

2016-11-12

Knowing your spirit #1

Hi all,

Barb and I were visiting her grandmother, who at nearly 90 years old lived in a nursing home, having moved there from the farm that had been in their family since the middle 1800's. She had reached the point she couldn't care for it and became confined to a wheelchair, so a nursing home in town near Barb's family was where she moved.

Barb and I were just teenagers at the time, but loved talking to her about the Lord and the farm and faith and her younger days, when her grandmother said something that has stayed with us all these years:

"Inside I still feel like that 17 year old girl running through the orchard on the farm, but this body has changed around me."

Man's unchanging spirit

Her grandmother's observation is one all adults can make. We have grown physically, mentally, and experientially through the years, but inside we still feel like we did years or even decades ago. Her grandmother at age 90 still felt like a teenager running through the family orchard as a 17 year old, but her body changed around her. Barb ran through that same orchard at about age 9 and has wonderful memories of 'the farm'. But today we would walk, not run through that orchard if it still existed (It doesn't).

For me I think back to being able to run up and down a basketball court for hours when I was 17, but I'm not able to jump as high nor change direction as quickly as I used to - and don't even ask me to dunk a basketball now. Inside I'm the same, but this body has changed around me.

This proves...

This observation about the body changing around us while inside we are still the same person and feel inside as we did decades ago, shows us we don't need these earth-bodies to live. Our spirit man doesn't need the physical body to live, for if it did our spirit would age and grow old parallel to the reduced physical abilities that come with aging. If so, our spirit man would also endure things like failing spiritual eyesight and spiritual ability to hear the Lord, have less spiritual endurance and even less spiritual memory, so our spirit man would suffer the same fate - but it doesn't.

There is no escaping it; Our bodies are of the earth and age accordingly. But our spirits did not come from this earth, and therefore don't need the earth-body to live.

Unchanging

This observation that inside we are the same people we were when we were children, unchanged but for physical, mental, and experiential development, proves we are eternal. That we are unchanged over 20, 30, 40 and 50 years and more, scientifically speaking, we must therefore conclude we will continue to be the same 75, 100, 500, 1000, 10,000 years or more from now. The only thing that has changed is our experiences while in the physical world. Inside we remain the same.

Paul said it this way: "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, inwardly we are renewed day by day....so we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but what is unseen, since that which is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." II Corinthians 4:16-18

Many Christian don't know how to identify nor live from their spirit

In fact, my series offered above is largely about identifying your spirit and how to have a relationship with the Father and Lord on a Holy Spirit to human spirit basis.

Mentioning in this space that inside we feel the same as we did decades ago, just our bodies have changed around us, that starts the process. A person looks down inside themselves to their 'core'.

You notice your spirit when you say something wrong and you feel grieved down inside you. Your mind notices that down inside you. It is where as is described in popular culture, a person feels dirty

after a sexual encounter that in their mind they know was wrong. That dirty feeling, that grievance is your spirit.

When I sought the Baptism with the Holy Spirit and the initial evidence as seen in Acts of speaking in tongues, I so filled my head with books and the opinions of others I found it difficult to know where and what my spirit-man was. I was approaching the baptism with the Spirit intellectually, trying to find or initiate the words in my mind, and it was only our good friend, Janny, who taught me how to focus down inside in my spirit.

Paul said, "When I pray in tongues (an unlearned language) my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful.."

Your spirit is that part of you that is eternal that your body has grown and changed and aged around. Your spirit is noticed when your mind shifts its attention down inside when you notice something you said 'grieved' you, where you sense a premonition about something bad about to happen, and where you sense a joy some morning and in your mind you wonder what your spirit man knows that is so good.

Consider your spirit man, which combined with your soul is eternal and doesn't need this earth-body to live. The Bible speaks of a day when believers will receive bodies made of heavenly material, bodies which will never age just like our spirit never ages...what a day...more next week, blessings,

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2016-11-19

Knowing your spirit #2

Hi all,
Roughly 50 years after Constantine legalized Christianity a man named Augustine rose in influence over the church - St. Augustine (354-430AD). The impact of his writings impact all the way to our time in 2 areas relevant for today's Thoughts'.

Original sin and infant baptism

Augustine started the the belief in 'original sin', as well as the related practice of water baptizing infants. This is how it happened:

Augustine believed that because Adam and Eve sinned it caused death to come to their spirit man, so every person is born with a spiritually dark or 'dead' spirit. St. Augustine taught original sin could only be removed by water baptism, and without water baptism a person could not get to heaven, even infants and young children.

Infant mortality was very high in those days, between 25% and 50% of babies died before age 1. Often a baby was not given a name until they reached 1 year of age; how uncertain was their survival. So the practice of water baptizing infants began, often just moments after their birth. And that is why some denominations baptize babies to this day - a tradition over 1500 years old.

American hero Paul Revere is reported to have taken his newborn son, Isannah (That is the correct spelling), Sarah and Paul's 8th child, to be baptized immediately after his birth, but unfortunately neither Isannah nor Sarah survived. (Paul remarried Rachel (Walker), and they had 8 children, for a total of 16 children between Sarah and Rachel, 5 of whom died in infancy)

Though 'original sin' and infant baptism was rejected by most Protestants for bring unscriptural, the error that babies are born 'spiritually dead' is widely held today by believers of all backgrounds in large part perhaps, because they never thought it through.

They just say "Babies go to heaven because they never did anything wrong" while not realizing the teaching of original sin says a baby is born spiritually dead, so cannot enter heaven even though they have never sinned.

What the Bible says

Fortunately Bible does not teach original sin. It teaches we are all born as Adam and Eve were originally created, alive to God, like them able to walk and talk with Him, and also like them, having not yet chosen which 'tree' from which they will eat.

Consider that Adam and Eve were so innocent as they walked with the Lord in the Garden that they had no idea they were naked. Incredibly smart, yet as innocent as toddlers - and that is how we can understand their spiritual condition.

What age is a person who doesn't know nor care if they are naked? What age is a person who naturally (often) sees angels, Jesus, and seems so sensitive to the things of God? The answer is small children - and like Adam and Eve who were created by God and so could move in His realm, so too can small children move in the things of God for they are **created** spiritually alive. But like us all, they too must at some point decide between good and evil, right and wrong, justice or injustice. Physical and personality traits are handed down parent to parent, but the Father alone is the creator and Father of spirits:

"We were subject to the fathers of the flesh who corrected us (according to the flesh), shall we not also be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?" Hebrews 12:9

"This what the Lord says, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundation of the earth, and who forms the spirit of man within him." Zechariah 12:1

"This is what the Lord God says, who created the heavens and stretched them out; He that spreads forth the earth and all (the life) that comes out of it. He who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk on it." Isaiah 42:5

"You hide your face and they are troubled; you take away their breath and they die and return to the dust. You send forth your Spirit and they are created, and you renew the face of the earth." Psalm 104:29-30

"The Spirit of God made me; and the breath (Spirit) of the Almighty has given me life." Job 33:4

These are just a few scriptures that teach us God the Father created our spirit man - He is the Father of spirits.

Think of it this way

"God (Father) is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." I John 1:5

"Do not be deceived brothers and sisters, every good and every perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights, in whom there is no variation nor changing of His character, and of His own will He begat us as a kind of first fruits of His creation..." James 1:16-18

The Bible says we are created by Him, and He can only create life. He cannot create a human being with the nature of Satan in his spirit. It isn't just that babies and small children have committed no sin, but also that they were created alive to God - and as such may operate in His realm and go to Him if they die prematurely.

This is the spark of life at conception. No matter under what circumstances you were conceived, we can say what is bound or loosed on earth is bound or loosed in heaven, so that when that egg and sperm are 'loosed' to conceive on earth, the Father is loosed to impart a spirit direct from Him. That means no matter the circumstance, the Father has a plan, provision, and grace for that child.

Consider also...and then why this is important

Paul spoke of his own experience in Romans 7 when he was discussing the place of the law - which brought the knowledge of good and evil, right and wrong. In Jewish culture of the day, a child would be able to recite by heart Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy by about age 5. That knowledge of the law brought the knowledge of good and evil. Paul said in Romans 7:

"Is the law sin? No! For I would did not know lust until the law said 'Do not covet! So the law was ordained to show life, but it brought me the knowledge of sin. By means of the commandment sin found its chance to work all manner of desire and sin in me. Apart from the law, sin was dead. For I was (spiritually) alive before I knew the law, but the law came and sin came to life and I died (spiritually). Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, killed me." v7-11

Seeing this in others, who chose the wrong 'tree'

Speaking of those who see God in creation but harden themselves: "For although they knew God, they were not thankful nor glorified Him as God, so their thinking became vain in their imaginations, and **their foolish heart was darkened.**" Romans 1:21

Notice - these were people alive to God and saw Him in nature, but chose not to acknowledge Him so their heart became darkened. If they had been born in original sin, they would have been born with 'dark hearts' already and Paul's book of Romans would be in error.

Fortunately you and I and every person were born alive to God, able to walk with Him when we were young, until the knowledge of good and evil came to us, and we had to choose life or death. Most of us chose death and had to be born again - some children go right to Life. Some adults who are mentally unable to understand, remain spiritually alive to God.

Paul mentioned people in Ephesians 4:17-20 who 'have their understanding darkened' and 'are past feeling' who had so turned from God that they can no longer feel that grievance in their spirit and conscience when they sin, and are even greedy to do the sin.

A baby's spirit is created by the Father, alive to Him, able to function in His realm and if a tragedy occurs from miscarriage to abortion to untimely death, they go to heaven and grow up to adulthood there. My point is for us to know our spirit man, to understand that the Father is the Father of spirits, has recreated the believer's spirit, and communicates with us Spirit to spirit - next week, enlightenment and the process by which He starts to dawn on us...until then, blessings,

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2016-11-26

Knowing your spirit #3

Hi all,

In high school my friend Janny would tell me about the Lord, and then I went on dates with Barb and would tell her what Janny told me. It wasn't long before I believed and gave my life to the Lord, as I had watched many answered prayers Janny and her boyfriend (and future husband) received, and knew somehow in my heart all she had told me about the Lord was true.

But Barb and I had many, many dates over the course of a few months talking through the merits of Jesus and my new-found born again state of existence. Barb's home life was not a happy one and she never has made decisions lightly nor quickly.

Looking back we might say 'the Lord was working on her heart' those months before she got to the point she was willing to decide for Christ. In fact, it wasn't until her lowest point in life that she called out to the Lord saying in part, "God, if you're real like John says you are, then you better show up or...." and at that point as she describes it, a warmth and peace saturated her very being like a liquid blanket of love falling directly on her - love she had never known swept over her.

Before you were born again...

That decision for Jesus we made as 16 year olds was quicker for me than her, but it was still a process for us both. The decision was arrived at only after discussion, thought, and seeing other's prayers answered. The Bible describes this process as 'enlightenment'.

Different words are used in the New Testament to describe the process by which divine revelation is shown a person, including 'open the eyes of your understanding', 'enlightened', 'opened their understanding', 'spiritual wisdom', 'spiritually discerned', to name a few. *Ephesians 1:18, Hebrews 4:4, Luke 24:45, Ephesians 1:17, Colossians 1:9, I Corinthians 2:14-16

You were first 'enlightened' in your spirit man. That process is when your mind realizes something else is happening deep in your spirit - that you realize you must do something about the question of Jesus.

Jesus said it this way: "...everyone who sees the Son, and believes on Him, will have everlasting life..." and "...everyone who has heard, and learned of the Father, comes to Me." John 6:40, 45

First we see the Son, and then we believe. First we learn of the Father even though most of the time we never realize it is the Father God dealing with us way down deep in our hearts - our spirit man - and then we come to Jesus.

When Peter exclaimed after hearing everyone's opinions about Jesus; "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!", Jesus said flesh and blood - natural means- didn't reveal that to him, but it was the Father in heaven revealing it. Did Peter realize it was the Father showing him who Jesus was? The fact Jesus had to tell him it was the Father, makes me think Peter didn't know it at the time.

Paul's prayers always involved the request for revelation, which is another word for enlightenment, as in "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, that the eyes of your understanding would be enlightened, and you would know the hope of His calling..." Ephesians 1:17-18

Know your spirit

For people who have difficulty with their prayer language, I suggest thinking back to that time of enlightenment before you knew the Lord - what stirred down inside you? Realizing your mind notices things happening down inside you, feelings, sensations, even thoughts and ideas flowing from your spirit recognized in the mind as quiet suggestions your mind 'picks up on', is key.

We live in such a cerebral world, an emotional world, people don't think through what happens when our mind notices something down deep in our spirit. This is what I'm describing. Learn to recognize when your thoughts are picking up what your spirit is sensing - you know it already, like when you argue with the Lord about something. He isn't in your mind, but in your spirit, and you are weighing whether to go with what you feel you should do vs what your mind is telling you. Taking the step of faith to trust what you sense in your spirit is a key first step opening the door to a new way of life.

Think of your mind as the middle point of a teeter totter with your spirit on one end and your body on the opposite end. Your mind can shift attention outward to the body and natural senses, and can look the other way down inside you to your spirit man and what it senses. Your mind can argue against either one - your body wants to go one way but your mind overrules it, or your spirit wants to go one way and your mind overrules it. Learn to agree with your spirit, end the argument, take the step of faith. Hebrews 5:14 says it is by reason of use (trial and error) that we train our senses to discern between good and evil. It doesn't just happen to you, you must live it and walk it out.

My experience is most Christians don't know how to flow in worship (or prayer) out of their spirit. The proof is when I'm leading a meeting and I have the music stop or go into the background and I ask people just to worship - and there is silence. I spend a lot of time in meetings teaching people how to flow out of their spirits - and when they do a whole new world opens up - the Lord opens their eyes to His realm, they feel and sense things they never have before. But this is a way of life, flowing in worship, in prayer, in pure motivation of love towards others - with no other strings attached than wanting them to grow in Christ.

Practice by worshipping on your own, just you and the Lord. Do so not by putting on a cd, but just get in touch with the thankfulness down in your heart you feel, the love you feel, the appreciation you feel to the Father and Lord for saving you - then once in touch with how you really feel about your salvation, express that in words - put that love and appreciation and thankfulness into words and tell Him. That is pulling from your spirit man out your soul using your body - spirit to soul to body in the divine flow of life.

Jesus said in John 4:24 the Father is seeking those who will worship Him in spirit and truth. The Greek word 'worship' is proskuneo, 'pros' means 'toward' and 'kuneo' means 'to kiss'. Literally, worship is 'give a kiss to the Father'. You can't do that with the mind wandering, singing beautiful lyrics outwardly while your mind wanders about whether you turned the light over the sink off before you left the house. Spend time on your own, get in touch with yourself deep down inside as to why you appreciate and are thankful for being saved, and then with your mind focused on forming those feelings into words, speak them out.

Walk through your daily life being aware of your spirit man by switching your attention from the outward things happening to inside, for instance to see how what the boss says feels in your spirit, how what the co-worker says, what the neighbor says. Often there is no feeling, but when someone does say something that is from God for you, whether they are aware or not, it will cause a surge of excitement or revelation in your spirit that your mind will notice - that is your spirit. When you open your mouth to hurt another person or exalt yourself and your mind notices you feel grieved down inside - that is your spirit. Live by switching attention continually back and forth between the natural senses and your spirit man's senses...a whole new realm awaits.

New subject next week, until then, blessings!
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