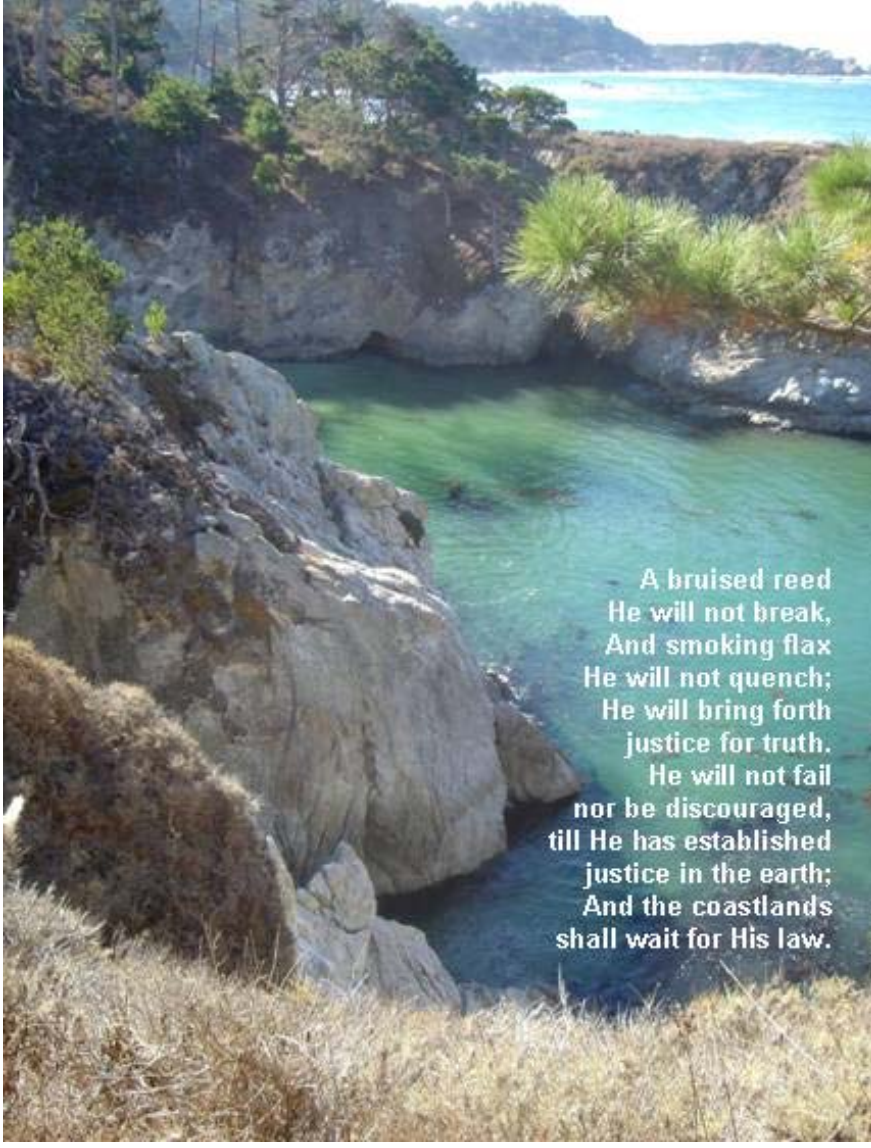


You're of no earthly value unless you're...

# Heavenly Minded

Vol 4 Iss 10



A bruised reed  
He will not break,  
And smoking flax  
He will not quench;  
He will bring forth  
justice for truth.  
He will not fail  
nor be discouraged,  
till He has established  
justice in the earth;  
And the coastlands  
shall wait for His law.

## ***In this issue...***

Jesus-like    The Enemy Within    Mother's Arms

## ***Dear Friends,***

Fundamentally, Christianity involves a dramatic change, doesn't it? Intellectually accepting that, we naturally try to 'be good'. We think, 'Being good is being like Jesus, right?' Hmmm. But, that isn't the Spirit-led change process, is it? Actually, when it finally begins to sink in that Christ is less interested in us trying to be 'good' people than in simply following Him, the change in our lives becomes radical and obvious. It's the cart and horse issue.

In trying to be good, trying to be righteous, we inevitably pollute and denigrate the Gospel because we pick and choose what's really, really important. Inevitably, we even 'culturalize' it. In America – 'we don't drink and we don't chew and we look down on those that do'. But, the harder we try, the more frustrated we can become because it is beyond us, way beyond us. You see, the kingdom of heaven is not political in nature. The yoke-fellow of Christ is a cross bearer far more than a cross wearer. The grace of God does not allow for the conforming of the Gospel to support our definitions of righteousness regardless of national, regional or personal morals. To the contrary, we are to be conforming to the Gospel.

And it is a radical message, as well as a really radical conformation -- too radical for the world; too radical for the natural man. Of course, radical Christianity is a redundant descriptive just as lukewarm Christianity is an oxymoron. Following Him doesn't mean we need to be Rambo-like believers, rather, we need to be Jesus-like believers. May God bless each of us with the grace to be more like Him.

*In Christ's Love,                      John and Darlene Dickey*



*The Word became flesh  
and made his dwelling  
among us. We have seen  
his glory, the glory of  
the One and Only, who  
came from the Father,  
full of grace and truth.*

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**Precious in His Sight**  
by Greg Olson

The goal of HM is to encourage our readers to "Set your minds on things above..." and thereby to be the greater and more effective witness to Christ. Articles may be shared freely and reproduced but only in their entirety. Comments and suggestions are always welcome. God bless you!

# Jesus-like

A sudden gale-force wind ripped across the water, transforming the small sea within a matter of minutes into a crazy undulating nightmare of waves which broke over their boat like giant hands pushing, lifting, dashing and drowning. Initially, the men on board scrambled in semi orderly fashion to lower the sail, secure equipment and bail with anything that could hold water. Quite quickly though, it was clear that they were losing the battle and that the ship was in grave danger of being overwhelmed by the stormy waters and biting winds.

With the small vessel pitching in every conceivable direction it was a miracle no one was washed overboard, but all were becoming frantic and were in terror of perishing. Chaos and fear now gripped their hearts. The mountainous waves crashed over the boat filling it with water. Yet one man in the stern seemed oblivious to the whole debacle. As though detached from the crisis, He slept gently and apparently peacefully upon a cushion.

Some of those nearby woke Him wailing, "Master, save us!!" and, "Don't you care that we are perishing?!"



You all know the story. Perhaps you know their situation.

They knew, somehow, that Jesus could save them but His seeming separation from the fierceness of their dilemma gave rise to their cry, "Don't you care...?!"

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The prisoner in Herod's filthy dungeon had lived arguably the most righteous life of Old Testament times with a devotion to God that impressed even the most dedicated of the religious elite. When he called on people to repent, he did it with genuine authority and the power of a separated life; he was a true Nazarite. In fact, he was so spiritually minded as to be rumored to be the Messiah or 'the Prophet' or Elijah.

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*Rembrandt*  
So, when he sent his followers to Jesus with the simple question, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" he undoubtedly expected a straightforward answer. Instead, Christ replied, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: the blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them." And knowing the thoughts of every man's heart, even one as righteous as John's,

He added, "And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

You all know the story. Perhaps you know his situation.

Earlier, John had specifically pointed out Jesus with the words, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me'.... I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him... I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

He knew Jesus was the Messiah, the One who would save Israel, but His actions were incongruous with those John expected. Thus, the Lord declared that he is blessed, "who is not offended because of Me."

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So sick he could not rise from bed, his sisters and friends feared for his life. They bustled about the home hoping to find something to distract him from his illness. 'Perhaps a bit of his favorite food' thought one or 'some encouraging word from the Teacher' thought another. They sent urgent, pleading words to the Master to come.

Hours and then days passed. No medical help, no relief for his pain, no sleep, no more tears and no Jesus. Where was He?? Finally, like the crescendo of a terrible symphony of sorrow, the sisters' wailing announced their dear brother's death. The bustling stopped. Everything stopped.

Amid the numbing shock and dashed hopes which followed, Mary and Martha fumbled with their daily chores. Others assisted with the burial duties and shared in the ceremonial weeping most of which was real for Lazarus was well loved by

many. Family and friends laid him in a tomb and rolled a large stone before its opening. The ordeal was ending or was it just beginning? And still no Jesus.

Four days had passed when running excited neighbors announced to all that He was coming – the Teacher and His followers had finally arrived. Martha was outside and found the strength to approach Him. "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

What was she thinking? Perhaps, He would pray for her brother's soul. Perhaps, He could take away their gnawing pain of grief. Perhaps, He could find someone to come and help provide for them as she and her sister were now alone.

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."  
Comforting words. Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

You know the story. Perhaps, you can identify with the situation. She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." Then she ran to her sister. Mary was the sensitive one; these words were perhaps too 'heavy' for Martha to handle alone. They had never doubted that Jesus



was the Messiah, but their brother's agony and death had put a huge valley of darkness and despair between them and their Lord. Why hadn't He come earlier??

Then, when Mary came to where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "*Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.*" She was weeping profusely as she echoed her sister's crushing disappointment. Everyone was weeping. Jesus wept.

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Jesus Christ – Master, Creator, Messiah and Author of the unexpected.

*"For My thoughts are not your thoughts,*

*Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD.*

*"For as the heavens are higher than the earth,*

*So are My ways higher than your ways,*

*And My thoughts than your thoughts."*

Isa 55:8,9

Can you see the common threads in each of these situations? First, these people were followers, fellow servants and friends of Christ. They had good reason to expect His help, His answer and His presence. Second, because of their relationship, they had expectations of Him specifically pertaining to what He would/should do. Third, His behavior was radically different than what they supposed.

Upon the stormy Galilean waters, facing disaster, the disciples perceived that He didn't care. They clearly had confidence that He could do something to help. That's why they asked – perhaps they expected Him to

bail water or take charge and calm their chaos. This is the case when we face fearful situations without faith. The natural man within us can look to Jesus if you would for help but will at the same time frame that anticipated help within 'natural' parameters. The followers of Christ are 'naturally' inclined to underestimate Him. We also misjudge Him as disinterested because He doesn't share our fears.

But He said to them, "*Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"*

With open jaws, bulging eyes and perhaps nervous knees, they watched as the natural elements over which the natural man has no control submitted to the Lord of creation.

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Dungeons are dark places – no restrooms, no microwaves and no cable TV. Seriously, they are generally the deepest pit available with an abundance of whatever naturally seeks the lowest hole. Dear John who had lived the 'cleanest' life possible for a sinful man was caged in a very dirty place.

To answer his question, Jesus pointed John back to the scripture and required him to base his faith on all that it said about the Messiah, not just the part(s) that he desired or expected. It was an answer but probably not the one he expected.

In his wonderful book, "The Prisoner in the Third Cell" author Gene Edwards describes what may have been in Christ's mind: "*Never before in all his thirty-one years, nor in all his preexistence in eternity, had he ever longed so intensely to answer the cry and the question of someone struggling to understand the mysterious ways of his God.*"

*"If ever there was a time for him to give a clear answer, if ever there was a person to whom he should speak clearly, surely the time was now and the person, John. If any*

*man ever lived who had a right to have an explanation given to him, that man was his own flesh and blood, his only cousin."*

*"John, your pain is great. I feel it. Tonight you so desperately need to understand me, to fathom my ways, to peer into the riddle of my sovereignty. Your heart is breaking. But, John, you are not the first to have this need. You are but one in a long train of humankind stretching across all the centuries of man who have called out to me with questions and doubts. You are but one voice among so many who wonder, who agonize over my ways."*

*"A day like that which awaited John awaits us all. It is unavoidable because every believer imagines his God to be a certain way, and is quite sure his Lord will do certain things under certain conditions. But your Lord is never quite what you imagined Him to be."*

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*"Take away the stone."* The command came with such authority that He didn't need to repeat it.

*Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."* Perhaps she thought He wanted to see the body one last time. In any event, she couldn't conceive of what was about to happen. Grief and disappointment are very strong influences in the life of anyone. It is my own experience that such factors tend to challenge our very trust and faith. The natural man puts the possibility of divine intervention in the past or the future. The 'now' can beat upon the soul like a deafening and relentless strobe. But Jesus understands. He understood Martha – she wasn't 'hearing Him'.

*He said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go." (emphasis added)*

Lazarus heard Him.

Oh, how we need to let this sink in. We continually tend to underestimate our Lord because He doesn't do things our way or

according to our desire. Abraham underestimated Him and wound up with a child God never considered his son. David underestimated Him and woefully wailed that someday King Saul would kill him. Thomas underestimated Him and doubted His resurrection. You see, even with believers, the natural man, which strives continually to direct our lives, is a chronic failure in estimating God. There simply is no estimating Him. And so, that then leads us to a fundamental question.

Gene Edwards put it this way --  
"You have now come face to face

*with a God whom you do not fully understand. You have met a God who has not lived up to your expectations. Every believer must come to grips with a God who did not do things quite the way it was expected."*

*"You are going to get to know your Lord by faith or you will not know Him at all. Faith in Him, trust that is in Him...not in His ways."*

*"The question is not, "Why is God doing this? Why is He like this?" The question is not "Why does He not answer me?" The question is not, "I need Him desperately, why does He not come rescue me?" The question is not, "Why did God allow this tragedy to happen to me, to my children, to my wife, to my husband, to my family?" Nor is it, "Why does God allow injustices?"*

*"The question before the house is this: "Will you follow a God you do not understand? Will you follow a God who does not live up to your expectations?"*

Clearly, His ways are not our natural ways and yet He tells us to follow Him.

(See Mat 4:19; 8:22; 9:9; 10:38; 16:24) Our Lord knows that's not 'falling off a log' easy. To the contrary, it can be extremely difficult. Even Jesus petitioned the Father to change the plan of salvation, if possible, in the Garden of Gethsemane (see Mat 26:39; Mk 14:35). Following 'the plan' of God even when you want God to change it is Jesus-like.

True peace in the midst of a stormy tumult is Jesus-like. Trusting God, taking no offense, even when He doesn't do things the way we thought He would/should is Jesus-like. Listening, that is hearing God and thus doing what He directs on His timetable as well as knowing, truly knowing He hears us – this is Jesus-like.

The time is short and the world around us is in an exponential decay. Things are 'stormy', dark and dungeon-like and there's plenty of grief to go around. However, regardless of circumstances, God's glorious plan is coming to pass – nothing can stop it. As with the disciples, with John and with Mary and Martha, His message is still, "have faith". For as we follow, we absolutely will see far, far greater things than we ever imagined or expected.

Meanwhile, may we, in Jesus-like fashion, burn radically bright in these last days, and knowing that His ways are so much higher than ours, may we trust our Savior – know His word, obey His voice and follow.

## *The Enemy Within*

*Excerpts from Ray Steadman's "Authentic Christianity"*

When Moses brought the Ten Commandments down from the mountain, he read them to the people. Their immediate response was: "All that God says, we will do." The confidence and pride of the flesh rose up to say, "We've got what it takes to do everything you say, God. Don't worry about us. We are your faithful people, and whatever you say, we will do." The truth was, of course, that before the day was over they had broken all ten of the commandments. They knew it, but they didn't want anyone else to know. So they put up a facade. They covered over their failure with religious ritual and convinced themselves that the ritual was all God wanted. That pride which would not admit failure was the veil that hid the end of the fading glory. They could not see the death that was waiting at the end. And they could not feel the frustration and defeat that would be theirs when the flesh had finished its fatal work.

Fifteen hundred years after Moses, Paul found the same veil at work in Israel. The Jews of his day made the same response to the demands of the law as their forefathers had made at Mt. Sinai: "All that you say, we will do!" Now, two thousand years after Paul the same phenomenon is occurring. When some demand is made upon the natural life, its response is, "All right, I'll do it," or at least, "I'll try." Even in Christians, the confidence that they can do something for God blinds their eyes to the end of the fading glory. They believe that something good can be accomplished if they just give it the old college try. So

today that same veil remains unlifted.

### **False fronts**

Veils come in many forms today, but they are always essentially the same: An image or front we project to others, and behind which we hide our real selves. They are always, therefore, a form of pride and hypocrisy. We don't want people to see our fading glory. Actually, we are reluctant to admit it has happened even to ourselves. And by wearing our veils long enough there is great danger that we will actually begin to believe that we are the kind of people we want everyone to believe we are. Then our hypocrisy becomes unnoticed by us and its perpetuation is assured. This is that subtle deceitfulness of the heart which Jeremiah saw so clearly and lamented: "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).

Yes, the veils we employ are unbelievably varied. Pride has a thousand faces. It is a master of disguise. C. S. Lewis has rightly said, *There is one vice of which no man in the world is free; which everyone in the world loathes when he sees it in someone else; and of which hardly any people, except Christians, ever imagine that they are guilty themselves. . . . There is no fault which makes a man more unpopular, and no fault which we are more unconscious of in ourselves. And the more we have it ourselves, the more we dislike it in others. The vice I am talking of is Pride or Self-Conceit; and the virtue opposite to it, in Christian morals, is called Humility (Mere Christianity , p. 106).*

Yet despite the unpopularity which pride creates for us, these innocent-seeming veils are so necessary to

our ego support that we invent many clever ways to preserve them. One is to have a "double entry" system of names. When a form of pride appears in others, we have one name for it; when the same thing appears in us, we have a nicer name for it. Others have prejudices; we have convictions. Others are conceited; we have self-respect. Others garishly keep up with the Joneses; we simply try to get ahead. Others blow up, or lose their tempers; we are seized with righteous indignation.

C. S. Lewis suggests that only Christians become aware of pride in themselves. Certainly it is true that most non-Christians, if they see pride in themselves at all, regard it as a virtue rather than a vice. But unfortunately, being a Christian does not guarantee easy recognition of all forms of pride. Christians are particularly susceptible to donning certain veils, especially those which appear to be forms of Christian virtue.

Take false modesty, for example. I have long ago learned that when I hear some Christian say, "I'm only trying to serve the Lord in my own humble way," I'm probably talking to the proudest person in six counties! St. Jerome warned: "Beware of the pride of humility." I once heard of a congregation that gave its pastor a medal for humility--then took it away because he wore it! True humility, of course, is never aware of itself. It is most noteworthy that the greatest saints have been most aware of their pride. And the truly humble person would never see this virtue in himself. Any degree of pious cant is a dead giveaway of the presence of towering pride.

### **Veils Christians wear**

Then there is self-righteousness. This is a particularly noxious form of Christian pride. It seizes upon some

biblical standard of conduct and takes pride in its own ability to measure up outwardly while conveniently overlooking any failure of the inner or thought life to conform. The end result is a smug, patronizing, and even nasty attitude toward anyone who does not meet the standard. This is the sin Jesus struck at most forcibly. He exposed it in the Pharisees and said that even the adulterers and the extortioners would enter the kingdom of heaven before them. It is the sin of the crusader who habitually mounts a white horse and rides out to combat any form of evil which he considers reprehensible.

Self-righteousness is also the sin of the person who nags another, for the nagger is focusing upon a single point of conduct and ignores the areas in his or her own life where a similar failure is occurring. Instinctively, we retreat behind this veil whenever failure or weakness is exposed in us. ("I may be weak there, but at least I don't do such-and-such.") We keep self-righteous veils always close at hand so they can be put on quickly to keep others from seeing the end of the fading glory.

Another common Christian veil is sensitivity or touchiness. Persons who are touchy or excessively sensitive are easily hurt by the words or actions of others. They must be handled with kid gloves lest they take offense. And when offended, they suffer agonies of spirit and tend to wallow in a morass of self-pity for hours, or even days, on end. Their explanation of such agony is always the "thoughtlessness" or "rudeness" of others, but in reality it is their own protest at not being given the attention or prominence which they're sure they deserve. Years ago

a wise Christian woman summed it up for me in a brief statement I'll never forget. "I've learned," she said, "that sensitivity is nothing but selfishness." That helped greatly to free me from a struggle I was having with touchiness at the time.

An impatient spirit can be a veil to hide the reality of what we are. It is often manifested to indicate importance or busyness. It frequently appears as a mark of zeal or dedication. But to be easily irritated, to frown readily, or reply sharply is a form of pride usually used to cover insecurity or a deep sense of inferiority. A self-justifying habit reveals something similar. Those people who can't stand to be misunderstood but are forever explaining their actions are really saying, "I want you to think I'm perfect. Of course, I know that the present situation does not let me appear so, but if you will just let me explain..." It is no wonder this habit is frequently associated with what is called perfectionism,

But perhaps the most common veil employed by Christians is remoteness: the practice of keeping feelings and attitudes completely to oneself, even with friends or close relatives. Remoteness arises primarily from fear--the fear of being known for what one is. Often, though, it is described defensively as "reserve," "privacy," or "reticence." It is clearly a veil to keep others from seeing a fading glory and is a direct violation of such biblical commands as "confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed" (James 5:16) and "carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). After all, how can another bear your burden if you don't share it?

All of these commands are summed up in the direct and repeated command of Jesus, "Love each other" (John

15:12), which he goes on to define as including, among other elements, the sharing of secrets (see John 15:15). Paul tells the Corinthian believers (in 2 Corinthians 6:11) that he has opened his heart fully to them and exhorts them: "As a fair exchange-- I speak as to my children--open wide your hearts also." (2 Corinthians 6:13).

### **The big lie**

It is apparent from the above examples that the flesh, or natural life, likes nothing better than to hide or disguise itself. We all tend to fear rejection if we are seen for what we are. The satanic lie is that in order to be liked or accepted we must appear capable or successful. Therefore we either project capability (the extrovert) or we seek to hide our failure (the introvert). The new covenant offers the opposite. If we will admit our inadequacy, we can have God's adequacy, and all we have sought vainly to produce (confidence, success, impact, integrity, and reality) is given to us at the point of our inability. The key is to take away the veil.

### **The great unveiling**

How can these veils be removed? The answer is clearly stated by Paul in the Scripture passage we are considering:

*But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away (2 Corinthians 3:14-16).*

Only in Christ is the veil taken away! And as the apostle goes on to tell us, "Now the Lord is the Spirit,

and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (v. 17). Here is our first real key in moving from the old covenant to the new. The key is the Spirit. Some may be confused by Paul's word that only through Christ can the veil be taken away. They may wonder, "Are we to turn to the Spirit or to Christ to have the veil removed?" The answer, of course, is that it makes no difference.

In Scripture, the Holy Spirit is frequently called the Spirit of Christ. It is His divine task and joy to enter the life of those who believe in Jesus and continually unleash in them the very life of Jesus himself. Thus, to turn to the Spirit is also to turn to Christ. It is by means of the Spirit that we turn to Christ.

We must further see that in practical terms "to turn to the Spirit" means to have faith in the promise of the Spirit, to trust the word of God. It is to expect the Spirit to act in line with what he has said he will do. Specifically, the promise is to apply to our practical, daily lives the full value of both the death and the resurrection of Jesus. His death has cut us off from our old, natural life, as Paul tells us in Romans 6:6--"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin."

When we agree with this word concerning the specific form of pride we are at the moment experiencing (that is, the particular veil we are hiding behind), we are immediately freed by the Spirit from its control. We have called the veil what God calls it, which is usually also what we call it when we find it in someone else. It can no longer be excused or justified--we repudiate it, and the fleeting pleasure it offers us. That is what it means to turn to the Spirit. As Paul describes it, ". . . if *by the Spirit* you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live (Romans 8:13, emphasis

added). Remember, we turn to the Lord, the veil is removed--and the Lord is the Spirit.

### Free to live

The second function of the Spirit is to make real to us in practical terms the resurrection of Jesus, as well as His death. This is the second part of "turning to the Lord." The first act of the Spirit ends the reign of the old life over us. The second act releases to us the resurrected life of Jesus. That is what the Scripture calls freedom. "Now the Lord is the Spirit," says verse 17, "and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."

When by faith in that promise we have turned from the flesh with its lying promise of success and have trusted in the Lord Jesus, dwelling within us by His Spirit, to be ready to work the moment we choose to act, we have in very practical terms passed from the old covenant to the new. Nothing coming from us, everything coming from God! That is freedom!

The apostle goes on to describe this freedom in glorious terms: "And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 2:18). Note the term unveiled faces. By faith in the promise of God (that is, by the Spirit) we have ceased to look at the face of Moses and are now beholding with full vision "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The veil is removed. Moses and the law are gone; only Jesus Christ fills the horizon of our life--for that precise moment. It is altogether possible that a minute or two later we may, like Peter walking on the water, take our eyes off the face of Jesus and begin

to look once again at our circumstances and our limited resources. At that moment, of course, Moses and the law return. The temptation to do this is not the act, and we can find our faith sorely tested while still having it fixed upon the face of Jesus. But when we succumb to these pressures and begin to trust ourselves or others, we are back in the old covenant, wearing a veil over our faces, and must repeat the whole process for deliverance.

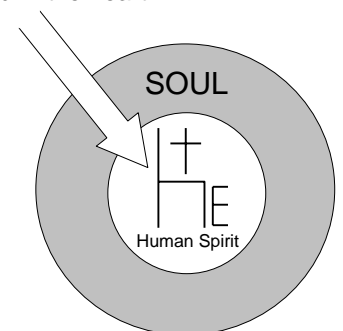
### God is not angry

But let us not despair or feel condemned when this happens. Remember that God has already made full provision for failure in learning to live by the Spirit. He anticipates our struggles and our defeats and only expects us to recognize them as well and return immediately to the principle of the new covenant. God is not angry with us or upset because we have fallen. We are angry at ourselves, perhaps, but that only shows us more fully how much we were expecting something to come from us. We need but to thank God for letting us see what we were unwittingly trusting in and then resume our confidence that Jesus is at work in us as we take up the task at hand again.

This continual return to beholding the glory of the Lord is doing something to us, says Paul. More and more areas of our conscious experience (our soul) are coming under the full control of the Spirit, and we are therefore reflecting an increasing likeness to Jesus; we are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another. This is what we often call "Christian growth" or "growing in grace." Because of constant practice of the principle of the new covenant, it is increasingly easy to keep the eyes of the heart fixed on the face of Jesus. Gradually it feels more and more "natural" to walk in the Spirit and not in

the flesh. The writer of Hebrews speaks of those "who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil" (Hebrews 5:14). It is still possible, under sufficient provocation or allurements, to act in the flesh in any given relationship of life, but it is increasingly unlikely, for the heart is being "strengthened by grace" (Hebrews 13:9).

Though this gracious effect is occurring in certain areas of the conscious life, it has not yet conquered all the areas in which we live. "Glory," the glory of the life of Jesus, is becoming dominant in some areas, but in others the flesh still reigns triumphant and must be attacked and subdued by the Spirit so that another degree of glory may become evident. What is happening has often been pictured as a throne room in the heart, where at first Ego ... is seated upon the throne, and Christ ... is waiting to be given his rightful place of rule... When the human will (the throne) is submitted to the authority of Christ, the Ego is cast off the throne and Christ rules as Lord in the heart...



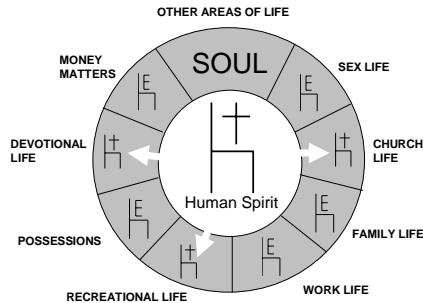
THE SPIRIT OF GOD PENETRATES  
THE HUMAN SPIRIT: EGO IS  
DETHRONED

### Growth is a process

I believe it is ... accurate to recognize the word *heart*, commonly

employed in Scripture, as referring to the soul and spirit combined, as above.

Note in the illustration that at the conversion of the individual, the Spirit of God penetrates the human spirit, dethrones the Ego (or the flesh), and replaces it with the Cross, depicting the life of Jesus. But that is *only* within the human *spirit*. The *soul* is still under the control of the flesh ...



THE HOLY SPIRIT INVADES AREAS OF THE SOUL  
 Cross = THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST; E = EGO, OR FLESH, IN CONTROL

### The up-and-down life

This would explain why it is possible for an individual Christian to be in the Spirit one moment and in the flesh the next. A good biblical example of this is in Matthew 16:16 where Peter confesses to Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." To this, Jesus replies, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven." It is clear here that Peter spoke in the Spirit when he made his confession of the identity of Jesus.

However, in verse 22 of the same account, Peter actually rebukes Jesus for suggesting that he will be crucified and resurrected again. To this rebuke Jesus says, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." Here Peter speaks from

the flesh in ignorant opposition to the will and purpose of God.

It is evident that when it was a question of Peter's rational acceptance or rejection of the *identity* of Jesus, the Spirit had already successfully enthroned Jesus as Lord in that area of Peter's life. But when it came to the matter of Peter's *involvement* with the program of crucifixion and resurrection which that identity made necessary, the flesh was still very much on the throne and Jesus was not yet Lord of that area. But that was all in the realm of Peter's soul (his conscious experience). In his human spirit, Jesus was Lord and had been ever since Peter responded to Jesus' call and entered into life.

It is quite possible then for you habitually to walk in the Spirit in one area of life--say, your relations with Christian brothers and sisters--but perhaps the moment you are involved with a member of your immediate family, you enter an area where the flesh is still unconquered and speech and attitudes are fleshly instead of Spirit-governed. This frequently happens with young Christians. From his vantage point in your human spirit the Spirit of God exerts steady and unyielding pressure upon the area of family relationships, often precipitating several crises, until the will submits in that area and Jesus is enthroned as Lord there too. Thus another degree of likeness to Christ is achieved and another degree of glory manifested.

Perhaps it is the sex life which holds out against the control of the Spirit. Or it may be the vocational life. Many a businessman has learned to live in the Spirit on Sundays, but on Monday morning when he steps across the threshold of his office, he

says, in effect, "Here I am in control. I have been trained to handle affairs here, and I don't need God's help. I know what is expected of me and I can handle things on my own." That, of course, is the old covenant in its purest form, and such a procedure will guarantee the presence in that businessman of many forms of death: depression, boredom, resentment, anxiety, tension, and so on.

### Fighting a battle already won

Since we can live only in one area of relationships of our life at any given moment, it is evident that we can be in a Spirit-controlled area one moment and in a flesh-dominated area the next. This is why we can be a great person to live with one minute (delightful, because we are in the Spirit) and then a moment later some old habit pattern of the flesh reasserts itself and we are right back in our old

covenant behavior--harsh, nasty, or cruel. When we become aware of those feelings within, we know we will lose our Christian reputation if they are allowed to show, so we snatch an evangelical veil and hide the fading glory.

But how encouraging to know that the Spirit will never give up the battle. He seeks in a thousand ways to invade each separate relationship of the soul, and gradually He is doing so--sometimes faster, as we yield to him; sometimes very slowly, as we resist and cling to our veils. The more we work and live with the face of Jesus clearly in view, the more quickly we find each area of our life being changed into His likeness. We cannot do that work. It is, as Paul says, all "from the Lord who is the Spirit." He will never cease the work he has begun.

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*In the secret of His presence  
 How my soul delights to hide!  
 Oh, how precious are the lessons  
 Which I learn at Jesus' side!  
 Earthly cares can never vex me,  
 Neither trials lay me low;  
 For when Satan comes to tempt me,  
 To the secret place I go.*

*When my soul is faint and thirsty,  
 'Neath the shadow of His wing  
 There is cool and pleasant shelter,  
 And a fresh and crystal spring;  
 And my Savior rests beside me,  
 As we hold communion sweet;  
 If I tried, I could not utter  
 What He says when thus we meet.*

By Ellen Lakshmi Goreh

Only this I know: I tell Him  
 All my doubts and griefs and fears;  
 Oh, how patiently He listens!  
 And my drooping soul He cheers;  
 Do you think He ne'er reproves me?  
 What a false friend He would be,  
 If He never, never told me  
 Of the sins which He must see.

Would you like to know that  
 sweetness  
 Of the secret of the Lord?  
 Go and hide beneath His shadow;  
 This shall then be your reward;  
 And whene'er you leave the silence  
 Of that happy meeting-place,  
 By the Spirit bear the image  
 Of the Master in your face.



A story from Scotland tells of a mother's dramatic rescue of her child. Workmen were blasting rock in a quarry. One day after they had attached the fuse and retired to a safe place and gave the alarm they saw a three year old child wandering across the open space where danger threatened. Every passing second meant death was closing in on the child.

The workmen called to the child and waved their arms, but he only looked on their strange antics with

not his mother appeared at this moment of crisis.

Taking in the situation at a glance



amusement. No man dared run forward knowing the explosion was only seconds away. The child most certainly would have been killed, had

she did what her mother's heart dictated. She did not run toward her son or yell to frighten him. Instead, she knelt down, opened wide her arms and smiled for him to come. Instantly the child ran towards her. Shortly later the area shook with the force of the explosion, yet the child was safe in his mother's arms.

What a picture of the grace of God and of the cross. With outstretched arms on the cross Jesus gives his gracious invitation to the world. Indicating we are to come to him for eternal safety.

*In Mother's Arms – Author Unknown*



Sing to the LORD a new song, And His praise from the ends of the earth, You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, You coastlands and you inhabitants of them! Isa 42:10