

CHAPTER 2

THE SPIRITUAL MAN

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him” (Heb. 1:14, 2:1-3).

Let us look at the word “salvation.” It is the great inclusive word of the gospel. It encompasses all that God does for the soul. We have broken it down to a great extent and made it mean salvation from sin, sometimes from a single transgression. But it means much more than this. It is an all-inclusive word, including all that God does for the spirit, soul, and body of man and is applicable to each department of his nature, not only in destroying the consciousness of sin, which is purely negative, but in creating a consciousness of righteousness, which is positive. Salvation is at once destructive and creative.

Mankind has lost much in limiting this work of God to a single act, or a series of acts, instead of realizing all that God does for man. To know God’s purpose for your life it is necessary to know who

you are, what you are, and why you are here, the whole spirit, soul, and body being brought into complete "at-one-ment" with God.

There are some overlooked declarations in the Word of God that would enlarge man's conception of the Word and purpose of God if we would only pay attention to them. Here is one:

"But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels . . ." (Heb. 2:6-7).

The margin of my Bible says that it means, "Thou hast made him *for a while* a little lower than the angels." Some translations read, "Thou hast made him a little lower than God." I believe it means of the same quality and substance, but limited in degree of understanding. That is my conception of this verse, and I believe it harmonizes with God's picture of man all the way through the Book.

My conviction is that the greatest transformation possible to the race is that men shall realize that instead of being enemies of God and of each other, God intends us to be gods (John 10:34). The great awakening that needs to come to all our hearts, and that has come so gradually to the world, is that there is a God-power and a soul-force in the nature of man that God is endeavoring to bring forth. He is calling forth a soul-awakening to the realization that the man within is the real man. The inner man is the real governor, the true man that Jesus said was a god.

I have been questioned on that one thing as much as any other. I want to emphasize it. One day the Pharisees challenged Jesus because He said He was the Son of God. They called Him a blasphemer. They kept the letter of the law but not the spirit of it. They had become enslaved to the

mere letter and were, therefore, opposed to the broader vision of Christ.

They were so angry they picked up stones and began to stone Him. Jesus turned to them and said, quoting the words God had spoken through David, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" (John 10:34).

These men were not Christians. They had not been transformed by any spiritual enlightenment as yet. They were men, as we would say, living in sin. Yet to them Jesus said, "I said, *Ye are gods.*"

If that is a fact, if these men who were sinners in the common use of the term were gods and were declared so by God Himself through the prophet, and so affirmed by Jesus, then there must have been something inherent in their nature that made them gods.

As we view the Scripture from beginning to end we see the wondrous truth that man is not a separate creation detached from God, but he is a part of God Himself. God breathed His own being, His own self into the nature and being of man and "Man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). God breathed into man the heavenly materiality of which God Himself is composed.

Someone might say, "I thought man was mortal." As I understand the organism of man, we have our physical body with its five sensory organs, and through these organs we are brought into contact with a certain range of activity that is purely physical.

But that is not all of man! Aside from his body, there is an inner man, a spiritual man, that inhabits and pervades the outer physical man. That is the man that came from God. The man that was breathed into the body. The man that is a part of God. That is the undying man. That is the man you cannot annihilate. That is the man who cannot destroy himself. And I do not believe it is

any violation of the spirit of the Word and the truth of God to say that that is the man whom God Himself cannot destroy. Why? Because God cannot destroy Himself, and man is of the substance of God. That is what Jesus had in mind when He looked into the face of the Pharisees and said, "I said, Ye are gods."

THE OPERATION OF THE SPIRITUAL MAN

We cannot readily realize what a transformation is going to come to mankind when he realizes this fact. When man subjects that great God-man of the heart to the degradations of the desires of the outer fleshly man, how that inner man must groan.

I am sure if the Spirit of God would dispel the mist obstructing our vision and quicken our consciousness so that we moved into the realization of that one fact, life would be transformed. God never intended that the outer man of the flesh should be the governor of the great man of the soul or spirit.

One can readily see that because of the finer nature, the finer construction, the finer heavenly material of which spirit is constituted, the spiritual man has a larger range of action than the physical man. Just as the outer man receives by impression, through contact, the things that occur about him, and as these are recorded in the soul, so the greater range of action of the spirit—through the spiritual senses—permits man to touch God Himself. He is able to touch the best things in the universe and bring them back in consciousness to the soul. The apostle Paul was "caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words . . ." (II Cor. 12:4).

The operation of the spiritual man is identical to the operation of the physical man. Both record their facts in the soul consciousness. Consequently, when we become aware of certain

things in the spirit that our spirit has recognized, it is because the spirit has recorded that consciousness of its operation in the soul. Therefore, we know it.

The subject of the God-man reduces itself largely to this: Instead of man's living in obedience to the things he receives from the fibratory action of the outer man, he realizes there is a larger life and activity within, and he begins to realize some of its powers and the duty that he owes to the inner man, that man of the heart, that God-man within. And realizing this, he refuses to permit the animal to control the spirit.

There is no individual on earth but that in some degree knows the operation of the Spirit of God. I do not believe a human being lives who has not in some degree at some time been conscious of the Spirit of God and possibly heard the voice of the Spirit or realized the operation of the Spirit upon his heart. As John said, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9).

In my congregation in South Africa there was a miner who lived a vile, sinful life. One day as he was working at the mine operating his drilling machine, he became aware of an inner voice speaking to him, a voice in his spirit which said, "Go down to the stope" (which was hundreds of feet down), "and call the Austrian out." An Austrian was working all alone in one of the stopes.

In telling me about it he said, "Brother Lake, I was so busy I thought perhaps it was some freak of my mind, and I went on with my work. A little while after that the voice spoke again, and this time with more authority: 'Go down to the stope and call the Austrian out.' I was still very busy, and I did not obey, thinking possibly it was my imagination." He went on with his work until that

voice spoke within him the third time in an extremely urgent manner. He said, "I knew it was the voice of the Spirit of God. I dropped everything and went to the stope. As I looked down I could see the light of a candle, so I took my candle and made a motion for him to come up. When he arrived I was not able to explain why I had called him up. But as I waited, hardly knowing what to say, the whole stope suddenly fell in."

Who was it that spoke? Who possessed the foreknowledge? Whence came the voice? It was the universal mind of God.

Even though that miner was not a Christian, and although he was not obedient to the law of God or to the law of his own being—a man who lived largely in the lusts of the flesh—yet his spirit had a conscious contact with God that day.

Perhaps you too have had this same experience. Before you were a Christian and had become obedient to the mind and will of God, was there a time in your life when the Spirit of God began to deal with you, and for the first time you were conscious that your life was not in harmony with God?

THE PURPOSE OF GOD

If these things are so, as the Word of God and the law of our being declares—that there is a larger God-man within—is there anything greater in life than to give that man a chance? What is the purpose of God in our being? Is it not all summed up in this: God's endeavor to develop in the man of the soul a conscious understanding of who he is, what his powers are, the endlessness of his existence, and all the other great things that the spirit naturally sees and feels.

The development of the soul into the likeness and stature of Christ is then the greatest element and purpose that can enter our lives. God Himself puts it first; man ought not to put it second.

Do you realize that as the light of God's truth is beginning to dawn anew on the world, the new force that has taken hold of your heart is the consciousness that God has a purpose in your life, a purpose in your being here? It is a part of the great education of the soul. It is a part of that which is necessary that mankind may go on continuously, conquering and to conquer.

I have a conviction that when the curtain is drawn on this present life, it will not be to sit down with a golden harp and sing songs all the day, though I believe that will have its place. I believe in the life to come in the new sphere, or in the condition in which we will live, we must continue developing.

The Word of God speaks of the heaven of heavens, and says that Jesus is higher than all heavens. I believe we will find that development of nature—which we have been realizing to some extent in this life—will go on and on until one day man will emerge in all senses in the likeness and understanding of God as He is.

I believe there is a time in the development of the life of the soul when it is more valuable on the other side of life than it is here. I remember one whom I loved dearly and in whom I observed this peculiar thing. For months a most wonderful process of spiritualization went on in that life, until one day as I sat at my desk I looked across into her face and observed a kind of heavenly glory all about her. I said to myself, "If that condition of spiritualization continues for a couple of months longer, there will be more of her on the other side than here, and I will miss her, for she will be gone." It was that way. One day I returned and found that during my absence her spirit had departed. She had gone to be with God.

When God has got the soul developed to the place where He can trust that soul with a larger life and a

larger mission, that soul is more valuable to God on the other side than it is here. I have a conviction that that is the time and that ought to be the manner of a soul's transition into the greater life.

If that is a fact, how earnestly we should desire that everything in us points to one thing: giving the man of the heart his due chance to raise up in his own God-likeness and God-greatness. And instead of being dominated by the outer man, as a son of God in the seat of authority the outer man is obedient to the inner man. That is God's purpose. That is God's intent.

In II Corinthians 10:3-5 we see how that fact was recognized by Paul. He says, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds); Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

Isn't that the exercise of the soul power? Isn't that the assertion of the spirit man, taking dominion and control in the life, bringing into captivity every power of thought and conception into obedience to Christ? For the Christ-life is the greatest life mankind has ever realized.

I was amazed recently to learn that at the present time a carload of Bibles is published for every thousand of any other book in the world. Why is this? Is it not because of the new soul awakening that is going on throughout the world? Is it not that men have come to the place of development in God-consciousness and understanding of themselves that they refuse to remain any longer in ignorance concerning the great fact of life? The Bible is God's great medium of revelation.

I can well remember when the vision of Christ

and His kingdom broke over my soul, and I began to understand myself and God. I sometimes wish I had a trumpet voice that would resound throughout this old world. I would like to tell mankind that the love of God and the things of Christ are not the things they have had painted to them. They are the great invisible, majestic forces that lift the heart into contact with God and cause man to realize that he is not an animal, but he is a king and a prince unto God.

I am an orthodox evangelist, and I have worked at my calling. I have had the privilege of helping many people to come into a consciousness of salvation. It is one thing to bring a man into a surrender of himself to God, and have him receive a conscious knowledge of and contact with God. But after that there must be the great development of a soul that causes the newborn Christian to realize what and who he is. If you want to find the real source of difficulty in the modern church, that is where you can put your finger on it. The development of the soul is neglected; man is not taught his own God-likeness and authority. Instead of his dominating the conditions by the power of God, he is dominated by them.

In the old days of Methodism, Wesley insisted that every individual who was a member of the church should have a conscious knowledge of God and be in union with Him. In establishing his church, he formed classes of twelve in which the most spiritual men were to look after their class's spiritual development and report each week the soul progress of each one. But the modern church of today has lost this to a great extent.

When an individual becomes aware of the God-man within and endeavors to let that man of the heart have some scope in life, right away he becomes conscious of a great range of spiritual life that the inner man touches. It begins to radiate

through all his being. That knowledge is the source of power. That inner man, that man in union with God through whom the power of God is transmitted, who understands the mind of God, fulfills his duty to God and to himself and brings the outer man into obedience.