

Spiritual Believers and the Soul

by Watchman Nee

The sermon emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between spirit and soul and submitting to the Holy Spirit's authority and control in order to experience a true spiritual walk.

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:1-2, Psalm 103:1, Matthew 11:29, Luke 23:46, Acts 20:24, Romans 6:11, Galatians 2:20, Hebrews 4:12, James 1:21, 1 Peter 1:22

Topics: "Surrender to the Holy Spirit", "Spirit vs. Soul"

Description

Watchman Nee emphasizes the critical distinction between the spirit and the soul in the life of a believer, urging Christians to recognize the dangers of allowing the soul to dominate their spiritual walk. He explains that true spiritual growth requires a willingness to surrender the natural life to the authority of the Holy Spirit, which involves a daily commitment to the cross and a conscious effort to differentiate between the operations of the spirit and the soul. The sermon highlights the necessity of allowing God's Word to pierce and divide the soul from the spirit, leading to a life that is fully yielded to God's will and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Nee calls believers to embrace this process of separation and surrender, assuring them that it leads to true peace and spiritual prosperity. Ultimately, he encourages a life of faith that magnifies the Lord and serves others selflessly.

Transcript

THE DIVIDING OF SPIRIT AND SOUL

OUR LENGTHY DISCUSSION as to the difference between spirit and soul and their respective operations has been to lead us to this present point. For a believer who strives after God the element to be apprehensive about is the inordinate activity of the soul beyond the measure set by God. The soul has been in ascendancy for such long duration that in the matter of consecration it even presumes to take upon itself the task of realizing that act to God's satisfaction. Many Christians are unaware how drastically the cross must work so that ultimately their natural power for living may be denied. They do not know the reality of the indwelling Holy Spirit nor that His authority must extend to gathering under His control the thoughts, desires and feelings of the entire being. Without their having an inner appreciation of this, the Holy Spirit is unable to accomplish everything He wishes to do. The greatest temptation for an earnest and zealous saint is to engage his own strength in God's service rather than to wait humbly for the Holy Spirit to will and to perform.

The call of the cross of the Lord Jesus is to beckon us to hate our natural life, to seek opportunity to lose, not to keep, it. Our Lord wants us to sacrifice self and be yielded wholly to the working of His Spirit. If we are to experience afresh His true life in the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, we must be willing to present to death every opinion, labor and thought of the soul life. The Lord additionally touches upon the issue of our hating or loving our self life. The soul is in

variably "self -loving." Unless from the very depth of our heart we abhor our natural life, we shall not be able to walk genuinely by the Holy Spirit. Do we not realize that the basic condition for a spiritual walk is to fear our self and its wisdom and to rely absolutely upon the Spirit?

This war between the soul and the spirit is waged secretly but interminably within God's children. The soul seeks to retain its authority and move independently, while the spirit strives to possess and master everything for the maintenance of God's authority. Before the spirit achieves its ascendancy the soul has tended to take the lead in all regards. Should a believer allow self to be the master while expecting the Holy Spirit to help and to bless him in his work, he undoubtedly will fail to produce spiritual fruit. Christians cannot anticipate a walk and work pleasing to God if they have not crushed their soul life by persistently denying its authority and unconditionally laying it in the dust. Except all power, impatience, and activity of the natural life are deliberately and one by one delivered to the cross and a ceaseless vigil is maintained, it will seize every chance to revive itself. The reason for so many defeats in the spiritual realm is because this sector of the soul has not been dealt with drastically. If soul life is not stripped away through death but is allowed to mingle with the spirit, believers shall continue in defeat. If our walk does not exclusively express God's power it shall soon be vanquished by man's wisdom and opinion.

Our natural life is a formidable obstacle to spiritual life. Never satisfied with God alone, it invariably adds something extra to God. Hence it is never at peace. Before the self is touched God's children live by very changeable stimulations and sensations. That is why they exhibit a wavy up and down existence. Because they allow their soulful energies to mix in with spiritual experiences their ways are often unstable. They accordingly are not qualified to lead others. Their unrelinquished soul power continually deflects them from letting the spirit be central. In the excitement of soulful emotion the spirit suffers great loss in freedom and sensation.

Joy and sorrow may imperil the believer's self-control and set self-consciousness on a rampage. The mind, if overly active, may affect and disturb the quietness of the spirit. To admire spiritual knowledge is good, but should it exceed spiritual bounds the result shall be merely letter, not spirit. This explains why many workers, though they preach the most excellent truth, are so cold and dead. Many saints who seek a spiritual walk share a common experience-one of groanings because their soul and spirit are not at one. The thought, will and emotion of their soul often rebel against the spirit, refuse to be directed by the spirit and resort to independent actions which contradict the spirit. The life in their spirit is bound to suffer in such a situation.

Now given a condition like this in the believer, the teaching in Hebrews 4.12 takes on paramount significance. For the Holy Spirit instructs us therein how to divide spirit and soul experientially. The dividing of these two is not a mere doctrine; it is pre-eminently a life, a must in the believer's walk. just what is its essential meaning? It means, first of all., that by His Word and through His indwelling Spirit God enables the Christian to differentiate in experience the operations and expressions of the spirit as distinct from those of the soul. Thus he may perceive what is of the spirit and what is of the soul.

The dividing of these two elements denotes additionally that through willing cooperation the child of God can follow a pure spiritual path unimpeded by the soul. The Holy Spirit in Hebrews 4 sets forth the high-priestly ministry of the Lord Jesus and also explains its relationship to us. Verse 12 declares that "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." And verse 13 follows by informing us that "before him no creature is hidden, but all are open and laid bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do." These therefore tells us how much the Lord Jesus fulfills His work as High Priest with respect to our spirit and soul. The

Holy Spirit compares the believer to a sacrifice on the altar. During the Old Testament period when people presented an offering, they bound their sacrifice to the altar. The priest then came and killed it with a sharp knife, parting it into two and piercing to the division of the joints and marrow, thus exposing to view all that formerly had been hidden from human sight. Afterwards it was burned with fire as an offering to God. The Holy Spirit uses this event to illustrate the work of the Lord Jesus towards believers and the experience of the believers in the Lord. Just as the sacrifice of old was cut asunder by the priest's knife so that the joints and marrow were exposed and divided, even so the believer today has his soul and spirit split apart by the Word of God as used by our High Priest, the Lord Jesus. This is that the soul may no longer affect the spirit nor the spirit any more be under the soul's authority; rather, each will find its rightful place, with neither confusion nor mixture.

As at the first the Word of God had operated on creation by separating light from darkness, so now it works within us as the Sword of the Spirit, piercing to the separation of the spirit and soul. Hence the noblest habitation of God—our spirit—is wholly separated from the base desires of our souls. Wherefore we come to appreciate how our spirit is the dwelling place of God the Holy Spirit and how our soul with all its energy shall indeed do the will of God as revealed to the human spirit by the Holy Spirit. No room can there be then for any independent action.

As the priest of old split the sacrifice, so our High Priest today divides our soul and spirit. As the priestly knife was of such sharpness that the sacrifice was cut into two, piercing to the separation of the closely knit joints and marrow, so the Word of God which the Lord Jesus currently uses is keener than any two-edged sword and is able to split cleanly apart the most intimately related spirit and soul there may be.

The Word of God is "living" for it has living power: "living" because it knows how to work: "sharper than

any two edged sword" since it can pierce into the spirit. What God's Word has penetrated is much deeper than the soul; it reaches into the innermost spirit. God's Word leads His people into a realm more profound than one of mere sensation; it brings them into the realm of the eternal spirit. Those who wish to be established in God must know the meaning of this penetration into the spirit. The Holy Spirit alone can teach us what is soul life and what is spirit life. Only after we learn how to differentiate experientially these two kinds of life and come to apprehend their respective values, are we delivered from a shallow, loose, sensational walk into that which is deep, firm and spiritual. Only then do we come into rest. The soul life can never furnish us rest. But please note that this must be known in experience; simply understanding in the mind will merely make us more soulish.

We need to pay special attention to this piercing and dividing. The Word of God plunges into the soul as well as into the spirit in order to effect the division of these two. The Lord Jesus in His crucifixion had His

hands and feet and side pierced. Are we willing to let the cross work in our soul and spirit? A sword pierced through Mary's soul (Luke 2. 35). Although her "Son" was given by God, she was required to let go of Him and to relinquish all her authority and demands upon Him. Even though her soul craved to cling tenaciously to Him Mary must deny her natural affection.

The cleaving of soul and spirit means not only their separation but also a cracking open of the soul itself. Since the spirit is enveloped in the Soul, it cannot be reached by the Word of life save through a cracked shell. The Word of the cross plunges in and splits open a way into and through the soul so that God's life can reach the spirit within and liberate it from the bondage of its soulish shell. Having received the mark of the cross, the soul now can assume its proper position of subjection to the spirit. But if the soul fails to become a "11 thoroughfare" to the spirit, then the former surely will become the latter's chain. These two never agree on any matter. Before the spirit achieves its rightful place of pre-eminence

it is challenged persistently by the soul. While the spirit is striving to gain freedom and mastery the strong soul power exerts its utmost strength to suppress the spirit. Only after the cross has done its work on the soulish life is the spirit liberated. If we remain ignorant of the damage this discord between the spirit and soul can bring or remain unwilling to forsake the pleasure of a sensuous walk, we shall make hardly any spiritual progress. As long as the seige thrown up by the soul is not lifted the spirit cannot be freed.

Upon carefully studying the teaching of this fragment of Scripture, we may conclude that the dividing of spirit and soul hinges upon two factors: the cross and God's Word. Before the priest could use his knife the sacrifice had to be placed on the altar. The altar in the Old Testament speaks of the cross in the New Testament. Believers cannot expect their High Priest to wield God's sharp Sword, His Word which pierces to the separation of soul and spirit, unless first they are willing to come to the cross and accept its death. Lying on the altar always precedes the plunging of the sword. Hence all who desire to experience the parting of soul and spirit must answer the Lord's call to Calvary and lay themselves unreservedly on the altar, trusting their High Priest to operate with His keen Sword to the dividing asunder of their spirit and soul. For us to lie on the altar is our free-will offering well-pleasing to God; to use the sword to divide is the work of the priest. We should fulfill our part with all faithfulness, and commit the rest to our merciful and faithful High Priest. And at the appropriate time He shall lead us into a complete spiritual experience.

We need to follow the footsteps of our Lord. As He was dying, Jesus poured out His soul to death (Is. 53.12) but committed His spirit to God (Luke 23.46). We must do now what He did before. If we truly pour out the soul life and commit our spirit to God we too shall know the power of resurrection and shall enjoy a perfect spiritual way in the glory of resurrection.

THE PRACTICE

We have just seen how the High Priest operates if we accept the cross. We shall consider next the practical side; that is, how we may arrive at the experience of having the Lord Jesus divide our soul and spirit.

(1) Know the necessity of having the spirit and soul divided. Without this knowledge no such request will be made. Christians ought to petition the Lord to show them the abhorrence of a mixed spirit-and-soul life and also the reality of that deeper walk in God which is wholly spirit and uninterrupted by the soul. They should understand that a mixed life is a frustrated life.

(2) Ask for the separation of soul and spirit. After knowing, there must be a genuinely earnest desire in the heart, a requesting that this mingled soul and spirit be cut apart. Just here the question rests with the human will. Should believers prefer to enjoy what they themselves consider the best life and not desire to have their soul and spirit divided, God will respect their personal rights and not force them into such experience.

(3) Yield specifically. If believers definitely desire the experience of having their soul and spirit separated, they must consign themselves to the altar of the cross in a specific manner. They must be willing to accept totally every consequence of the operation of the cross and be conformed to the death of the Lord. Before they encounter the cleaving of soul and spirit believers need to bend their will continuously and incessantly towards God and actively choose to have this cleavage. And as the High Priest accomplishes this division in them their heart attitude should be that He should not stay His hand.

(4) Stand on Romans 6.11. God's children need to watch lest in seeking to experience the separation of soul and spirit they fall back into sin. Remember that this separating is built upon their having died to sin. Hence they should maintain daily the attitude of Romans 6.11, considering them

selves verily dead to sin. Additionally, they should stand on Romans 6.12 and not permit sin to reign in their mortal bodies. This attitude will deprive their natural life any opportunity to sin through the body.

(5) Pray and study the Bible. Christians ought to search the Bible with prayer and meditation. They should let God's Word penetrate thoroughly into their souls so as to enable their natural life to be purified. If they actually do what God says, their soul life shall not be able to continue its free activity. This is the meaning of 1 Peter 1.22: "having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth."

(6) Daily bear the cross. Because the Lord desires to sever our spirit and soul He arranges crosses in our everyday affairs for us to bear. To take up the cross daily, to deny self at all times, to make no provision for the flesh-not even for a moment, and to be shown constantly by the Holy Spirit what are the activities of the soul in our lives: this is spiritual life. Through faithful obedience we shall be led to encounter the dividing of soul and spirit so that we may experience a pure spiritual walk.

(7) Live according to the spirit. This is a condition not only for our preservation but also for a distinct cleavage between spirit and soul. We must seek to walk by our spirit in all respects, distinguishing what is of the spirit and what is of the soul and resolving as well to follow the former while rejecting the latter. Learn to recognize the working of the spirit and follow it.

These are the conditions which we on our side must fulfill. The Holy Spirit requires our cooperation. The Lord will not be able to do His part should we fail to do ours. But were we to discharge our responsibility, our High Priest would tear apart our spirit and soul with the sharp Sword of His Spirit in the power of His cross. Everything which belongs to emotion, sensation, mind and natural energy would be separated one after another from the spirit so as to leave no trace of fusion. To lie on the altar is what we must do, but to divide the soul from the spirit with the well-honed knife is

what our High Priest undertakes. If we truly commit ourselves to the cross our High Priest shall not fail to execute His ministry in separating our spirit and soul. We need not worry about His part. Upon seeing we have fulfilled the requirements for His working He shall part our spirit and soul at the appropriate time thereafter.

Those who have apprehended the danger of a mixture of these two organs cannot but seek deliverance. Open though the road is to deliverance, it nevertheless is not without its difficulties. Believers must persevere in prayer that they may see clearly their own pitiful state and understand the indwelling, working, and demands of the Holy Spirit. They need to know the mystery and reality of the Holy Spirit dwelling within them. May they honor such holy presence; may they be careful not to grieve Him; may they know that, aside from sin, what grieves Him the most as well as what harms themselves the deepest is to walk and labor according to their own life. The first and original sin of man was to seek what is good, wise and intellectual according to his own idea. God's children today often make the same mistake. They should realize that since they have believed in the Lord and have the Holy Spirit indwelling them, they ought to give the Spirit complete authority over their souls. Do we think because we have prayed and asked the Holy Spirit to reveal His mind and to work in us, that all shall accordingly be done? That assumption is not the truth; for unless we deliver to death specifically and daily our natural life, together with its power, wisdom, self, and sensation and unless we equally desire honestly in our mind and will to obey and rely upon the Holy Spirit, we shall not see Him actually performing the work.

The Lord's people should understand that it is the Word of God which parts their soul and spirit. The Lord Jesus is Himself the living Word of God, so He Himself effects the division. Are we disposed to let His life and accomplished work stand between our soul and spirit? Are we ready to have His life so fill our spirit that the soul life is immobilized?

The Bible is God's written Word. The Lord Jesus uses the teaching of the Bible to separate our soul and spirit. Are we willing to follow the truth? Are we ready to do what the Scriptures teach? Can we obey the Lord in accordance with the teaching of Scripture without putting in our opinion as well? Do we consider the authority of the Bible as sufficient without seeking human help in our obedience? We must obey the Lord and everything He teaches us in His Word if we would desire to enter upon a true spiritual path. This is the Sword which is operative to the cleaving of our soul and spirit.

THE SOUL UNDER THE SPIRIT'S CONTROL

Very early in this volume we likened our whole beingspirit, soul, and body-to the ancient Jewish temple of God's habitation. God dwells in the Holy of Holies. A curtain separates it from the Holy Place. This curtain seems to enclose God's glory and presence within the Holy of Holies, barring His glory from the Holy Place. Men of that time therefore can only know the things outside the curtain in the Holy Place. Apart from faith they in their outward life cannot sense the presence of God.

This curtain however, only exists temporarily. At the appointed hour, when the flesh of our Lord Jesus (which is the reality of the curtain, Heb. 10.20) was crucified on the cross, the curtain was rent from top to bottom. What separated the Holiest and the Holy Place was removed. God's aim was not to dwell permanently just in the Holy of Holies. Quite the contrary. He desired to extend His presence to the Holy Place too. He was merely waiting for the cross to complete its work, for it is the cross alone which can rend the curtain and permit God's glory to shine out from the Holiest Place.

God today would have His own enjoy such a temple experience in their spirit and soul: if only the cross is allowed to perfect its work in them. As they ungrudgingly obey the Holy Spirit the communion between the Holy and the Holiest grows deeper day by day until they experience a great change. It is the cross which effects the rending of the curtain; that is, the cross so functions in the life of the believer that he has a rent-curtain experience between his spirit and soul. His natural life renounces its independence and waits

upon the spirit life for direction and supply.

The curtain was torn in two, "from top to bottom" (Mark 15.38). This has to be God's doing, not man's. When the work of the cross is finished God tears the curtain. This cannot be achieved either by our labors or by our strength, not even by our entreaty. The moment the cross accomplishes its task at that moment is the curtain rent. Let us therefore renew our consecration and offer ourselves to God without reservation. Let us be willing to have our soul life committed to death in order that the Lord Who dwells in the Holiest may finish His work. If he observes that the cross has wrought thoroughly enough in us the Lord shall indeed integrate the Holiest and the Holy within us just as He centuries ago rent the curtain by His might so that His Holy Spirit might flow out from His glorious body.

Thus shall the glory in the shelter of the Most High overwhelm our daily sensuous life. All our walk and work in the Holy Place shall be sanctified in the glory of the Holiest. Like our spirit is, so shall our soul too be indwelt and regulated by the Holy Spirit of God. Our mind, emotion and will shall be filled by Him. What we have maintained by faith in the spirit we now also know and experience in the soul, nothing lacking and nothing lost. What a blessed life is this! "And the glory of the Lord filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord's house" (2 Chron. 7.1-2). However lovely our activities of priestly service may have seemed in the Holy Place, they all shall cease in the glorious light of God. Henceforth His glory governs everything. No more is animal activity adored.

This brings us to the other, and equally significant, aspect of the dividing of spirit and soul. Insofar as the soul's influence and control of the spirit is concerned, the work of the cross is to effect the division of the two; but insofar as the spirit's filling and reigning is concerned, the cross

works towards the surrender of the soul's independence so that it may be reconciled completely to the spirit. Believers, should seek to experience oneness of spirit and soul. Were we to allow the cross and the Holy Spirit to operate thoroughly in us we would discover that what the soul has relinquished is scarcely a fraction of what it ultimately gains: the dead has now come into fruition, the lost is now kept for eternal life. When our soul is brought under the reins of the spirit it undergoes an immense change. Beforehand it seems to be useless and lost to God because it is employed for self and often moves independently; afterwards God gains our soul, though to man it may appear to be crushed. We become as "those who have faith and keep their souls" (Heb. 10.39). This is much more profound than what we commonly term "saved," because it points especially to life. Since we have learned not to walk by sensation and sight, we are now able to save our life by faith into serving and glorifying God. "Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1.21). As God's Word is implanted we receive its new nature into us and are thus enabled to bear fruit. We obtain the life of the Word from the Word of life. Although the organs of the soul still remain, these organs no longer function through its power; rather, they operate by the power of God's Word. This is "the salvation of your souls" (I Peter 1.9).

Human nerves are rather sensitive and are easily stirred by outside stimuli. Words, manners environments and feelings greatly affect us. Our mind engages in so many thoughts, plans and imaginations that it is a world of confusion. Our will is agitated to perform many acts according to our sundry delights. None of the organs of our soul can bring us into peace. Singly or collectively, they disturb, they confuse, they shift us around. But when our soul is in the spirit's hand we can be released from such disturbances. The Lord Jesus implores us: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matt. 11.29). If we are favorably inclined to yield to

SPIRITUAL BELIEVERS AND THE SOUL 205

the Lord, to take up His yoke, and to follow Him, our soul shall not be aroused inordinately. If we learn of Him by seeing how He, when despised by men, continued to follow God's will and not His Own, our soul shall return to tranquillity. The reason for our hurt feelings lies in the fact that we are not amenable to being treated as our Lord was and are loathe to submit ourselves to the will and ordering of God. Were we to deliver our natural energies to death and capitulate entirely to the Lord, our soul, though so nervously sensitive, would rest in the Lord and not misunderstand Him.

The soul which comes under the Holy Spirit's authority is a restful one. Once we busily planned, today we calmly trust the Lord. Once we were flushed with anxieties, today we are like a child quieted at its mother's breast. Once we entertained many thoughts and ambitions, today we consider God's will best and rest ourselves in Him. In obeying the Lord wholly, we rejoice in heart fully. With complete consecration comes perfect peace. "As bondmen of Christ doing the will of God from the soul" (Eph. 6.6 Darby). We do not rely upon the soul to execute God's will, rather we perform His will from the soul, that is, with our whole heart. The soul which once rebelled against God's desire is now perfectly committed to Him through the operation of the cross. That which carried out its own will, or tried to do God's will by its own idea, is now of one heart with God in all things.

A soul under the rule of the Holy Spirit never worries for itself. "Do not be anxious about your life (original, soul)" (Matt. 6.25). We now seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness because we believe God will supply our daily need. Once touched by the cross through the Holy Spirit, the soul no longer is able to be anxious about itself. While selfconsciousness is the soul's prime expression, yet believers actually lose their self in God; hence they can trust God utterly. Every work of the soul, including self-love, self-seeking and self-pride, have been so eliminated that believers are no longer selfcentered.

Because the cross has done its task we do not busily plan any more for ourselves. Instead of suffering anxiety we can restfully seek God's kingdom and righteousness. We know if we care for God's cares that God will take care of our cares. Once we wondered at miracles, now we live by the God of miracles and know in experience how God provides every need. This all flows naturally since God's power is backing us. The cares of this life emerge as very small items indeed along our daily path.

"Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will do right and entrust their souls to a faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4.19). Many people know God as the Creator but not as Father; believers, though, should experience Him not only as Father but also as Creator. As the latter God reveals to us His power. By this we will understand and acknowledge that the whole universe is in fact in His hand. Formerly it was hard for us to believe the idea that things in the world could not move against His will; but now we know that every element in the universe-be it human, natural, or supernatural-is under His careful scrutiny and clever ordering. We now acknowledge that all things come to us either through His order or by His permission. A soul governed by the Holy Spirit is a trusting one.

Our soul ought to desire the Lord as well as to trust Him. "My soul clings to thee" (Ps. 63.8). No more do we dare be independent of God nor do we dare serve the Lord according to the idea of the soul. Rather, we today follow Him with fear and trembling and trail after Him closely. Our soul genuinely clings to the Lord. No more is there independent action, but instead a full surrender to Him. And this is not by compulsion; we do it gladly. What we henceforth hate is our life; what we wholly love is the Lord.

Such persons cannot but utter the cry of Mary: "My soul magnifies the Lord" (Luke 1.46). No longer is there self-importance, either in public or in private. These believers recognize and admit their incompetency and only wish to exalt the Lord with humbleness of heart. They will not steal the Lord's glory any further but magnify Him in their souls.

For if the Lord is not magnified in the soul, nowhere else is He magnified either.

Only such as these count not their life (original, soul) of any value (Acts 20.24) and can lay down their lives (original, souls) for the brethren (1 John 3.16). Unless self-love is abandoned the believer shall forever shrink back when called actually to take up the cross for Christ. He who lives a martyr's life and is willing to nail his self to the cross is able as well to die a martyr's death if ever the need should arise. He can lay down his life for his brother if occasion demands it because in ordinary days he has denied himself continuously and has not sought his own right or comfort but has

poured out his soul for the brethren. True love towards the Lord and the brethren arises out of no love for self. He "loved

me" and "gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2.20). Love flows from the denial of the self life. Blood-shedding is the source of blessing.

Such a life is in truth one of prosperity, as is written: "thy soul prospers" (3 John 2 Darby). This prosperity originates not with what self has gained but with what self has denied. A soul lost is not a life lost, for the soul is lost in God. Soullife is selfish and therefore binds us. But the soul renounced shall abide in the boundlessness of God's life. This is liberty, this is prosperity. The more we lose the more we gain. Our possessions are not measured by how much we receive but by how much we give. How fruitful is this life!

To forsake the soul life, however, is not as easy as deliverance from sin. Since it is our life, the choice is ours to make daily not to live by it but by the life of God. The cross needs to be borne faithfully and to be borne increasingly faithfully. Let us gaze upon our Lord Jesus Who "endured the cross, despising the shame": "Consider him . . . , that ye wax not weary, fainting in your souls" (Heb. 11M ASV). The race set before us is none other than that of His despising the

shame and enduring His cross.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name!" (Ps. 103.1)

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