

Spiritually or Soulishly?

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Okay, let us pray. Lord Jesus we thank you for the great privilege of having an evening like this together. And Lord we realize how few places in the world a group of people like ourselves can gather in quietness and peace and simply concentrate on what you're teaching us. And we thank you for that privilege. And we realize Lord that we'll look back to these Sunday evenings often in years to come and be thankful for them and realize that these were precious times. So Lord, we would appreciate them at this moment, and we would rejoice in what we have tonight. And we know Lord as we do that you will be faithful, and you will speak to speaker as well as to audience, and you will reveal yourself to all of us here in words that are deeper than mere man's. And we thank you for that Lord. Amen.

I know that those of you who have been coming for several weeks will be patient. I just explain, brothers and sisters who are here for the first time tonight, that what we talk about in these evening services is the spiritual life. And we're trying to do that under a certain framework that we believe the Bible outlines to us. And as with all man's attempt at summarizing what the Bible teaches, I'm sure it's only partially true and when we get to heaven we'll laugh at our silliness. But, it does seem that the Father shows us in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, that there is a spirit, and a soul, and a body in our personalities. "May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Then if you track those through the Old and New Testaments, you find that when the spirit is mentioned it normally refers to one of these three functions and that's why we've put those three functions inside the spirit. [He shows a graphic of the personality showing 3 concentric rectangles with the 'spirit' being the innermost, then the 'soul' around the spirit and the largest outside rectangle being the body. The 'spirit' contains communion, intuition and conscience. The soul contains mind, emotions and will. The body is the physical being that the outside world sees.] The ability to commune with God, the ability to know what God wants you to do directly from himself, your conscience which makes you act up to the best that you've heard through your intuition. Then your will, and your mind, and emotions are part of your soul. That's the psychological part of you. And then your body is in itself a trinity also.

And when we talk about the spiritual life, that's the kind of life that we mean. [He shows on diagram 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.] That's the way God intended us to operate, from his Holy Spirit, loving him above our homes, above our cars, above even our children, above our jobs, above our own selves -- loving him and wanting to please him with all our hearts. And then, as a result of that, his life would begin to come through us, we'd become like him, just like every husband and wife becomes like each other as the years pass, we'd become more like God and his Spirit.

You may say, "Well, what is his Holy Spirit?" Well, he is a real person, but you can tell a little -- the kind of spirit that begins to come to you from a friend. You get to know a friend closely, and if you really love that friend, you become more and more like him, because you admire him, and you respect him, and he does you. And so you both melt more and more together. So there is a naturalness about it. Now, I agree with you, that there's something added about the Holy Spirit of

God, because it's not just a feeling or an atmosphere. He is a real person. But he does that kind of thing. He brings two friends closer and closer together, and makes them more like each other.

And that was God's plan for us, that the life of his Holy Spirit would come through us in communion and prayer, would direct us through our intuition what we should do; our conscience would constrain our wills to obey that, and our will would direct our mind to understand the details of God's will for us that day, and our emotions would express the joy of our friendship with him to the world. [He shows again on diagram 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.] So it would be an outgoing life. So the world would be filled with the blessedness of God, and the unity of God, and the liberty of God through his people. And that was God's plan.

And so that loved ones, is what we talk about when we talk about the spiritual life. Now, at these present weeks we're trying to deal particularly with the spirit. So we have dealt to some extent, with the experiences that lead us into our relationship with God. We have spent the past two years doing that. But now we're beginning to talk about this area of the spirit. [He indicates 'Spirit' on the diagram.] And we have in previous weeks dealt with the ability to commune with God, our intuition, and our conscience and now we're beginning to talk about what it means to walk after the spirit.

Because you see, that's the way God intended us to operate. He intended our body to get its direction from our soul and our soul to get its direction from our spirit, and our spirit to get its direction from God himself. And so what we're talking about in these weeks is walking after the spirit. Now, what many of us, of course, have done for years is, we've operated the way the great bulk of mankind operates which is that way. [He shows diagram again, and shows arrows coming in from the world to the body and in to the soul and in to the spirit.] That is, the great bulk of mankind at the moment operates from the world in. They don't operate from God out; they operate from the world in. They've abandon God, they don't want him. They don't want to depend on him. They don't want to love him. They want to be their own God.

And so what has happened is their own spirit has died, and it's no longer in existence. And they're left without any dynamic in their lives. And so they've turned from God to the world to find the security, and the significance, and happiness that they once got from God's love. And now most of mankind lives to get security, and significance, and happiness from the world.

And so what has happened of course is, that among other things, the spirit has died and the soul itself -- do you see it has itself become perverted? It had to. The soul has to operate a different way when it depends on God to the way it operates when it depends on the world. You can see that. When it depends on God then the soul is used for different things. The will for instance, commands the mind and emotions. It directs them in accordance to what it itself is receiving from the spirit. The mind concentrates on understanding God's will and God's plan, and working it out in deductive detail in whatever job you happen to have -- in what carpentry you do, in what business you carry on. The emotions are used to express the joy of your fellowship and your love of God to other people. So the soul operates that way when it operates from God out in a spiritual way. But when it operates from the world in, do you see that those functions become perverted?

If you have no sense of identity because you have no sense of God's love you have to get a sense of identity from somewhere. Otherwise you feel you're a nothing. And so where we get it is from the

grade curve. We get it from the grade curve, and all variations of the grade curve. We pit ourselves against other people and prove to ourselves that we're better -- maybe not than 79 others, but than two others. We're better than them. And so we make ourselves feel some significance and some importance.

Now to do that, of course, the mind can no longer afford just to be interested in understanding God's will. It has to manipulate like mad! It has to manipulate people so that it gets itself into a position where it seems and feels important. It's the same with the emotions; if the emotions no longer get joy from God, and from their fellowship with God, the emotions have to get joy from somewhere else. They can't concentrate just on expressing joy. They themselves are empty and so they concentrate on getting joy from others.

And I don't want to mention it too much, but many of us, in family life, have seen the results of that. I mean, we have seen the way mothers and fathers -- instead of giving to the children have used the children. And we've seen the way the children, instead of giving to the mums and dads, have used the mums and dads. And indeed, we've seen the way a husband will concentrate on getting joy from his wife rather than giving joy to her, and vice versa. In many family relationships you can see the effect of such a perversion of the soul.

Now loved ones, that's what has taken place. So when most of mankind are in that situation, they have a spirit that is dead towards God; they have a soul that has become utterly perverted in its functions; and they themselves have chosen the world, and live off the world completely, and don't live off God at all.

Now obviously, one of the big steps is when you make the choice to live off God instead of to live off the world. Many of us feel that that's at the moment of the new birth, but so many of us have experienced only a partial new birth that often that choice becomes a little later -- after we have become a little more knowledgeable about Jesus, and we see that there's a real choice.

And many of us have found ourselves to be carnal Christians. We have found that our spirits have become alive, but we ourselves have continued to operate 'in' from the world. And so we're carnal Christians; we still depend on the world for our security, significance, and happiness. That's what explains -- oh in Ireland, the great thing was we had 'sales of work'. They were dreadful, catastrophes. You had 'sales of work' to get money for missions; you sold things, and people -- ladies -- baked cakes. And then you sold them at half what it cost them to bake them -- typical kind of Christian inefficiency that we operated on. But that's what caused the lady to be offended because her cake was not noticed by the pastor or by the other people. That's why you got that kind of thing in churches. Because many people were born of the spirit -- their spirit had come alive -- but they themselves were still operating on the basis of getting the approval of others in the church. That's why men would get caught up in running for office in the church. They would be born of the spirit, and they would want to love Jesus, but they themselves wouldn't have actually chosen to live off God. They'd have chosen still to live off the world. So they still prized the approval of their peers and the respect of their friends.

So that's what you call a 'carnal Christian', loved ones -- a person who is born of the spirit but is still living from the world in. And that we talked about last day. That of course, is a question of rebellion. A carnal Christian is involved in downright rebellion. He's involved in the exercise of a selfish will, because he has chosen still to depend on the world for the things he ought to get from God.

Now, do you see loved ones, that when a person has decided that he is going, once and for all, to die to the world with Jesus, and to live only to God for all that he needs, then the Holy Spirit fills and baptizes that person? And they become a person filled with the Spirit or baptized with the Spirit.

But what we began to talk about last day is this: there are many loved ones who have come to a real death to what the world has to give them, and have come to a place where they are filled with the Spirit and baptized with the Spirit. But they don't realize that they still have this enigma within them. They still have this soul that for years, for all the years of their lives, has been continually and increasingly perverted in its functions. And so they come to the place where they are no longer carnal. And they are no longer in rebellion against God. And they're willing to do anything for God, and be anything for God. And they're willing to put his will first in everything. And they have no trouble seeking the approval of other people, or being annoyed when other people criticize them. And they're free from anger, and envy, and jealousy, and those inwards sins.

But, they don't realize that they still have this soul within them that is working as if it was dependent on the world. And so they still have a mind that has got used to manipulating people, and things, and events. They still have emotions that have been used for years to getting joy, and getting happiness from other things and other people. And they still have a will that for years has been used to obeying and being dominated by their mind and emotions. Now that, loved ones, is what we'd like to talk a little about tonight. It's called souliness.

And the soulish Christian is a Christian who is filled with the Holy Spirit and has decided he is willing to die to self and to self will, and willing to do anything for Jesus, but the soul itself is still in a state of perversion. And so the soulish Christian is not involved so much in rebellion as in deception. Peter, when they came to arrest Jesus in the garden, had only one desire. And that was to defend his Lord. And he was willing, at that moment, to lay down his own life for that. And so he whipped out his sword and sliced off the ear of the high priest's servant.

So, his heart was good. He wanted the best for Jesus, but the methods that he used were not God's at all. Now, it was deception. It wasn't that Peter was, at that moment, rebelling against Jesus. It was at that moment that he was deceived into using the old normal methods that his soul had devised for years: for survival's sake, he decided to use that. Now therefore, it's the case, loved ones, of souliness of an independent soul -- not so much of a selfish will, but of an independent soul.

Now, this is what we would like to talk a little about tonight. Maybe I should just mention, brothers and sisters, since there are some of you who weren't here last Sunday, that the question here is that crisis experience of the cross. [He shows the diagram and indicates the backwards personality where there is a conflict in the will.] You have to come to a place in your life where you decide, "Lord I'm fed up with this inner conflict." Which occurs, by the way, just about there [He indicates the conscience in the spirit conflicting with the 'will' in the soul], because the spirit that is inside you is wanting to do what Jesus wants, but the soul and the body are utterly dominated by the world. And they have a direction coming this way. [On the diagram he shows arrows from the world in to the 'body, then into the soul, and then into the spirit.] And so the two forces meet: the lust of the flesh and the desires of the spirit meet, "to prevent you from doing what you would," so that you cry out, "The good that I would I cannot do and the evil I hate that's the very

thing I do.”

Now, if you're in that situation as a carnal Christian, what you need do is decide, “Am I willing to be crucified with Christ? Am I willing to have this old personality crucified with Jesus once and for all, so that no longer do I live this way but I live that way alone?” [He shows on diagram a cross over the personality with arrows coming in from the world to the body and in to the soul and in to the spirit then 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.] “Am I willing to depend on God only?”

Now, that's quite a big question, if you tie that down into details, because it does mean some very practical things. If you're willing to depend on God only it means that you have to be willing to accept whatever criticism may come from others, and yet just let God deal with it. You have to be willing to be downgraded and to be walked over by other people, and respond only as far as the Holy Spirit prompts you to respond. That doesn't mean you're an absolute doormat, because obviously there comes a time in Jesus' life that he has to throw over the tables of the money lenders. But the important thing is that you do need to come to a place where you are willing to respond only as Jesus will want you to respond -- not to respond with anger yourself just to get rid of the pressure, but be willing to stay under it as long as God wills you to stay under it. So it means being willing to die to your right to shake off persecution, or to shake off opposition when it comes, and instead to be willing to respond only as Jesus guides you.

It means the same for pleasure, the whole business of pleasure. We are just little puppies. You know that; we are! We'll do anything if we get an extra biscuit; we will! We'll do anything for an extra \$100 a month. And we'll, on the whole, do anything for a little bit of praise, if somebody just strokes us a little. We'll just beg like mad for the rest of the month. And so it means -- coming into a death to that, means dying to being at the mercy of other people's praises, and dying to the right to their praises, and dying to the right for them to be pleased with you, and being satisfied alone with God's pleasure.

So loved ones it does mean a lot of things. You see, why we get angry, why we get angry at home or in the office is because, either the children are getting on top of us, or the people around us are just steamrolling over us. And so we think, “I'll roar; I'll huff, and I'll puff, and I'll blow this house down. And they'll see what they're doing.” And so, that's what anger is. It's self saying, “I have a right not to be treated in this way. And if I get mad enough, I know I can scare them.” And so anger and bad temper is really based on our feeling that we have a right to be treated in a certain way, and we have rights not to be treated in certain ways. So it's the whole business of rights.

So a carnal Christian has always trouble with his rights. He always feels, “I have a right to be praised. I have a right to be looked up to.” And he could never be found on the cross. You'd never find him on the cross. You could never find him hanging on that cross as Jesus did, with the power to call a billion angels to his aid, with the power to strike everybody dead at that very moment, and still hanging on the cross. You never find a carnal Christian on the cross. He wouldn't bear that. He would feel, “I have a right not to be on this cross.”

So loved ones, a person who is a carnal Christian needs to deal with those things. Would you be willing to die to self with Jesus, because that's actually what happened to you on the cross? When Jesus died -- “Christ died. Therefore all died.” And if you are willing to die with him, he fills

you with his Holy Spirit and cleanses your heart, so your life becomes like that. [He shows on diagram again 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, it's maybe good just to mention that, because I think some of you might still wonder, "Well, what do I do if I'm back in that situation?" Well, loved ones, you need to deal with that chapter, Romans 6 and particularly Verse 11 where you remember, God says, "You've to reckon yourself to be dead indeed unto sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." "So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." That's the first step, the real belief and the willingness to believe that. It's not a matter of just believing in your head, but it's, "Are you willing?" The Greek word is 'logidzo' and it means, "Treat yourself as really dead."

I remember, in my life, when God said to me, "Would you be willing to take your place in Jesus on the cross?" And I said, "Lord, will you, through your Holy Spirit, show me what this would mean for me?" And it means different things for all of us. You know that, according to the age we are and according to the career we're in. But I know one of the things it meant for me was, "Would you be willing to be an apparent failure in the world's eyes, as Jesus was? Would you be willing to be a nothing, if it were for Jesus' glory?" And I remember that it was then I realized that believing is not a case of just a mental attitude, but it's a case of a willingness. "Consider yourselves..." means "Treat yourselves as really dead with Jesus."

And of course, you can only believe that when you're actually willing to be there. Do you see that? I used to say often to God, "Oh I believe it, Lord, and I want to believe it." But I wasn't willing to be there, so of course the belief was always being destroyed and torpedoed by my own real wishes underneath. And so the battle for me, was to come to a place where I was really willing to be crucified with Christ, and to die to self, and to live only for Jesus' glory whatever it would cost me, even if it cost life itself.

And so, that's the first step loved ones, and then the second step is in Romans 8:13, the day-by-day obedience to the Holy Spirit. Because the only way of course, for that to be made real in you, is through the kind of obedience -- instant obedience to the Holy Spirit, who alone can bring you onto the cross with Jesus. "For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live." And it's only by the Spirit, by obedience to the Spirit that you can do that.

And of course, many of us run in to real difficulties, because we come into the office the next day -- after having settled things with Jesus on the cross. And some secretary, or someone else makes some quick comment that shows what somebody else thinks of us, and it isn't very complimentary. And we know they shouldn't have said it anyway to us. But they say it, and suddenly we know it. And it's at that moment that we should immediately not do a thing. We should immediately look to the Holy Spirit and say, "Holy Spirit, I have given up my rights to control this life and to defend myself. What do you think? What do you think?" -- To look immediately to him and let him guide us. But usually it's at that moment we say, "Listen, there's no question about this. I mean, there's no problem with this. I don't need the Holy Spirit's help here. I can decide the way to respond to this myself." So it's usually the next day that we fail at the crucial moment to look to the Holy Spirit, whatever the cost. Because you see, the question is not whether it's right or wrong to bear it. That's only a bluff by Satan. He loves to bluff us, and get us into some debate. "This is an unreasonable thing to require you to bear this." We should not touch that. It's just his subtle tricks. We should immediately turn from him and say, "No, Holy Spirit, you alone can tell me what

to do.”

So loved ones, that’s what we’re talking about when we talk about the crisis experience of the cross. Now, in me, it was an instantaneous experience. The Greek tenses imply that. They are aorist tenses. Our old self was crucified at a moment in time, and it’s finished with. That’s the strength of the aorist tense in Greek. So most of us who have experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or being filled with the spirit, or being cleansed with the spirit, or being crucified with Christ, have experienced it in a moment.

If you say to me, “Well, does it occur just like that? Can it not be a process before it?” Yes, you can take several months dying, but there’s a moment when the last breath is breathed. There’s a moment when you’re dead. And the Holy Spirit witnesses to you that you’ve come to that place of full consecration. Now, that’s what we mean loved ones when we talk about the crisis experience of the cross.

Now, when you’re talking about souliness, you’re talking about the process experience of the cross. That’s the experience that Paul talks about when he says, “Bearing about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus.” Or it’s when Jesus says, “If any man would come after me let him deny himself daily and take up his cross and follow me.”

Now, there’s the daily cross. And you talk about the 'process cross' or the 'daily experience of the cross' when you deal with souliness. You can see why of course, because this inward life is a matter of choice. It’s a matter of the will. You chose to live from the world in or you chose to live from God out. That’s a matter of choice. That can be an instantaneous moment. It may take you a long time to seeing all that’s involved, but there comes a time when you’ve seen it all and you make your agreement with God. You say, “Lord, I know what I’m worth, and I give it to you.”

So that’s a matter of choice and you can see why that can be a crisis. But you can see loved ones, these functions here [He shows diagram again, and shows arrows coming in from the world to the body and in to the soul and in to the spirit.] have been developed over years, and years, and years. This is a question of process. These things have to be changed gradually over a period, probably of years. And that’s why it’s the process experience of the cross that you deal with when you deal with souliness.

Now loved ones, maybe I should just mention very briefly here that when you’re dealing with these souliness functions, what you’re dealing with is a heart that wants Jesus’ glory, but wants to bring it about in your way. In other words, it’s not that you have the desire of the old creation, but you’re still trying to use the life of the old creation. And you can readily see that the life that we have developed for the sake of existing in the world is a life of its own.

We get as good a degree as we can. Then with our minds we exchange it for the best opportunity at IBM, or 3M, or whatever corporation we’re going into, that we possibly can. And then we play the old game with the colleagues -- when they’re on our side -- with the rivals when they’re on the other side -- but we manipulate one against the other to gradually scramble to the top of the heap -- as far up the heap as we can get. And that’s the kind of life that many of us are trained to practice.

Now, do you see that’s a totally different approach to the approach that is needed when you come up to the walls of Jericho? You come to the walls of Jericho, if you’re going to use the old method

you're going to start looking around for some weak spot in those walls. Or, you're going to start bargaining off some of your cattle for some sticks of dynamite. Or, you're going to work out how your guys can get a big enough battering ram to go through part of the wall. But you're still going to use all these manipulated powers that you've used for years.

Now, you know the way the walls of Jericho came down. And you know the way lepers are healed -- by Jesus. And you know the way people's lives are changed by Jesus. And you and I know that it is by the power of God's Spirit coming through an ordinary man or woman. And it is not by that person figuring out how to knock down these walls themselves, or how to get across this Red Sea on their own power, or how to get this man's withered flesh cleaned up so that it will look healthy, or how to get this dead person to seem to be alive. It isn't that. It's obviously a whole direction that comes from God's Spirit that entails a whole different use of our mind and emotions.

I mean, people like Joshua, were not fools. They were no different from us. People like Moses were not dumb. They were like us; they had used the same methods for years that we have used. Suddenly they had to learn a whole new way. They had to listen to a voice of God that was telling them to walk around the walls seven times and to blow trumpets. They had to listen to a voice that told them to walk into the Red Sea -- walk into the Jordan even though the water wasn't moving back -- to walk right into it. They had to listen to a voice that was telling them, "Lay your hand on this withered leper's flesh, and then pray and the flesh will be healed." They had to operate in an entirely different way.

Now loved ones, that's what we have to come into ourselves. And the great problem with the bulk of Christendom at the moment is that many of us do want Jesus' glory, but we're working in an utterly soulish way to bring it about. And it's not simply the businessmen that we call in for our 'stewardship' campaigns. That's just a pretty obvious version of it. But it's all the other manipulative ways we have of trying to get people to talk about Jesus -- lots of little tricks we have to get them to talk about Jesus, to get them to read the right book. It's all using the powers of the soul to do God's work.

Now the Father has a completely different plan for us. And so, loved ones, it is quite a task that the Father has to begin to break these perverted powers of our souls in order to get them back to what they used to be and what he had originally made them to be. And it is a process experience.

Now, I'll just mention very, very briefly maybe how it takes place, because I would like to at least present some very definite teaching on that. Most of us are in trouble, because we don't even know when we're being soulish.

Some husbands realize it when there is a disagreement with their wives, and they say to the wife, "Alright, we have to settle this. We have to settle it now. Now, let's get down and let's talk this out. Let's not have any more cold wars, let's just talk this thing out, and you put your side forward and I put my side forward, and we'll sort it out." Three hours later they are near divorce. And so, many husbands realize, "Yeah, I was a bit soulish." And many of us could parallel the thing with our roommates, and our friends. Many of us realize after the event that there's something we didn't do right. Our desire was good enough, but there's some method we were wrong in using. And so we know the thing long after the event.

But loved ones, we don't know it at the moment. And the only way we will realize it is by the way that God has given us in his word. And you'll see it there in Hebrews 4:12. And that runs, "For

the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

Do you remember we shared that we're trying to talk tonight about whether we're living soulishly or spiritually, whether we're acting from the spirit or the soul? Loved ones, God's word is the source of our revelation, "For the word of God is living and active, sharp..." So sharp you see -- sharper than any two-edged sword -- that it can pierce to the actual division of soul and spirit. It can tell you when you're acting in the soul and when you're acting in the spirit. It can even pierce to the dividing of joints and marrow, because it discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart. "And before him no creature is hidden, but all are open and laid bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

So loved ones, the first step for those of us who sense we are living in some way soulishly, is to ask the Holy Spirit whose sword this book is of course -- the Holy Spirit is the one who created this book -- ask the Holy Spirit, "Will you, Holy Spirit, give me revelation through the word you have written and show me what the intentions and the desires of my heart are? And show me when I'm acting soulishly rather than acting from God's spirit -- when I'm using the power of my own personality, or the power of my own manipulative ability to bring things about, instead of following the directions of God himself." And the Holy Spirit will do that.

In other words, there are moments at home when even the best marriage counselor and the best psychologist would tell you to say something to your loved one. The Spirit of God is already working in her heart, or in his heart, and has a whole plan for the fullness of their salvation beginning to operate. And the Holy Spirit is saying, "Shut up. Just be quiet. Just be silent." But our souls are so active and so overdeveloped that they feel we have to do something. And the Holy Spirit is really saying, "Be quiet." And, loved ones, there are moments like that when more can be achieved by God's Spirit in your loved one's heart than you would ever achieve over 1,000 years.

And it's the same in our businesses that we run here, and in your businesses that you loved ones that run businesses, and in different jobs. So often, in our offices, far more would be worked by the Holy Spirit, far more would be created in loved ones' hearts, if we would play it by ear with the Holy Spirit, if we would listen to his directions instead of continuing to do what our great souls think are the wisest things to do. If we would just walk quietly with the Spirit of Jesus, and be directed by him, and stop this business of pointing out to him, "What good will that do?" We're so stupid, you know. But that's our attitude. We say, "What good would that do? Keeping quiet, being silent, how is she ever going to change unless I say something? How is the situation in the office ever going to change unless I do something about it?" And the Holy Spirit is quietly saying, "I have things already working that you are just going to blow apart unless you keep quiet, and keep believing me for it."

And often the Holy Spirit is saying to us, "All I want you to do is have faith in me. Don't help me! Please don't help me! Just have faith in me! Just -- your place is to exercise faith that I am working. And if you do that I'll be able to clear this up. And I'll tell you when to act! There'll be a time to act, but I'll tell you when it is." Loved ones, that's the kind of knowledge we need, moment-by-moment as we go through the day. And the Holy Spirit will give it to us if we spend time in his dear word each day in fellowship with God, and then ask the Holy Spirit and trust

him, "Holy Spirit, will you bring to my remembrance whatever word of God is in this book that will reveal to me when I am stepping in the wrong direction?"

So that's the first step, loved ones. It's a real belief in the Holy Spirit's ability to use the Word to bring that to you. Now, of course, it's not as easy as that because, when the Holy Spirit says, "Be quiet," we won't be quiet! We've been used to running off at the mouth just whenever we wanted to. And we feel that, "We can do these things. And we can clear this thing up. We understand this woman; we understand this guy; we can clear this up if we just get our sleeves up and get into it." And so there are strong powers of the soul that are so strong that the Bible says they have to be broken.

Really loved ones, your soul is hideously developed! Really! You think at times -- the tragedy is your will is virtually non-existent. With most of us our will is virtually non-existent! It's utterly dominated by the body and the soul! But many of us are either very strong 'mind people', or we're very strong 'emotional people'. And those strengths are powerful because they are our only weapon against the world, and our only weapon in our using the world, and abusing it. And so these powers have become very, very strong.

Those of us who are very 'emotional people' know how to use our emotions to get what we want. We know how to use our emotions to get things done. Those of us, who have very strong minds, know how to use our intellect to manipulate things the way we want. And so those powers immediately go into action every time we come to a need for action or crisis. They begin to turn, almost without our knowledge. That's the killer! The will is never in control unless we are walking by the Spirit. Do you realize that? It's periodically -- it grabs control at times. But it can only grab the control that the mind, the emotions, and ultimately the 'spirit of this world' will let it grab.

But normally the will is very, very weak. And the mind and emotions automatically and spontaneously operate by reflex reaction. And wouldn't you agree that that's the way the great number of us operate in the world? I mean we operate -- soulish people operate by external stimuli. "Am I going to like that person or not? He smiled, I like him. He frowned, I don't like him. Am I going to be happy this morning or not? The sun's shining; I'm happy. Am I going to be happy? Oh, it's cold, and wet, and miserable. I'm going to be miserable today." Most of us soulish people -- we operate by external stimuli all the time.

So you see what happens, loved ones: All this power and force come from the world -- hits our mind and emotions, and the dear little mind and emotions -- they just bounce right back! [He shows on the diagram the forces from the world coming up from the outside and hitting our 'soul' (mind, emotions and will).] It's a little reflex reaction. I don't know if you played billiards. We played billiards. It's maybe not a very saintly thing to play billiards. But we played a lot of billiards in Ireland. Do you know snooker? And you hit the white ball, and it hits a red ball and knocks it into the pocket. It's that kind of thing! It's just one ball hitting another --knocking it. That's the way we go! It comes this way, the world hits our emotions! Our emotions bounce back! The world hits our mind! Our mind bounces back!

That's about as shallow a life as most soulish people live! Now, do you see that that is very strongly developed loved ones? So it takes a tremendous break in power to break the power of those soulish functions, and to eventually bring them under the control of the Spirit. And so just as in this situation there was a daily obedience, so in this one, loved ones, there's a daily experience. And maybe you would look at it. It is so miserable that you'd better look at it and make sure it's

in God's word. 2 Corinthians 4:7-15. This is the kind of experience.

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, 'I believed, and so I spoke,' we too believe, and so we speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature," our soul, "is wasting away, our inner nature," our spirit, "is being renewed every day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, because we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.”

And particularly that Verse 16, I should make it down to 16, “So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature..." our outer man, that is the soul. God allows you to come into experiences as breaking as those that Paul is outlining. And as you come into them, those experiences gradually break down the powers of your soul. Those breaking experiences break these mighty powers. [He indicates the mind and emotions in the 'soul'.] Probably only a mum who has seen her son -- despite all her attempts at converting him -- go into drugs, and go into promiscuity, and then end up drying out in St. Mary's [a hospital in Minneapolis] -- only that mum has really probably come to the end of what she could do.

And yet, it's often that kind of breaking experience that God has to allow to come to us before he can destroy those manipulative powers of our souls. That's why the apostles could say, “Greet it as pure joy when you enter into various trials.” Because they knew that everything that comes to a child of God who wants to live a spiritual life is lovingly filtered through God's hands so that it is just the exact amount of difficulty, and trial, and affliction that will break the powers of that person's soul and bring them into a place where they at last have a soul that is submissive and is a good servant to their spirit. So that, finally they can come into a real ministry of Jesus' life.

But loved ones, until that happens, what most people see in soulish Christians is that great Christian, that great personality. Most people are preoccupied with the personality because it's the personality that has not been broken. Most people are preoccupied with either the person's goodness, or their braininess, or their cleverness, or their affection, or their emotion. But they only begin to see Jesus when that person begins to have the soulish powers within them broken, and their own personality begins to be transparent so that people begin to see Jesus right through them without seeing them at all.

And loved ones, that's what we need. And that's what the dear world needs. You know, so many of us who love Jesus are really just prostituting what he has given us. And we're still busy drawing attention to ourselves -- if not to ourselves, to our great churches; or if not to our great churches, to our great beliefs. But the world is not seeing much of Jesus through most of us. It's seeing a great deal of us, and just little glimpses of Jesus. And the reason is that many of us, though we're born of the Spirit have never been filled with the Holy Spirit, we're still living off the world. And those of us who have stopped living off the world, have stopped living a carnal

life, are still living soulish lives. And we're still trying to do God's work with our human abilities. And so what people see is a great work being done by human ability. So they glorify the great human ability.

Do you remember Abraham? You remember the war that was fought, and the kings wanted to give him some of the spoils. And he refused any of the spoils. He wanted all the glory to be God's. And he wanted the world to see that it was God that had made him wealthy, and rich, and prosperous, and not men. And it's really when we begin to come into that desire that Jesus only will be glorified, and that people will see him alone and not us, or our organization, or our own brilliance, or our own Christ likeness; it is only then that Jesus will begin to be lifted up. And then of course, the promise is tremendous, "I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto myself," and everybody will see and be judged and judge the beauty that they see."

So really our only task is to live Jesus up, by allowing him to be seen and not ourselves. Really, all we have to do, is to come fully into his cross with him. That's it. You can see how the witnessing systems are good -- the evangelizing, and the preaching, and all that. It's all right. It's good. I suppose it has to be. But it's all pretty irrelevant, really. What the world wants to see is Jesus in the flesh. And God has promised, when they see Jesus, then they will be able to decide for or against God. And our only job here on earth is to allow Jesus to live in us, freely, and be seen by them.

And that's a beautiful task we have. We don't have to save the world. We don't have to witness to everybody. We don't have to evangelize everybody. We have to let Jesus live in us, and then all those things will come about, you see. But the beautiful thing is, then we will witness; we will evangelize; we will save. But it'll be him doing it through us. We'll be acting; we'll be operating. But it will be in response to his directions, and there will be a beauty about it. And of course, that's what your dear colleagues and my colleagues want to see. The loved ones that I work with during this coming week, that's what they want to see. And that's what your friends and my friends want to see. "Sir, we would see Jesus."

Let us pray. Dear Father, we know our own hearts yearn for Jesus. It's good to have all the preachers, and the ministers, and the evangelists, but we yearn for a glimpse of ultimate truth. And we see how much mileage we've got in our lives out of that brief glimpse. And Lord we realize that's what our friends, and our dear wives, and husbands, and our children, and our colleagues -- that's what they need. Lord we often have felt that our words have been too many, that our actions have been too confused, and there has been too much of 'us' in them. And Lord we realize that when Jesus is seen through us, there's a peace and quiet that achieves far more than all our activity can.

And so dear Father, we would give ourselves to you now and ask you, by your Holy Spirit, to bring us through to whatever state we need to be in. Father, if there are loved ones here tonight who aren't born of the Spirit, will you, by your Holy Spirit, reveal to them the need to truly confess and repent of those sins and to give their lives to Jesus? If there are loved ones among us who are carnal Christians, living defeated lives, will you, Holy Spirit, bring us onto the cross where we have been placed by God? Will you bring us into that, in reality, in our own lives?

Will you Holy Spirit, show us what it means to reckon ourselves to be dead, and what it means, day-by-day, to submit to you, and put to death the deeds of the body, by the Holy Spirit? Then Lord, if there are those of us who are soulish Christians, Holy Spirit, we would ask you by your

word that you wrote in the Bible, to give us light, and discernment, and revelation so that we will perceive when we are soulish and when we are spiritual. And then Lord, we would pray what that lady, Jessie Penn Lewis, prayed, "Bring us into pure life whatever it costs. We give you leave to bring whatever afflictions, or allow whatever trials you deem necessary to come to us, so that these mighty souls of ours will be broken and remolded so that they can be servants and expressions of the Spirit of Jesus in us."

So Father, we would give ourselves to you as a people, that we may be among those who make it easier for loved ones to believe in Jesus, because they've seen him in us -- because we're epistles read and seen by all men.

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 ever more. Amen.