosed. Why? Because he has not received words in his spirit. At other times, as he waits before the Lord, the believer senses something rising in the center of his being perhaps but a few words. With those few words, however, he is able to communicate adequately at a meeting what has been revealed to him. He comes to realize how God actually uses him to testify for the Lord.

Such experiences attest the importance of the "utterance" given by the Holy Spirit. There are two kinds of utterance, the natural and the Spirit-given. The type of utterance recorded in Acts 2.4 is indispensable in spiritual service. However eloquent our natural utterance, it remains powerless to truly communicate the things of God. We may view ourselves as having spoken quite well; yet we have not succeeded in expressing the thought of the Spirit. Spiritual words, that is, terminology received in the spirit, can alone articulate spiritual knowledge. If we are burdened with the message of the Lord in our spirit, as though a fire were burning within, and yet have not the means to discharge that burden, we should wait for the "utterance" to be given by the Spirit so that we may proclaim the message of our spirit and discharge that burden. Should we inadvertently employ language taught by human wisdom instead of waiting for the words bestowed intuitively by the Holy Spirit, we shall find our spiritual effectiveness comes to naught. Speech merely grounded in earthly wisdom can only move people to say that the theory advanced is indeed good. Sometimes we enjoy many spiritual experiences, but we are at a loss how to articulate them until other believers unlock them with a word. This is because until the moment we heard others uttering our experience in simple terms, we still had not received in our spirit explicit words from the Lord.

Spiritual truths must be explained with spiritual phrases. We must employ spiritual means to reach spiritual ends. This is what the Lord especially wishes to teach us today. Spiritual goals need to be perfected through corresponding spiritual processes. The fleshly as fleshly will never become spiritual. If we hope to arrive at our spiritual objectives with our minds and emotions, we as it were are expecting sweet water to pour forth from fountains of bitter water. All matters pertaining to God—such as seeking His will, obeying His commandments, proclaiming His message—are effective only if they arise out of fellowship with God in the spirit. Whatever is performed through our thoughts, talents or methods is accounted by God as dead.

Re: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwprayer (), on: 2004/9/16 10:25

THE SOULICAL AND THE SPIRITUAL

"The unspiritual (original, soulical) man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). The soulical are those who have not yet been born anew and who hence do not possess a new spirit. Since their intuitive faculty is dead to God's all which they have are the faculties of the soul. They are well able to decide what they like through reason and affection but, not having a regenerated spirit, they are powerless to receive the things of the Spirit of God. Although these individuals can think and observe, they still lack basic intuitive power; they cannot take in what God reveals exclusively to man's spirit. How utterly inadequate are the natural endowments of man. He truly has much, but nothing can substitute for the operation of intuition. Because man is dead to God, no organ exists in him by which he can take in the things of God. Nothing in a soulical man is capable of communing with Him. Man's most respectable mind, intellect and reasoning are as corrupt as his lusts and passions; both equally are incompetent to apprehend God. Even a regenerated man, if he attempts to communicate with God by using his mind and observation (just as the unregenerate does) instead of exercising his renewed spirit, is absolutely impotent to perceive the realities of God. Those elements which belong to us naturally do not change their operations following regeneration. A mind is still a mind and a will, a will: these can never be turned into organs capable of communion with God.

Not only can the soulical person not receive the things of God, he even regards them as folly. According to the valuation of his mind, matters known by intuition are downright foolishness because they are all unreasonable, against human nature, contrary to worldly wisdom, or in conflict with common sense. The mind delights in whatever is logical, open to anal-

ysis, and psychologically appealing. God, however, is not governed by man's law and hence His actions are folly to the soul. The folly mentioned in this particular chapter unquestionably refers to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. The word of the cross speaks not only of the Savior Who died in our stead but also of the believers who have died with the Savior. Everything naturally belonging to believers must go through the death of the cross. The mind may accept this as a theory, but it surely will oppose it as a practice.

Since the soul person does not welcome this word of the cross, he obviously cannot comprehend what it is all about. Reception precedes knowledge. The ability or inability to receive tests the presence or absence of a quickened spirit. The capacity or incapacity to know manifests the vital or the moribund character of the intuitive faculty. The spirit first must be quickened before one is able to take in the things of God. With an enlivened spirit one is also given the intuitive ability to appropriate the things of God. Who knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man? A soul person cannot discern God's realities because he does not enjoy that new spirit which carries within it the intuitive power of discernment.

Re: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/9/16 13:58

The Apostle Paul proceeds to explain why the soul man is incompetent to receive and to know matters pertaining to God: "Because they are spiritually discerned." Do we not notice how the Holy Spirit repeatedly stresses the fact that man's spirit is the place of communion with God? The focal point of this particular portion of Scripture is to prove and demonstrate that man's spirit is basic to, and exclusive in, any fellowship with God and the knowledge of divine matters. Each element has its own particular use. The spirit is employed to know the heavenly realities. Now we are not trying to disparage the use of the soul faculties. They are useful, but here they must play a secondary role. They should be under control and not be the controller. The mind should submit to the spirit's rule and should follow what intuition fathoms of the will of God. It ought not conceive its own ideas and then demand that the whole man comply. Emotion too should obey the dictates of the spirit. Its love or hate must follow the affection of the spirit and not its own. The will also should bend to what God has revealed intuitively in the spirit. It must not prefer those choices which are other than the will of God. Were these soul faculties kept in secondary position the believer would make tremendous strides in his spiritual walk. Unfortunately most Christians give them first place, thus eliminating the spirit's position. Is it any wonder that they do not live a spiritual life nor are of any spiritual worth? The spirit needs to be restored to its ordained position. A believer must learn to wait in the spirit for the revelation of God. Unless it ascends to its rightful place a man is barred from knowing what the spirit alone can know. That is why verse 13 adds, "interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit," for only the spiritually sensitive can know things in the spirit.

"The spiritual man judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one" (v.15). The spiritual man is one whose spirit dominates and who has a highly sensitive intuition. It is qualified to perform its functions because its quietness is undisturbed by the mind, emotion and will of the soul. Why can the spiritual man judge all matters? Because his intuition leans on the Holy Spirit for its knowledge. Why is he not judged by anyone? Simply because no one knows how and what the Holy Spirit imparts to his intuition. If a believer's knowledge depends on his intellect, then besides those who are naturally talented no one can judge in all respects. Learning and worldly education would be indispensable. And such a learned one would also be judged by those who are as wise or even wiser than he, for they certainly could understand the train of his thought. Spiritual knowledge, however, is based on the spirit's intuition. There is no limit to a Christian's knowledge if he is spiritual and possesses a sensitive intuition. His mind may be dull but the Holy Spirit is able to lead him into spiritual reality and his spirit is able to enlighten his mind. The way the Spirit reveals Himself does indeed surpass the expectation of man.

"For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ" (v.16). Here is posed a problem. No one in the world has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct Him because all men are soul, The only way to apprehend God is by intuition. How can a person whose spirit is dead ever know the mind of God? This explains why no such persons as this can judge the spiritual man, for none of these have known the mind of the Lord. These are naturally the soul people. On the other hand, the spiritual ones know the mind of the Lord for they have a responsive intuition. But the soul cannot know because their intuition is not operative; hence they enjoy no fellowship with God. The meaning here is that the soul can neither know the mind of the Lord nor that of those spiritual ones who are fully committed to Him.

"But we. . ." indicates that the "we" is different from those soul people. "We" includes all the saved believers, many of whom perhaps continue to be fleshly. "But we have the mind of Christ." We who have been regenerated, whether babes or grownups, possess the mind of Christ and discern His thoughts. Because we have a resurrected intuition we are able to know and have known already what Christ has prepared for us in the future (v.9). The soul do not know, but we, the regenerate, do know. The difference is in having or not having the spirit.

Re: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/9/16 16:08

THE SPIRITUAL AND THE FLESHLY

"But I, brethren, could not address you as spiritual men, but as men of the flesh, as babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food; for you were not ready for it; and even yet you are not ready" (3.12). These words are closely related to the preceding verses and their teaching follows the line laid down above which speaks of the spirit of man. Now we all recognize that the dividing of the Scriptures into chapters and verses was contrived for the convenience of the readers and was not something at all revealed by the Holy Spirit. These words of verses 1 and 2 of I Corinthians 3 should be read in connection with those of the preceding chapter.

How incisive is Paul's spiritual sense. He is acquainted with all his readers, whether they are spiritual or fleshly, whether wholly controlled by the spirit or frequently governed by the flesh. He does not therefore disregard the condition of his readers' receptivity and pour out his thoughts at random simply because he is speaking of spiritual affairs. He will only communicate "spiritual things with spiritual" (v.13 RSV marginal). Paul's communication depends not on how much he knows, but on how much his readers can assimilate. There is no boasting here of his own knowledge. The Apostle has spiritual phraseology as well as spiritual knowledge; he accordingly knows how to deal with believers of all kinds. Not all terms which articulate the deep mystery of God are spiritual terms; only those which are taught in the spirit by the Holy Spirit are. And they are not necessarily profound words: they may in fact be very common and ordinary: yet these words are taught by the Holy Spirit and apprehended in the spirit. When these are uttered they then produce considerable spiritual results.

What the Apostle writes in these two verses and in verse 15 of the previous chapter resolves one interesting paradox; namely, if the spirit of man knows the things which belong to man and the spiritual man judges all things, why then are there so many spirit-renewed Christians who nonetheless do not sense that they have a spirit or who are not able to know the deep things of God through their spirit? The answer is: "the spiritual man judges all things" (v.15). Though all Christians possess a regenerated spirit, not all Christians are spiritual. Many are still fleshly. Man's intuition has in truth been quickened, but man must give intuition its rightful place, providing it opportunity to operate. Or else it will be suppressed, unable to commune with God, or to know what it could know. Spiritual Christians do not walk by their soul life; they have delivered all its faculties to the cross and relegated them to a position of submission so that their intuition can receive God's revelation freely. Afterwards their mind, emotion and will voluntarily comply with this revelation. Such is not the case with fleshly Christians. Regenerated and alive to God intuitively, they have every opportunity to be spiritual; but they remain bound to the flesh instead. The lusts of the flesh remain so exceedingly powerful as to drive these Christians to sin. Their carnal mind is still full of wandering thoughts, reasons and plans; their emotion runs wild with many carnal interests, desires and tendencies; and their will formulates many worldly judgments, arguments and opinions. They are so occupied in following the flesh that they have neither time nor inclination to listen to the voice of intuition. Since the voice of the spirit is usually very soft, it cannot be heard unless it is listened to attentively with everything else quieted. How then can it be heard if the various parts of the flesh are inordinately active? When believers are governed by the flesh they become influenced by it to such an extent that their spirit grows dull and they are unable to take solid food.

Re: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/9/17 0:49

The Bible compares a newly regenerated believer to a baby. The life in his spirit which he newly possesses is as tiny and weak as a baby naturally born. There is nothing wrong with his being a baby as long as he does not remain too great a time in that stage. Every adult must begin as a child. But should he persist as such very long, his spirit never progressing beyond what it was when he was first regenerated some years before, then something is drastically wrong. Man's spirit can grow; the spirit's intuition is able to wax stronger. A newly regenerated person is like a new-born baby who has no self-consciousness and whose nerves are wobbly in function. His spiritual life may be compared to a spark of fire. His intuitive power is extremely weak and not effective. But a baby must grow daily. His knowledge must increase continuously through exercise, training, and growth until he has become fully self-conscious and knows how to skillfully exercise all his senses. Even so must a believer. Upon regeneration he needs to gradually exercise his intuition. Each exercise means an increase in experience, knowledge and spiritual stature. Just as a man's senses are not born with matured awareness, so a believer's intuition is not born highly sensitive.

All this does not signify, however, that the soulish Christians who long remain babes have no outward dealings with their

sins, experience no increase in their knowledge of the Bible, exert no effort to serve the Lord, or receive no gift of the Holy Spirit. The saints at Corinth encountered all of these. They "were enriched in (Christ) with all speech and all knowledge ... not lacking in any spiritual gift" (I.Cor. 1.5,7). From the human point of view, are these not signs of growth? We probably would regard the Corinthian believers as most spiritual; yet the Apostle viewed them as babes, as men of the flesh. Why is it that the increase in speech, knowledge and gifts was not considered growth? This uncovers an intensely significant fact, which is, that though the saints at Corinth grew in these outward endowments they failed to grow in their spirit. Their intuition did not wax stronger. Increase in preaching eloquence, Bible knowledge and spiritual gift is not reckoned as increase of spiritual life! If the believer's spirit-that which is capable of communing with God-does not grow stronger and keener, God judges that he has not grown at all!

How many of the Lord's people today are developing in the wrong direction! Many assume that upon being saved they must seek higher Bible knowledge, better utterance in preaching, and more spiritual gifts. They forget it is their spirit that must advance. Speech, knowledge and gift are purely outward matters; by contrast intuition is inward. Quite sad is the sight of that Christian who allows his spirit to persist as a babe, but who concomitantly fills his soul life with speech, knowledge and gift. These articles are valuable, but how can they be compared with the value of the spirit? What God has newly created in us is this spirit (or spiritual life), and what should develop into matured manhood is likewise this spirit. Should we commit the serious mistake of seeking the enrichment of the soul life instead of the increase of this spiritual life with its intuition, we shall have made no progress at all in God's eye. God considers our spirit allimportant; and so He cares for its growth. No matter how much our mind, emotion and will may gain by speech, knowledge and gift, it is all deemed by God as vain if our spirit is not developing.

Re: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/9/17 0:57

We daily expect to have more power, more knowledge, more gifts, more eloquence; yet the Bible contends that even if we have more of these elements we do not necessarily progress in spiritual life. On the contrary, our spiritual walk may remain the same without advancing a mile. Paul candidly reminds the believers at Corinth: "You were not ready for it; and even yet you are not ready." In what were they unprepared? They were not prepared to serve God with their intuition, to know more of God intuitively, to receive His revelation in their intuition. They were obviously not ready when they first believed in the Lord; but now years later, though enriched in speech, knowledge and gifts, they still were not so. By those two words-"even yet"-the Apostle signified that though they were replete with outward enrichments their spiritual life had made no progress since they first believed. Real advancement is measured by the growth of the spirit and its intuition; the rest belongs to the flesh. This should be impressed indelibly on our hearts.

How sad that believers today seem to achieve progress in almost every sphere except in that of their spirit. After trusting the Lord for many years, they continue to lament: "I do not feel I have a spirit." The difference between our mind and God's mind is wide. We, like those at Corinth, try successfully to garner much so-called spiritual knowledge by exercising the intellect of our mind. Unfortunately the increase of our mind does not and cannot substitute the maturing in our intuition. To God we appear unchanged. We must henceforth remember that the increase God preeminently desires is not in our outward man but in the inward man and its intuition. He expects the new life which we receive at regeneration to enlarge. And all which belongs to the old creation He expects to be denied.

Re: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/9/17 10:36

A believer fails to be spiritual because he is influenced too much by the flesh. Only one whose intuition is alive and who enjoys uninterrupted communion with God knows the deep truths of God. If the intuitive power is weak, what else can be absorbed except milk? Milk is pre-digested food. What this denotes is that the soulish believer cannot maintain fellowship with God in the spirit's intuition and hence must depend upon other more advanced Christians for the things of God. Matured Christians fellowship with God in their intuition and then transform what they have been shown into milk for the babes in Christ. The Lord permits such a thing in the life of a beginner, but He takes no pleasure in having His people remain dull and powerless in communing directly with Him. Feeding on milk indicates the person is far less capable of communing with God directly and instead relies on others to transmit God's message to himself. The matured has his intuition fully exercised to distinguish good from evil. We are of no spiritual utility if we have many ideas but do not possess the ability to commune with God and know His realities with our intuition.

The Christians at Corinth ranked high in speech, knowledge, gifts, but how was their spiritual life? Almost totally inactive. The church at Corinth was a carnal church, for all she had she had in the mind.

Many of the Lord's people currently commit the same error as did the saints at Corinth. The words of the Lord are spirit and life, but these people do not accept the words accordingly. They investigate theological problems with a very cold mind and search the hidden meaning of the Bible with the design of presenting the best interpretation. They satisfy their lust for knowledge. They communicate what they have found by writing and preaching. Excellent though their thoughts, arguments and outlines may be, seemingly most spiritual too, God nevertheless looks on these achievements as dead weights because they have not been achieved in the spirit. They have simply passed from one man's mind to another man's mind. Some readers or hearers may protest that they are helped, but the question is, what is helped? Beyond assisting the mind to acquire additional ideas, nothing else has happened. Such knowledge adds nothing to spiritual effectiveness. Only what comes from the spirit can enter the spirits of others; that which comes from the mind can only reach the minds of others. Finally, what comes from the Holy Spirit enters our spirit, and whatever the Holy Spirit transmits through our spirit can reach the spirits of others.

Re: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/9/17 15:01

THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION

In our communion with God the spirit of wisdom and revelation is imperative. "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him" (Eph. 1.17). When a new spirit is received at regeneration its functions await development, for they presently lie dormant there. The Apostle Paul prayed for the regenerated believers at Ephesus, desiring that they receive the spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they might know God intuitively. Whether this ability is a hidden function of the believer's spirit which is activated through prayer or whether it is something added by the Holy Spirit to the believer's spirit as a result of prayer, we do not know. Yet one thing is certain: this spirit of wisdom and revelation is essential to one's communion with God. We also recognize that it can be obtained through prayer.

Although our intuition is capable of communing with God it requires wisdom and revelation. We need it to know what is of God and what is of ourselves. We must have wisdom to discern the enemy's counterfeit as well as his attack. We also require it to know how to conduct ourselves among men. In a thousand different ways we need God's wisdom, for we are foolish and prone to make mistakes. How difficult for us to execute God's will in all matters, but He will grant us the necessary equipment. He does not impart it to our brain; rather, He dispenses the spirit of wisdom to us so that we may have wisdom in our spirit. God gives it to our intuition for He will lead us through intuition into the way of wisdom. While our mind may indeed remain dull, our intuition is full of wisdom. Often when our own wisdom seems to have reached its end, there gradually rises from within us another kind to guide us. Wisdom and revelation are closely linked because all God's disclosures are those of wisdom. If we live naturally we have no way to figure out God. Nothing but darkness resides in the natural man. God and matters divine stretch far beyond the reaches of our mind. And although our spirit may even be quickened, it still dwells in darkness if there is no unfolding from the Holy Spirit. A quickened spirit only indicates that it is at last capable of receiving God's revelation. It does not mean that it can now move independently.

In our communion with God He frequently gives revelation. We ought to pray for such. The spirit of revelation implies that God reveals in the spirit. The spirit of wisdom and revelation signifies where God reveals Himself and how He imparts to us His wisdom. An impulsive thought is not to be interpreted as belonging to the spirit of revelation. Only what we intuitively know of the mind of God through the operation of the Holy Spirit in our spirit ever constitutes the spirit of revelation. God communes with us there and nowhere else.

The spirit of wisdom and revelation affords us true knowledge of God; all else is skin deep, imaginary, superficial, and therefore false. We frequently speak of God's holiness, righteousness, mercy, love, and other virtues. Man's mind is capable of conceiving these attributes of God, yet such mental knowledge is like looking through a stone wall. When however a believer has received revelation from God concerning His holiness, he sees himself corrupted to the core and void of any cleanliness before the light of God's dwelling in unapproachable light where no sinful, natural man can draw nigh. Oh, that many among us might be given such an experience as that. And thereafter let us compare the one who has received such a disclosure of God's holiness with the other who, has no such experience yet easily speaks of His holiness. The first may perhaps employ the same terminology, but the word articulated by the first seems to be many times weightier than that of the second person. The first one appears to speak with his whole being and not just with his lips. The spirit of revelation alone explains it. And this applies equally to all other truths in the Bible. Sometimes we understand a certain truth and recognize its importance, but only after that particular truth is gradually unfolded by God to our spirit are we able to speak with a special emphasis.

Whatever we gather outwardly which is not inwardly disclosed can neither move ourselves nor others. Revelation in the spirit alone contains spiritual potency. To commune with God is to receive His revelation in the spirit. Rare are God's disclosures for many of us because rarely do we wait on Him for them. How can we compare a preoccupied natural life with a life walked according to revelation? But if we are willing to provide God the opportunity, we shall receive revelation quite often indeed. The life of the Apostles abundantly substantiates this assertion.

Re: Nee Spiritual Man, Communion - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/9/17 16:22

SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING

There is a soulish as well as a spiritual wisdom. The first springs from man's mind while the second is supplied to the spirit by God. Education may remedy any lack of understanding and wisdom in a natural man, but it cannot alter his natural endowment. Spiritual wisdom, though, may be realized through believing prayer (James 1.5). One thing which we ought to keep in mind is, that in redemption "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10.34). He places all sinners, wise or foolish, on the same footing, and confers upon them the same salvation. As the entire being of the wise is totally corrupted so is that of the foolish. In God's sight the mind of the wise is as nonefficacious as that of the foolish. Both need the regeneration of the spirit; and after that it is no easier for the wise man than for the foolish to know the words of God. Now of course it is quite difficult for a very foolish person to know God; but is it less difficult for the wisest among men? Not at all, because God must be known in the spirit by everyone. Their minds may be unlike, yet both their spirits are dead and hence equally foolish and deficient in divine matters. Man's natural cleverness does not help him to know God and God's truth. No doubt the wise one is easier to reason with and is quicker in understanding, but it is altogether limited to the mental realm, utterly contrary to intuitive knowledge.

Do not assume that after regeneration the wise have advantage over the foolish in making spiritual progress. Unless they are more faithful and submissive, their better mental comprehension adds nothing to their intuitive knowledge. Man's old creation never serves as the source of the new creation. Spiritual advancement is measured by faithful obedience. Natural endowment does not affect spiritual life one way or the other, although it yields priority to the flesh. In spiritual experience everybody begins at the same starting-point, passes through the same processes, and obtains the same results. All regenerated believers, including the naturally wise, must consequently seek spiritual understanding, without which no one can maintain normal fellowship with God. Nothing can take the place of spiritual understanding.

"That you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1.9-10). This is what Paul prayed for on behalf of the saints at Colossae. In this prayer we find that true knowledge of God's will is preceded by spiritual understanding and followed by: (1) leading a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him; (2) bearing fruit in every good work; and (3) increasing in the knowledge of God.

No matter how good man's natural endowment is, he cannot know God's will by that means. It requires spiritual comprehension to know His will and to commune with Him. Only spiritual understanding can penetrate the spiritual realm. The natural kind may grasp some teachings but these stay in the mind and are unable to flow as life. Because spiritual understanding comes from the spirit it can transform what is understood into life. Have we now perceived that all true knowledge emerges from the spirit? The spirit of revelation moves hand in hand with spiritual understanding. God grants us the spirit of wisdom and revelation as well as spiritual comprehension. The wisdom and revelation we obtain in the spirit needs to be understood spiritually. Revelation is what we receive from God; understanding assists us to comprehend what is revealed. Spiritual understanding furnishes us the meaning- of all the movements within our spirit so that we may comprehend God's will. Communion with God includes receiving His revelation in the spirit-that is, in the spirit's intuition-and then apprehending the meaning of this revelation by spiritual understanding. Our comprehension does not arise naturally but is enlightened by the spirit.

It is clear from these two verses in Colossians that if we desire to please God and to bear fruit we must know God's will in our spirit. Our spirit's relationship with God is the foundation for pleasing Him and bearing fruit. How vain for us to expect God's pleasure while walking according to the soul. God is pleased with nothing but His Own will. Nothing else can satisfy His heart. Our anguish is that we do not know God's will. We search and think, yet we seem unable to touch His mind. We should therefore remember that the way to know God's mind lies not in much searching and judging but in spiritual understanding. Nothing but man's spirit can judge God's will, for it has an intuitive power to discern His movement. If we apprehend God in this way continuously we shall increase in the knowledge of Him. Intuition can grow and grow. It knows no bounds. Its development means the development of the believer's entire spiritual life. Each true communion w

What we have with God trains us to commune better next time. We should seek to be perfect; accordingly, we must seize every opportunity to train our spirit to know God better. Today our need is to truly know Him, to appropriate Him in the depth of our being. How often we think we have discerned His will and yet later we discover we have been mistaken. Since our need is to know God and His will, we must seek to be filled with the knowledge of that will in all spiritual understanding.