

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

Part 3
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BY GOD, YOU ARE FIRST & FOREMOST A SPIRITUAL BEING

God originally designed us to function with Him as a *“living spirit”* (**khahee nephesh**) (Gen.2:7). Throughout the New Covenant Scriptures, the Lord makes it clear that our spirit joined with His is the basis and priority of all life with Him. Jesus said *“it is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing”* (Jn.6:63). Furthermore, *“the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness”* (Ro.8:10). We cannot even worship God, EXCEPT *“in spirit and truth”* or put more clearly, ‘in spiritual connection’ (Jn.4:24).

Through Paul, the Lord clearly expressed that we have now been destined to become the redeemed expression of God’s original intention: a *“living spirit”* (**khahee nephesh**) (Gen.2:7).

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass” (1Thess.5:23-24).

The spirit is listed first, then the soul, after that the body. This is not accidental or even incidental. It is intentional and a matter of God’s order of priority. We are to be fully prepared for eternity with God. But to be fully prepared for Christ and the age to come, we must be readied. During that journey of God working within and through us, we are to become sanctified. But for that to take place, it must happen in God’s order: spirit, soul and body. It is not the body which is of first importance to God. It is our spirit. It is not our soul which is of most importance to God, it is our spirit. Our spirit, joined and made alive by His, is the priority of all God’s plan for us and the basis and foundation of all life in Him.

Because of this, we were not created by God first and foremost to become physical or social beings, but are instead being remade by Christ’s image into first and foremost spiritual beings ‘hardwired’ with a priority and passion for connection and relationship with God. Only from this foundation of spirit-first living can we have authentic connection and relationship with others. In other words, all true Christian relationships work by way of Christ’s relationship with them, their place in Him, and then their place among one another as He has and/or is fitting them (1Cor.12:12,18,25). Then, based on that, there is relationship that can be centered in Christ, not one another. In other words, all relationships in the body of Christ are subject to God’s limitation, direction and placement, not our own for either self or others. For a moment or two, allow yourself to think about your relationships and the basis for them, the direction of

them, and the authority that God has (is free to use) in shaping, molding, influencing, activating and deactivating them.

I am proposing to you that if we are going to see the body of Christ function together as individuals and body parts, it will only come through spirit-first living. I am asserting that only as the Lord is free to put together the parts, first within them individually and then by joining them together with Him in the presence of others will we see the Church become who and what Christ is calling for through the Holy Spirit and gifts of ministry.

And this is the crux of the shift that must take place for many, many multitudes of those who have been called to belong to Christ. And I will go so far as to say that without the above foundation in place and followed throughout life, you cannot and will not fulfill God's call on your life the way He has had in His heart since before the world began (Psa.139:15-16; Ro.8:29; Rev.13:8).

SOULISH CHURCH, VS. SPIRITUAL BODY

Are you Spirit-united with those around, or soul-tied? Is God giving you life, or are you getting it from others? Are you giving God's life to others, or are you mustering energy to impart your own? If we are more strongly soul-tied to others we are attempting to minister among and to, the "exchange" which takes place is one that is religious, not truly relational in the Spirit of God.** Are all soul ties wrong? Of course not, but all humanity was designed to relate to one another first and foremost as (recreated now in Christ) spirit beings with a mind, will and emotions as conduit for bodily revealing, releasing and representing Christ in the earth.

What we are talking about here is orientation. And, it is also predisposition. What is your orientation? Is it toward God, or toward others? Who are you predisposed toward? Is it God, or people? If it is God, then what you will give them can flow from your relationship with Him. And it will flow to them (if they will receive it). But if it is people, then your approach to God will be encoded by the release of their mind, will and emotion. The result will be that the substance of what you bring to God with them (or for them) will be human, circumstantial, and temporal. Your "request" will be rooted in soul-connection, instead of Spirit-flow. This is because the focus is not on spirit-first, but soul as foundation.

Let me say it another way. And this has to do more with the impact of what takes place. There is a transference that takes place in all relationships. There is, as stated earlier, and "exchange." When we truly worship God, there is an "exchange" which takes place (Psa.100:4; Psa.22:3). When we relate with one another, there is also an "exchange" that takes place, or transference. Whether in soul or in spirit, there is a give and take, a joining or cross-pollination which occurs in all interactions with others, especially if there is knowledge and openness to one another (whether by spirit-first or soul). Some people drag you down, others lift you up. If they lift you up, it can be either soul or spirit based. If it

is spirit based, you will be freed by it and can know healthy boundaries in the midst of it. If it is soul based, you will find that you “need” it and are driven to have “more” regardless of its appropriateness. You either lift people up or drag them down. This also can be either soul oriented or spirit based.

One of the pitfalls of relationships in general- whether friendship, marriage, fellowship, ministry, leadership, etc.- is that they all too often and easily become and remain problem centered. Clearly, this is a hallmark of what it means to be soul oriented and predisposed, instead of spirit-based and functioning. Granted, in the workplace often there is nothing but problems, but that is one of the reasons God has not only designed us to live by His Spirit first, but also placed us in that arena so that by Him we become part of the solution. But unfortunately, this dilemma of difficulty-focus has really found a home in the church system that thrives today. But again, I am asserting that this is a sign, a trademark, or a fingerprint and even the DNA of the religious church.

While I cannot turn this message into a full explanation of what I call “problem-centered Christianity,” I hope you can see just how much this is the result of a soul orientation and predisposition (people centered), instead of a spirit-first foundation and lifestyle (God oriented). And, without becoming first and foremost a spirit-being, oriented and predisposed toward God, the transference resulting from having a predisposition toward people will begin to overtake you even while (&/or especially after) giving what you have, because you will have ‘received’ from what is theirs as well.

By living soul oriented instead of spirit-first, you will begin to wane and falter when you will feel you need to have the most energy available for what is at hand. You will find that when you need God most, you seem to have Him the least (so to speak). When this takes place in our personal lives, we find that what and who God has placed around us to bless us, instead seem to be taking the most from us. When this spills over to the workplace, ministry or vocations, we never seem to be able to do anymore than just “survive.” For example, there are still more calls to return and meetings to prepare for and decisions to make, but we were tired before we began, and it now seems impossible. We’ve not been to the table of the Lord, because through our orientation toward people, lifting them up and the “exchange,” that resulted, we have come to believe we are the table of the Lord (“as long as God moves, I must be all right”).

When soul oriented toward people instead of spirit-first activated by God, we ‘must’ go because we’re ‘called,’ even when there is nothing within to give (& it’s highly debatable He “called” us into that which we are headed for). We will then call on God, but even if He comes we “get through it” only to see it weaken us more and more. Why? Because we’re not flowing from spirit-first relationship with God, but from a soulish false responsibility toward people rooted in belief in the self’s need to work and accomplish, not the Spirit’s call to follow and trust for the

sake of God's Kingdom (which includes both others & us, but in God's true order).

In our homes and places of serving, often this occurs until many come to the brink of either quitting, burning-out, having a health breakdown, a church split, going into adultery, divorce, alienating those God has placed around them, or just plain backsliding because of being angry with God over why He's done this to us. And God has done absolutely none of this.

What's worse? Many have accepted this as "just the way it is." So if (miraculously) one stands still in the Spirit long enough to receive a revelation of faith for what Christ wants in a new apostolic purpose, it cannot even be envisioned, let alone walked into. In the bondage of the lifestyle of being soul rooted and people oriented, a new apostolic purpose cannot be properly declared or imparted to others, let alone activated or established within and through them. Why not? A new apostolic purpose requires room within our spiritual womb to grow. Only then can it renew a soulish mind to take on Christ (1Cor.2:16; Ro.12:1-2; 2Cor.10:5).*** A carnal mind will misunderstand, wrongly apply, and execute by the flesh. A spiritual mind will stay in the conduit of God's faith, grace and direction, step by step.

** I highly recommend a teaching series available on our www.riverofpower.org site entitled "The Supernatural Exchange."

*** To understand more about what I mean by "new apostolic purpose" you need to consult the series released from the period of October 6 thru December 15 of 2011. If you missed this, it will soon be available on our site.