

Spiritual Life #47

Walking After the Spirit

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

And I say that because otherwise you may think that it's unimportant, so just with that as an introduction, I would try to bring those of you into the picture who perhaps are here for the first time this evening by saying that we do talk about the spiritual life. And we have, in connection with that, been using the model that I shared this morning, you remember. [He puts up a diagram of the personality which consists of 3 concentric rectangles and indicates 'spirit' as the innermost, then 'soul' as the middle level and 'body' as the outer most.] And it's that model there of the personality. And it's the outline that we believe the Bible gives us, as you go through the meaning of spirit, soul, and body.

And when we talk about the spiritual life, we normally mean that kind of life, you see. [On diagram he adds overlay that shows arrows from God and the Holy Spirit above down into our spirits and from there to the soul and from there to the body and out to the world.] A life that moves from God through our spirits, through our souls, through our bodies and out to the world. A life that moves from the inside out, a life that receives the character of God through the Holy Spirit and then expresses that in deductive detail to the world. That's what we mean by spiritual life: the Holy Spirit reproducing Jesus in us, and then using our personalities to express that throughout our seventy years in the world. So that actually we are living epistles, and so that people can continually see Jesus right down the centuries of the world's existence. So that's what we mean by the spiritual life.

And what we will be talking about this evening is particularly walking after the spirit. And I use that translation from the King James because it seems to emphasize the heart of it best, "Walking after the spirit." So I think it's maybe about the fifth study we're doing tonight, and we're talking about 'walking after the spirit.'

Now what we have done loved ones, is we talked -- maybe the year before last -- about the new birth and the baptism with the spirit, and then walking in the spirit. And then last year, we began to deal with the elements in the spirit: communion, the ability to commune with God; intuition, the ability to know what God wanted us to do directly from him; and our conscience, which we have dealt with over the past three or four weeks in connection with its ability to judge our actions according to what we receive through communion and intuition from God. [He shows these functions of the spirit in the diagram.]

Now we're going to start talking about the relationship of the spirit to the other parts of our personality. And probably next year some time we'll deal with the elements of the soul, and then perhaps the following year the elements of the body. But this year we're talking about the spirit and particularly now the relationship of the spirit to the rest of our personality. And that's why, loved ones, we're talking this evening about 'walking after the spirit.'

Now, would you like to look at the verse that mentions that so that you see it in God's Word? It's Romans 8:4. You remember the purpose of Jesus' death, as shown in Verse 3, "For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit."

Now, the King James says, "Who walk after the spirit." And you see, "Who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit." And so actually we can walk according to other parts of our personality than the spirit. And you find what we did walk according to Ephesians 2:3. "Among these we all once lived in the passions of our flesh," that's walking according to the flesh, "Following the desires of body and mind." Now loved ones, those are the two parts of the flesh. 'Walking by the body,' or the 'mind' in this case stands for the soul, 'walking according to the soul. [He shows body and soul on the diagram.]

Those are the two ways you can govern your life. And most of us, before we met Jesus or had anything to do with God, walked according to our bodies and we talked about that this morning. Most of us just walked according to what our body needed, according to the comfort that it required, according to the food that it needed, according to the appetite that it needed to satisfy. Most of us were dominated utterly by our bodies. That's why, you remember, our spirits were dead. Now what happens when we hear first about sin, and hell, and damnation, and the possibility of being saved is normally -- it's a very selfish reaction. Normally we are convicted by God's Holy Spirit that we're living the wrong way and that we're going to go into outer darkness and that we'll be alone forever, and we'll miss completely the purpose for which we were made. And normally we are very selfishly motivated, we say, "Help me! Save me!" And we hear about Jesus' death -- we don't know the details -- but we hear that because of Jesus' death, God is willing to save us. And so we sue for forgiveness. And we confess our sins and repent of them. And we give our lives to Jesus, and God actually makes our spirits alive. [He shows the diagram with God's Holy Spirit above and an arrow from Him into our spirit.]

He does bring into us his Holy Spirit. And then his Holy Spirit begins to point out that actually nothing has changed in our lives. That all we've done is declare a great desire to receive Jesus, a great desire to be saved from hell, a great desire to be forgiven, a great desire to live the way God wanted us to live. But that's all. Our lives usually have changed very little.

Some of us have given up alcohol or drunkenness. Some of us have given up promiscuity. Some of us have given up stealing. Some of us have given up those more outward immoralities and vices that God convicted us as being wrong. And so we gave those up, but actually we ourselves are still living by the desires of our body. And so we begin to realize that the Holy Spirit is pointing out that there is a conflict that normally meets about there. [He shows the diagram with arrows up from the body into our soul, but also from our spirit into our soul.] That's the conflict that is described in Romans 7:15, "The good that I would," -- that I sense coming from in my spirit and from Jesus within me -- "The good that I would, I cannot do. But the evil I hate," -- this stuff that comes in from here -- "that's the very thing I do."

And normally most of us realize at that moment that though we're born of the spirit, in no way are we filled with the spirit, in no way are we baptized with the spirit, in no way are we living the way God meant us to live and the way Jesus died and rose in order that we should live. And so we find that we are what we call 'carnal Christians'. We have the spirit alive within us, but we're living still by the desires of our body.

And you have to decide what you're going to do when you've become aware of that. Until you do decide that, loved ones, you'll only be a defeated struggling Christian and eventually it seems that you lose even that. Even if like Nee -- and Nee does believe in eternal security -- even if like him you do, you are forced into the position where you say with him that even though you may be alive -- according to your theology you somehow have to be alive -- yet you live as a dead man. You live as a non-Christian.

Now maybe it would be relevant to say that the greater part of Christendom, of course, lives like that. [He shows the diagram with arrows up from the body into our soul.] The greater part of Christendom lives in the carnality that is described in 1 Corinthians 3, you remember, "For while you are in the midst of strife and in the midst of jealousy, are you not behaving like ordinary men?" And of course, the great bulk of our Christian churches are filled with strife, with criticism, with disagreements. Even the very denominations can placard this to the world through the media, that they are actually involved in strife, and pride, and jealousy, and disagreement.

Now the greater part of Christendom really therefore is living in carnal Christianity.

I would just share with you, that you're nowhere! You're nowhere if you're that! You're nowhere! You might say you're worse than the happy old non-Christian, who is trying to do his best to please God, because of course, you use the blood of Jesus as a cover for the things that fill your life.

Whereas he, dear love him, has not even that cover, and so he's bound to try to do something about his life. But the carnal Christian is born of the spirit but lives by the power of the body.

Now I would just share with you loved ones, that you haven't even started to walk after the spirit if you're at that stage. Do you see that? You're not even in the ballpark of Christianity! You're not walking in the spirit! You may say, "Oh I'm walking in the spirit, but I have great trouble with lust." No, no, you're not. You're not. You haven't even started to walk in the spirit! The spirit can't even get past there with you, can't even get past there with you. [On diagram indicates 'Soul'.] Indeed, the spirit is being utterly squashed inside you by the desires of your body!

So that would apply to all of us who are still under the dominations of our bodies. So that involves those of us who are still proud of the way we look, or still get jealous of the way somebody else looks, because it's all self, you see. Or we still have terrible battles with lust -- just dreadful battles some of which we win, some of which we lose. That's carnality! That's the carnal Christian walk! It isn't the spiritual Christian walk! And it isn't walking after the spirit! And if you say to me, "Oh well, I mean I've been used by Jesus at times to bring people close to him." It's just God's grace, working over and above as a kind of overdrive over the top of you, because it's not you. It's not you that's showing forth Jesus, because you're still living off the world and off your body.

Now, loved ones, here's what we're talking about this evening. When a person has come to a place where they've accepted their crucifixion with Christ, and they've accepted with Jesus their place on the cross, and they've said, "Lord, if you died for me, and if you took my personality to death with you, then I'm willing to be on that cross with you. Lord, whisper to me as you put your arm around me, what it's like to be on that cross." And then as Jesus whispers to you, "Well, my son, my daughter, it means that you really have to live as if you have no friends. You see, here on this cross I cannot depend on any of those loved ones around me for praise or for support. It's as if they aren't there. All I can depend on is my Father. Now, it'll mean that, my son. Then it'll mean that you have to be without any plans for your future. I am on this cross and there is no future. This is my one moment. I have died to any future that I have. Now it means that! You being in me, means dying to your future, being as if you're a dead man now with no future to control or to plan." And Jesus will tell you what it involves.

Now, then if you're willing to be crucified with him, then the Holy Spirit fills you. And you have a great sense of unity in your inner life, and a great sense of victory over sin -- over inward sin even! Not only outward sin, but inward sin like anger, and jealousy, and pride, and envy, and a critical spirit. You find that those things -- you do not feel sin within! That's what being cleansed and filled with the Holy Spirit means. You do not feel sin within! You can experience at times, the fiery darts of the wicked one, as there is a critical spirit in the office. And that critical spirit touches you for a moment, but instead of it lighting up a critical spirit inside you, you find that you're clean. And you find that there's a rejection of that critical spirit and a moving toward what Jesus wants you to express. So, that's the difference, loved ones.

The difference between being a carnal Christian and a spiritual Christian is that the carnal Christian no longer feels sin rising up within him, and no longer has to beat it down with all he can, and all his prayers, and all his willpower. He finds that it's natural to obey where it used to be natural to sin. The carnal Christian feels that it's natural to sin, it's natural to be jealous, it's natural to be angry, it's natural to lose your temper. The spiritual Christian finds it's natural to love. It's natural to be kind. It's natural to be patient.

So there is a vast difference! You can see that. Outwardly there may be no difference. Do you realize that? "Outwardly," John Wesley said, "There's probably no difference. The carnal Christian ought to have the same power to control his outward life as Plato, or Socrates, or any of the old classical philosophers, and certainly ought to have the same power and grace of the Holy Spirit as the spiritual Christian has." But the difference is within. The difference is within. Within the

spiritual Christian there is a freedom from conflict, a freedom from the old battle, because he has now decided not just, "I want to be saved, I want to get to heaven, I want my sins forgiven," but, "Lord Jesus, I want you to live through me. I want to live this way. And I'm willing to live this way. And I'm willing Lord, to do without any security, any significance, any happiness that the world can give me. Indeed I don't want it, Lord. I don't want anything that they can give me. I'll accept what you alone can give me."

Of course, that's why you don't get worried, you see, when the money is in problems. You can see that, because your security no longer depends on the world. And so you find rising up within you, not an anxiety, but a delight that your security is in the Father. Now, that's the situation a spiritual Christian comes to when they say no longer, "Yes Lord I want to be saved, I want to get to heaven," but they say, "Lord, what I most want is for you to be glorified in my life. I want you to live again inside me." Now then loved ones -- then begins the whole experience of 'walking in the spirit', or 'walking after the spirit'.

So, if I could just mention the seminars that we have on Sunday morning. We have one called 'The New Birth'. That concerns the Spirit coming in and regenerating us. We have another called The Baptism with the Holy Spirit, that concerns this battle to come through to an integrated victorious life. And then we have one called 'Walking in the Spirit' and that concerns the time that we're beginning to discuss tonight, when a person who has been delivered from his carnality wants only Jesus' glory in his life, and wants only to see him transmit his life to others.

Now then loved ones -- then you're past carnality, and you're past rebellion, and you're into the issue of this dear soul. [On diagram indicates 'Soul'.] This dear soul was perverted. The mind got used to manipulating things and people for security, the emotions got used to getting joy for happiness, the will got used to being dominated by both in order to somehow try to gain significance, or approval, or acceptance by their peers. And those remain. And now the Holy Spirit has to begin the breaking experience of making this soul the kind of soul it was meant to be, a soul that can easily express the life of Jesus to the world. And that's loved ones, what we call the problem of souliness.

The problem of souliness is the problem -- not that a carnal Christian enters into. A carnal Christian can't even see the difficulty. He has cruder things to deal with. He has jealousy, and anger, and lust, and pride. But souliness is the difficulty that the spiritual Christian begins to enter into when he has once determined to give his life wholly to expressing Jesus' life to others. He begins to find that he has a soul where the will is not used to obeying the conscience, and it is certainly not used to directing the mind or the emotions. And the mind is not used to understanding. It's used to manipulating. And the emotions are not used to expressing joy. They're used to getting joy. And what happens with the great bulk of loved ones who come through carnality is that they never get past this souliness.

And loved ones, I can tell you that it is Satan's most deceptive trick for preventing the Spirit of Jesus coming through personalities to the world. And it is a question of deception. And it might be good for you to see that, that carnality is a question of rebellion. It is a will that does not want to be crucified with Christ, that does not want to receive praise only from him. It wants praise from everybody else as well. It wants both the world and God at the same time. It's a question there of a selfish will. [He shows graphic of personality with arrows the other direction, from the world in to the body, etc.] Whereas when you come to souliness, it's a case of an independent soul, a soul that has got used to living independent of the direction of the spirit and of Jesus within.

Now loved ones, that really is what we talk about for the next two or three years here in the evening service. And for those of you who are still fighting this, you know that I'll trust God to enable us to speak about it from time-to-time, but I have to tell you that the evening services are really concerned with this issue here. [On diagram he indicates 'Soul'.]

And I'll tell you the heart of it; the heart of it is that we have developed personalities independent of God that were useful to get from the world what we should have had from God. So many of us developed sarcastic tongues, cutting, caustic, sarcastic tongues. Many of us were comedians -- were facetious: funny at the wrong time, funny all the time, to cover our own self consciousness. Many of us were very willful people. We were very strong willed. We were strong willed partly because we were weak willed inside, and partly -- perhaps because we inherited something from our fathers and our mothers.

But all of us developed personalities that we found were useful to live off the world instead of living off God. Now what we do with all our pride is we turn from the world, and we turn to Jesus, and we say, "We'll serve you with this personality." And nothing of Jesus' life comes through. All that comes through is a rather stereotyped kind of Christian who is whomping all the heavy things on people that are supposedly deep Biblical truths or the latest spiritual insights that he has got at the last meeting. But they don't come as life, as fragrant life, to the person to whom he's speaking. And if he carries on like that --and most Christians do, most Christians carry on like that -- eventually loved ones, you fall from your souliness back into carnality. Because do you see the soul is also part of the self?

And you remember that that verse in Ephesians says, "We once followed the desires of body, and mind, because both of those are part of the sin self that rebelled against God." [On diagram he shows 'Will', 'Mind', and 'Emotions' as functions of the 'Soul'.] And if you carry on trying to serve God with this soul that once served the world, and you don't allow God's Holy Spirit to apply the 'daily cross' to it, breaking its powers, and remolding it, and bringing it under the Holy Spirit, and making it a 'fit servant' for the Holy Spirit, eventually you will fall out of what is just souliness back into carnality, and eventually all the way out of the Father's arms. So it is vital to deal with this.

One reason that it's vital to deal with it is, if you look at God's fresh natural world, it's very hard to get two daffodils that are exactly the same. Many of them, when you get them under a microscope, even seem to be the same, but it's very difficult to get two that are exactly the same. Everywhere in God's natural world there is great diversity and variety. One of the reasons we enjoy so much getting out into the country or to the lakes is there's a kind of salve, or peace, or healing that comes to us from the sheer diversity and variety of God's creation. Now that's always what the Holy Spirit brings about. He brings about a delightful individuality, a freshness, and a gladness that comes directly off the 'dew of Mount Hermon', which is the Holy Spirit.

Now, when you try to serve Jesus with your soul untouched, and unbroken, and unmolded, you become a boring, miserable stereotype of either the 'Evangelical Christian', or the 'charismatic' Christian, or the 'Spirit filled' Christian, or the 'baptized' Christian. That's it! You've become a miserable, boring stereotype that everybody can tell what you'll say next. Sure, you'll support this man. Everybody supports him if they're a Christian. Sure you'll oppose this.

But more than that, in your own dealings with people there is not the fresh spontaneity of Jesus. You have real trouble in doing the kind of thing he did with the woman caught in adultery. They all expected him, of course, to condemn her outright, and he didn't. He said, "Listen, let whoever is without sin cast the first stone," and then they all went away. And he said "Did nobody condemn you?" And she said, "No." And he said, "Neither do I." And then he said, "But go and sin no more." Now loved ones, it's that kind of spontaneous, different, Spirit, God - guided life that this rather tired old world wants to see. And unless you and I allow our souls to be remolded, and made good effective expressions of Jesus' magnificent spirit, the world will not see that.

Now it ties up a wee bit with what John was talking about with the parents. There's nothing so like a 'set piece' as the family. Nothing so like a 'set piece'. It's almost like in the old days in the royal courts. They used to do 'tableaus'. [A group of models or motionless figures representing a scene from a story or from history] And I don't know if you've ever played it, but everybody got

into a certain position, like that. And there was a 'tableau' and you were to guess what it was. Everybody was dead still. There's nothing so like a 'tableau' as family life. Dad says, "Reagan's [U.S. president from the Republican political party] the man." And his son says, "Oh, that McGovern [George McGovern the Democrat political party presidential candidate that opposed Reagan] were back there, Dad." So it goes on. Well you know it. You know the way it goes. The pieces are set. You could almost play the whole thing yourself without having different people there.

If you had Rich Little [born 1938, Canadian-American impressionist and voice actor that imitated many voices] there, he could almost do all the conversation, because the record has been played so often that it never varies. Everybody has their set piece -- doesn't matter what it is. It can deal with Cambodia, Iran, everything. You know exactly how it'll run. There's nothing like the family for being a set piece: boring, stagnant, and caught up in its own reflex responses to each member. That's what makes the thing such a problem when you go home at Thanksgiving [U.S. holiday], because Dad sends the signals, and there's a whole personality in you that responds. It's responded for years to that signal, and it's ready to respond the same way.

Now loved ones, there's nowhere that needs the freshness of Jesus' Spirit changing and transforming your personality, like your home. And it's the same of course. Those of us who are husbands and wives know it. Loved ones, we have imprisoned each other. We have! We get to know each other so well that we don't need the other person in a conversation. We can play through the conversation without them saying a word. And of course, because we have that attitude to them, we bind them in that spot. And so we bind them into that character. Just as we used to bind the poor little guy, you remember, at the back of the class who was always the comedian? We bound him into being the comedian. He had to be it all the time because we expected it. So we do the same with our dear partners.

Now loved ones, do you see there is nowhere that so needs the freshness of the Spirit of Jesus coming through a soul that has been broken and remolded, like our homes and the people we live with?

And if you live with roommates, you know how difficult it is for them to see Jesus in you, because -- often you've stopped gambling; you've stopped drinking in excess; you've stopped being promiscuous. Maybe, if you've come through carnality, you've even stopped being angry, and jealous, and bad-tempered. But you're still left with the old stolid personality, which you developed over long years, and which is suitable only for that kind of life. [He shows diagram again, with arrows coming in from the world to the body and in to the soul.] It's suitable only for the kind of life that depends on the world. It isn't suitable at all for expressing that fresh spontaneous beautiful personality of Jesus. [He shows the diagram again with arrows from God into our spirit and from our spirit out into our soul and then from there out into our body and out to the world.]

Now that's what we're talking about when we're talking about walking after the spirit, loved ones -- not walking after the soul! I can give a thousand examples because we have it staring us in the face every time in business day-after-day. There are set ways to deal with problems in business. There are set ways for every problem. There are set ways for every financial problem, set ways for every personnel problem! And you probably have suffered some of the personnel methods that businesses use.

Now, if you deal with loved ones according to those methods, you are in fact using part of the system of Satan. And Jesus cannot use you to stir life in a loved one in that position. And so repeatedly we, in difficulties that we may have in Fish [Fish Enterprises businesses in Minneapolis] from day-to-day, are being brought up against the sheer inexpedience of souliness, the sheer inexpedience of souliness. It is really -- if you are honest, it is really sin. It is something that is independent of the way God is moving at that moment -- but it is certainly incredibly inexpedient. It is something that Jesus does not want to do with a person at that time.

So you're in the kitchen and the rush is on at 12:30, and there is a guy to your right who should have had those hamburgers ready. And that's all he's responsible for. And you have every right, in

human terms, to tell him off. You have every right, in human terms, to imply, "Look, that's your job to do!" And your whole personality is bent to respond that way. Moreover, do you see that it isn't really a question of sin in your mind? You don't feel you're being unfair to the guy; you don't feel you're being unkind to him. You feel, "Listen, he ought to have done this. This is his job! This is the way this kitchen will work together! If he doesn't do that, the food won't be out; the guests will have meals that are cold; the ministry of Jesus will be spoiled." You actually have every right, from a human point of view, to make some sarcastic comment to him, or at least to say to him, "Look, would you get a move on with those hamburgers?"

Now, loved ones, that's the moment of truth. That's what we're talking about. I can tell you, without any doubt, what is in his little heart, or her little spirit. In fact, if you pause for a moment and put yourself in his shoes, and you receive some sharp comment from a colleague who is a Christian, you know how you feel. And you know how you have to fight resentment, and you have to fight the feeling that you're being unfairly treated. And you know that that adds to the tiredness that you feel at that moment. And you know you go home that night more weary because of that kind of comment than because of all the work and all the rush.

Now there's a moment loved ones, when your personality is either remolded so that it can say what Jesus would say in that situation, or he is trying to say it, but your personality is not able to express it. In other words, Jesus can be imprisoned in your spirit, by your soul. And that's what we talk about when we talk about ministering Jesus' life. Those of you who have problems with roommates: the dirty socks are always on the floor; they're always late home for supper. Many of you have problems with family, or with husbands, or wives, because they always want to watch that program, and it's a dumb program, and they always want to watch it. Or you have problems because they always want to go out that night when you want to stay in, or because they always want to have this certain kind of meal on a Thursday.

Loved ones, all those things are dealt with only by the touch of Jesus' life. And I say it not only by faith, not only on the basis of truth, but also on the basis of experience. Those things are not dealt with by 'soulish' discussion, by 'soulish' suggestion of other possibilities, by 'soulish' examination, or argument, or debate, by 'soulish' enlightenment, pointing out how foolish they are and how much more fun life could be if they do it your way. Those things aren't touched by that kind of 'soulish' performance. They are touched only by the life of Jesus. Only the life of Jesus can make flowers grow. Only the life of Jesus can make love grow in a person's heart. Only the life of Jesus can change a person's habits that have been going on for years and years. Only the life of Jesus can transform a whole relationship.

But that life of Jesus, loved ones -- if you can ever get to the place where this soul is beginning to be broken, and the life of Jesus is able to come through, you will begin to see life springing up around you. The person who is soulish has chronic problems. That's it! The soulish Christian is surrounded by chronic problems, problems that never are solved, problems that keep coming up repeatedly, problems that they've counseled about for years with this person, trying to help them, but the problems are chronic. Soulish Christians have chronic problems all around them, chronic problems in their wives, chronic problems in their husbands, chronic problems in their children, in their brothers, their sisters, their colleagues, their roommates. They have chronic problems all around them, because the only thing that will touch a real problem is the creative life of Jesus' Spirit. And that will only happen if that spirit can come through you.

And that's the message, you know, of that illustration we've used so often with, you remember. Mary I think it was, and came into the house and had the box of alabaster ointment, and broke the box, you remember, and put the ointment on Jesus' feet. And then the verse says, "The whole house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment." But, the fragrance of the ointment could only come out when the box had been broken.

And loved ones, it's the same with us. Even the best of us here, we have personalities that are

just hard. They might even be good personalities. Evangelical Christians might even say, "Oh, we have good personalities. We're always so enthusiastic for the Gospel. We're always trying to bring people to Christ." And we may even have good personalities, but loved ones, until those personalities are broken, through revelation of the Holy Spirit, and through breaking experience in our life, those personalities will not be able to express the love of Jesus, and the lightness of Jesus, and the freedom of Jesus, and the life of Jesus, and the surprising movements of Jesus. See, Jesus thinks in different ways to us. That's why brother, I said about Cambodia, because Jesus sees things differently. He may want us to give all our money to Cambodia, or he may want us to give none of it to Cambodia. But the important thing is to see life as Jesus sees it, because if you do that, then you'll begin to see Jesus' life creating things around you. And so loved ones, that's why I think John -- I think any of us who have operated together now for nine years in these businesses, Jim, any of us will say soulishness is what kills the life of Jesus among us. Soulshness! Not terrible sin! We don't -- well, none of us swear at each other. All of us love each other. We all want the best for each other. But we have personalities that have been trained by the world, and they have to be broken by the power of Jesus' Spirit.

Could I just share one last thing? If you have a roommate, or a wife, or a husband, or a friend, and you feel that somehow there's a place past which you cannot get. And you've settled down, and you've said, "Well, that's as far as I can go. She doesn't understand or he doesn't understand. I can't get through. That's it! I'll have to live with it! I'll live with it for -- what? I have thirty years left. I'll live with it for the next thirty years." Loved ones, that's deception. There is a way through, but usually it's through God exposing to us some of the deception that we're living under. Some subtle attitude of our minds, or emotions, or our wills towards this loved one is preventing life coming about in them. Honest, that's true.

If they are not downright opposing everything that you do, in that case you know whose side they're on. But if they're not downright opposing everything you do, and really, they show a desire to love you and to want to accept the same things as you accept, do see that you're both, whether roommates, husband/wife, father/mother, you're meant to be like that completely. [He crosses his fingers.] And the Spirit of Jesus is able to bring you revelation about that part of your soul that has to be changed. And that's what we talk about when we talk about the process experience of sanctification, or walking in the spirit, or the daily bearing of the cross, because that's really what it is.

The fact is, your soul was changed on Calvary. Your soul was changed. Your soul was transformed from that to that. [Shows diagram with arrows coming in from the world to the body and in to the soul and in to the spirit. And then changes overlay showing arrows from God into our spirit and from our spirit out into our soul and then from there out into our body and out to the world.] It's simply that the Holy Spirit brings this [indicates this last overlay direction from our spirit out through our souls] to you gradually, where he brings the death to self and the filling of the Holy Spirit in a moment, he brings this to you gradually. And he begins daily to enable you to bear the cross of Christ in regard to your soulsh powers.

Now loved ones, next Sunday I'd like to talk more about this, and more about how to come into this, and more about the importance of seeing where you live from. Do you live from your soul, or do you live from your spirit? But, maybe if I could just stop there this evening. If your ministry to others in your home, or in your work is getting dry, or isn't getting anywhere, probably it's because you're not ministering Jesus' life at all. You're just ministering God's truth with the powers of your own soul. And what you need to do is to begin to ask the Holy Spirit to give you revelation about these things. And it's the same with your own life, actually. If your own life is dry, it's either because you're not a Christian, or you're a carnal Christian who wants to still live off the world, or you're a spiritual Christian who has never realized up to this moment that your personality, your soulsh powers, have to be changed. They have to go through the cross. And they have to be changed and transformed in order to express the fresh life of Jesus.

And oh do you see there's such a life for you, such a life for you, on the other side of that? There's a freshness! And there's a creative ministry where you will -- instead of walking through chronic problems, you'll see flowers sprouting up. Everywhere you go, you'll see flowers of Jesus sprouting up! You'll see people being born of the Spirit, and filled with the Spirit, people becoming soft towards Jesus. You'll begin to see that, if you can allow this hard alabaster box to be broken [On diagram shows the 'soul' working the wrong way]. And we'll try to share a wee bit more about what that means next day. But really you don't need to wait for the key. You can just deal with the Holy Spirit. Say, "Holy Spirit, I caught a little of what brother was sharing tonight. I caught a little of that. I know it in my own family life, in my own home life. Indeed I know it in my own office. I know there's a hardness that has come into my dealing with loved ones. I want the best for them, but I know there's a hardness in my dealing with them and I can't seem to change it. It seems my personality can't operate any other way. Holy Spirit, will you begin to remold my personality and show me what I have to do to cooperate?" And whatever, pray like Jessie Penn Lewis prayed, "Lord bring me through to this, whatever it costs me. Bring me through to the full death and resurrection in yourself, whatever it costs me." And it will probably cost you a lot -- probably everything! And you'll have a lot of hard times coming through it. But loved ones, this is what life is! This is what marriage is! This is what real friendship is! This is what real joy and living is! This is how it is real joy and delight!

Let us pray. Dear Lord Jesus, we just have a vague feeling of what you're saying to us tonight, but we certainly know some of those symptoms, Lord. Indeed, in certain situations we've just run out of ideas. We don't really know where to turn next. And we are sick and sore, tired of some of our own soulishness that we've shown in all kinds of relationships. Lord Jesus, we want you to shine through us. That's why you died and rose! That's why we're here on earth! Lord, we want you to shine through us. We want to minister 'life', and not 'ourselves'.

So, Lord Jesus we would ask you for the dear counsel of the Holy Spirit, to reveal to us now in these coming days ways in which we are soulish, ways in which we are trying to use the old powers of our personality to do work that is supernatural. Lord Jesus, will you show us a new way to go? Show us a way to be silent when we would normally speak; a way to exercise faith when we'd normally exercise our own will over someone else. Lord we ask you, will you give us light? Give us light so that we as individuals and as a body may begin to be used by you to create life, as you yourself have created life in us. Lord, we ask that you will make us fathers and mothers in your kingdom.

And now the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with each one of us now and evermore. Amen.