

# **THE HIDDEN MAN**

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## **CHAPTER ONE THE HIDDEN MAN OF THE HEART**

The Word of God tells us that we human beings were created differently from the rest of God's creation. We were created, the Bible tells us, in the very image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Man is not God, as some New Age philosophers contend, but rather man is made and fashioned to have a part of himself that is like God Almighty. It is God's gift and grace to us. Man has a spirit; in this sense, man is like God Who is Spirit (John 4:24). This part of man is hidden; it is unseen in this present age. It is, however, the part of man that is of utmost importance, for it is the part that fellowships with God and will go into eternity when the physical body dies. It is the "you" that will exist in God's presence until the resurrection of the body. It is the inner real "you."

This inner person is a hidden person. The Apostle Peter describes this in his letter: "But let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God." (1 Peter 3:4)

There is a "you" that is hidden from everyone else except God and yourself. There is a "me" that is hidden from everyone else except God and myself. There is a hidden inner man. It's within this hidden man that our noblest hopes, dreams and desires are birthed. It's also where our evil and harmful intentions and actions are birthed (James 1:14-15). This inner man should be a place of joy and peace, gentleness and quietness. More often than not it is a place of struggle, confusion and inner turmoil. Sometimes the condition of the inner man is like an inner soap opera. I believe the popularity of soap operas today is so high because they reflect the inner turmoil of the hidden man of people alienated from God and without the hope only Jesus Christ can give.

The inner turmoil of those without a living relationship with God is understandable. In the world there is tribulation (John 16:33). If we are in Christ, however, we have overcome the world (1 John 5:5). Yet, I venture to say, speaking as a pastor with years of experience, that many, if not a majority of Christians have unrest or confusion in their hidden man and also have their "inner soap operas" going on. And this should not be.

I am very concerned that Christians have a healthy hidden man because it is so important. The hidden man is the "you" that you will bring into

eternity. What is in your hidden man, furthermore, is what your life and your world around you will eventually become. “Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flows the springs of life.” (Proverbs 4:23) “As a man thinks in his heart, so he is.” (Proverbs 23:7)

Remember, the hidden man I refer to is the spirit. The spirit of man is either the root of all our problems or the wellspring of life and hope. In our modern world, we have become obsessed with psychiatry and psychology as a tool for solving our inner problems. Modern psychology looks only at the mind, the emotions, the *psyche*. It does not take into account the spirit of man, a spirit which is either dead and non-functional because it is separated from the Source of life, God, or is alive because through the act of faith, a real change has been brought to the hidden man by the indwelling of the life of God, the life of Jesus Christ. The hidden man, the spirit, comes alive at the new birth (John 3:3) and a person becomes a new inner creation because of the indwelling of the life of Christ (1 Corinthians 5:17).

The hidden man, therefore, is *not* the mind and the emotions. The real wellspring of life is the *spirit*. If the spirit is dead in sin and separated from the life of God, then the mind and the emotions will dominate the inner life of a person and the mind and emotions will, even at their best, operate in the fallen wisdom of this sinful age (1 Corinthians 2:6-14).

For the Christian (really for anyone), any counseling process that does not make reference to the spirit life of a person is totally useless. Secular psychiatry and psychology are totally useless for bringing human wholeness. Modern psychiatry is simply a money-making industry which really solves no basic human problem. Most psychiatrists probably need psychiatrists themselves! The hidden man which has been born again and recreated in the image of Christ has been given the potential, power and strength to reassert dominance over the mind and emotions and walk into the *balance* and *wholeness* that God originally intended for all of us.

The real “you” therefore, is your spirit man, which is either dead in sin or alive in Christ. The real man is the hidden man. Real life, eternal life, is in the inner hidden man. It is eternal; it never grows old. You know this from personal experience. As we age, our bodies feel older. There are more aches when we roll out of bed in the morning; our senses may grow old. We wear glasses to see better, or have hearing aids to hear better. Your inner man, however, feels just as young and alive as the first day you were “born again” in Christ. There is no sense of age or time in your hidden man. When you shuck off the cares of the day and get into concentrated fellowship with God the Father and the indwelling Christ, you’ll notice that your hidden man feels exactly the same as the first day you were “born again.”

The Word of God tells us to “walk no longer just as the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart.” (Ephesians 4: 17-18) *There is no emotional problem in this world that cannot be solved by the application of the Word of God in the Power and Love of the Holy Spirit.* Secular psychiatry and psychology are ultimately useless and unnecessary. The real solutions to the problems of mankind begin in the hidden man. In the Bible, the spirit, the heart and the hidden man of the heart all mean the same thing.

God’s answer for mankind is, first of all, to recreate the hidden man of the heart through the new birth. Social ills are really a symptom of spiritual ills. Change the heart and the rest changes. We’ll have a just society when we have just people. We’ll have a peaceful society when we have peaceful people.

It is a fact that we are a sinful, fallen race in need of redemption (Romans 3:23; 5:12; 6:23). We see the result and the fruit of our sinful, fallen nature everywhere in this life. The prime time news and the daily newspaper make us fully aware of that fact whether we accept it or deny it. Because of mankind’s sinful, fallen nature, the spirit, the heart, the hidden man has become a battle ground. “The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17:9) Our Lord Jesus said, “But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.” (Matthew 15:18-19)

One of the most difficult things people have to deal with is admitting they most go God’s way, not their own, in their heart. “Every man’s way is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the hearts.” (Proverbs 21:2) Those in ministry who counsel others often run into the roadblock that the counselee is absolutely sure that they are correct in what they desire and do, regardless of what God’s Word may say! This makes some marriage counseling cases and other personal cases virtually impossible to help unless the person is open to the fact God’s way may be different from their way!

Regardless of the condition of our hidden man of the heart, it is the hidden man of the heart that God always sees and is concerned about, not the outer man (1 Samuel 16:7). We can walk in this world presenting an outward appearance entirely different from what is going on inside of us. As Abraham Lincoln once said, it is possible to fool some of the people all of the time and even all of the people some of the time. But God is never fooled; our inner self is always laid bare and open to Him (Hebrews 4:13).

God’s desire is that our hidden man of the heart be recreated in the image

of Christ and that we not be in inner turmoil, but have victory on the inside. God desires that our hidden man be a place of righteousness, joy and peace (Romans 14:17) and gentleness and quietness (1 Peter 3:14). God desires that our hidden man be a place of positive faith and creative power (Mark 11:32). Above all — and *this is the essence of the wholeness that God wants in us* — God desires that there be no discrepancy between our inner hidden man of the heart and our outer actions. He desires that there be a wholesome harmony, a harmony that flows from the inside heart to the mind to our outward actions. The Apostle Paul put it this way: “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul (mind) and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thessalonians 5:23) God’s highest wish for each of us is that we become fully transparent, harmonious, and a walking wholeness. In this way, the fullness of Christ’s power and character can work through each of us.

The only way this can be accomplished in our lives is through God’s initial action recreating our heart, our hidden man. We read the cry of King David, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” (Psalm 51:10) We see God’s promise to fulfill such a cry: “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.” (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

God Himself will place His love and ability within our hidden man. “The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who was given to us.” (Romans 5:5) We can then fulfill the two great commandments Jesus gave us: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind... You shall love your neighbor as you love yourself.” (Matthew 22:37,39) The very life of God, the very life of the Risen Jesus Christ resides in your heart and you have within you all Who Christ is and all Christ can do. So, this recreated hidden man can perform what is in Proverbs 3:5-6: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your path straight.”

The miracle of the recreated hidden man takes place when we come to God, acknowledge we are separated from Him and need His life within us. It takes place when we sincerely take our old life without Him and place it at the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ and turn from our old life and ask the Christ to come live in our heart and bring His life within us. It takes place when we purpose in our heart to live our lives to please God with His help.

If this is you at this moment, your hidden man can be recreated if you'll pray this following prayer from your heart:

“O God, I am a sinner and I know my sins separate me from you. I need a new life. I turn from sin and I accept what your son Jesus did for me on the cross. He paid the price for my sins, a price I could not pay. I accept His sacrifice for me. I believe Jesus is Lord and I believe You raised Him from the dead. Jesus, I ask You to come live in my heart and give me the new birth and the new life that You talked about. By Your grace and strength, I'll live the rest of my life to please You. Thank you, Lord Jesus. Amen.”

If you prayed that prayer from the heart, two important things have happened in your hidden man: 1) You have become a new creation with Christ now living in you (2 Corinthians 5:17); and 2) Christ has removed your old sinful nature and placed His own righteousness within you (2 Corinthians 5:21).

With a recreated hidden man of the heart, you are now empowered by God to enter the battlefield of the hidden man, become victorious and become everything God wants you to be. Let's go!

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE THREE BATTLEFIELDS OF THE MIND**

The one who has come to God through His Son Jesus Christ has the very life of Christ living within him. When Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, He was no longer limited to living in one specific place in one earthly body. He entered His unlimited glory which meant that He could reproduce His own life and personality in an unlimited number of people through the unlimited power and presence of the Holy Spirit within a person. In fact, this was Almighty God, the Father's very purpose in sending Jesus to earth to go to the cross, die, and rise again. God wanted human beings to become like His Son Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29).

God's whole work in each and every life is to work in them and upon them in the different personalities of each individual to develop a Christ-like character in each one. The Apostle Peter writes about the “manifold grace of God”: “As each one has received a special gift employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” (1 Peter 4:10) The

actual word in Greek refers to “multi-colored” grace of God. Peter talks about how the Body of Christ is like a stained glass mosaic window — each piece different in shape and color, yet part of a bigger picture that makes up Christ.

When Christ comes in to live in a person’s heart, that person then has residing in them *all* who Christ is and *all* that Christ has (Ephesians 1:3). Through Christ, a person is already potentially complete in their hidden man. The Christian is then called to a lifetime of discipleship where they win the battle in the hidden man and then the hidden man flows out into the outer man and ultimately into the world around us.

At the moment we accept Christ as Savior and Lord, we see that He brings His inheritance of righteousness, peace and joy of the Holy Spirit into our heart. *This is your inheritance that you should be enjoying even right now as you read this book.* If you are not enjoying your righteousness, peace and joy of the Holy Spirit, then there is a battle going on in your hidden man. It is not the Lord Jesus’ desire that you be going through this inner turmoil. There are three major battlefields that a Christian goes through in the inner man. All of your inner struggles and turmoil are the result of one of these three battlegrounds. I’d like to go through these three battlefields and, like a good family doctor of the soul, diagnose the symptoms, cause and cure.

1. *The First Battlefield Of The Hidden Man Is Selfishness Vs. Service And Love* — This is the basic, key battleground of life on earth. All forms of evil and sin on this earth are the result of selfishness. All true good and every participation in the resurrection life and power of Christ result in love and service. Selfishness vs. Love and Service is the very battleground between Satan and Jesus Christ. If you’ll take the time right now to read the account of Satan’s temptation of Jesus in the wilderness at the start of Jesus’ ministry, you’ll see that Satan confronted Jesus with three temptations that at their very heart were selfishness. (Luke 4:1-13 is the best account for our purpose here today.) Selfishness vs. Love and Service is the heart of the cosmic battle between Satan and Almighty God. It is Isaiah 14:12-17 vs. John 3:16. The wars, the poverty, the crime and suffering in this world are all the results of selfishness. The victories of the Kingdom of God and the Christ-like character are all the results of love and service.

So it is in our hidden man. Every moral action we must take will be motivated either by love and service or by selfishness. Our old nature wants to assert selfishness. Selfishness is deceptive. Outwardly, it would seem to be the way to satisfy our need. “I’ve got to get mine first.” Sadly, the root

and essence of every selfish decision carries within it hurt, evil and ultimately some form of death. That which is gained through selfishness never brings true peace of satisfaction.

One way I always tell Christians they can diagnose their motivation is to look at their prayer life. When they pray, if God should say “No” or seem to be silent, do they get angry, or throw a tantrum with God? This is a sure indication of a wrong motivation in prayer and it could signal that our spiritual walk in general is also on a wrong course. Such an attitude will, of course, lead to inner turmoil and frustration (James 4:2-3).

The cure for the illness of selfishness is the practice of Christ-like love and service. Let me say right at the outset that we can only exercise Christ-like love through the power of the Risen One within us. But know this — God *has* placed that ability within us to love as He loves! Romans 5:5) It is a gift and part of the benefit package of Christ living within us! This power is released in us and through us as we bring our *life* and as we bring the *circumstances and situations* of our life to Christ and submit them to Him. Prayer and the consecration and dedication of our lives and circumstances to Christ brings our situation into the path of daily Christ-like love. This gives victory and this releases the unexpected possibilities of the resurrection power in us and in our situations.

We have to realize that the One Who rose from the dead and became King and Lord over this universe did so through a lifestyle of love and service (Matthew 20:25-28). The “big deals” in Jesus’ Kingdom are those who practice love and service, even to the point of recklessness (Matthew 18:3-4; Luke 22:25-27).

As members of Jesus. Kingdom, we’ve got to get rid of the idea that if we care about others first, we’ll be the loser. Our prayers, when they involve others, should always pray for God’s best for *everyone* involved. *True faith in the good character of God acts on the belief that if we obey God’s command to love others with His kind of love, He’ll make sure that in the process we are taken care of.* God promises that if we love with His kind of love, we’ll not be short-changed in life. Best of all, we’ll get victory in the hidden man.

2. *The Second Battlefield Of The Hidden Man Is The Material Vs. The Eternal* — This battlefield can be a very subtle and difficult battlefield at times. Because we are physical beings as well as spiritual beings, we may at times want to find our security in the material, in that which we can see and feel. When we do this, we are setting ourselves up for a fall because all material things will eventually pass away. The Apostle John wrote, “And the

world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.” (1 John 2:17) Jesus said, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” (Matthew 24:35) What can look outwardly like security can vanish in an instant.

The battle can take place in the hidden man because God and His Word always call us to choose the eternal over the material. At critical points and critical moments of decision we are challenged to choose the eternal when our old nature wants to choose the material. Prime examples are the case of Esau and the case of Moses.

In the Book of Hebrews we read, “(see) that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.” (Hebrews 12:16-17) Esau, the older of twin brothers, was in line to inherit the Covenant rights and promises God gave to his grandfather Abraham. However, he came in from working the fields one day and was hungry. All he could think of was his own hunger. His younger twin brother Jacob was cooking a delicious stew but wouldn’t give Esau any unless he sold Jacob his birthright. Well, Esau chose the material and sold his birthright and got the stew. The stew satisfied Esau — but only for so long. He realized his mistake and tried to undo it, but it was too late.

On the other hand, we read about a man named Moses. “By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to endure ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.” (Hebrews 11:24-26) Although Moses had been brought up in the royal courts of Egypt as a prince living in the lap of luxury, he chose, at a critical moment, to choose the eternal — obedience to God — rather than the material. The decision caused Moses to live in the desert as an apparent failure for 40 years. But because Moses made the right choice, he eventually became God’s person to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. Today, everyone knows about Moses. Those few who even know about Esau think of him as a failure.

Our choice of the material can often put the following choice to us: *the material* — short run comfort and success for long run pain and failure, vs. *the eternal* — short run pain and failure for long run comfort and success. In Mark’s Gospel, we see a rich young man who came to Jesus and wanted to follow Him. Jesus challenged him to sell all he had and follow Him. The rich young man, however, couldn’t do it and went away sad (Mark 10:17-

22). Few of our choices in life may be as drastic as this rich young man faced. But we *will* have occasions where we must choose. Many Bible scholars feel that this young man, if he had obeyed God and chosen the eternal, might have replaced Judas when Judas fell. But the rich young man missed the opportunity of an eternity because he chose the comfort of material goods which even today no longer exist.

You and I will have those choices in our lives when we must choose either the material or the eternal. The Holy Spirit Himself will make those choices clear. The remedy for this battle is to *know* the Word of God which always contains God's eternal answer. Then, like Moses, *choose* God's choice. All I can say regarding this battlefield is that you'll *know* when the line has been drawn and you'll *know* the choice you must make. Then, you simply make the choice — like Moses did and Esau didn't. And then you have peace and victory in your heart.

3. *The Third Battlefield Of The Hidden Man Is The Emotions Vs. The Spirit* — This is the battlefield of feelings vs. faith. It is the battle of what circumstances around us try to tell us vs. what God has promised us in His Holy Word. It is the “yo-yo” Christian vs. the established Christian.

The Lord Jesus Christ told us, “It is the Spirit Who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.” (John 6:63) We also read in the Word of God, “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” (2 Corinthians 5:7)

Of the three battlefields in the hidden man, this is probably the most down-to-earth common one because it is in this area that we deal with the most common everyday situations of our life — the practical things. The “practical” things are there every day. The practical things are often the most immediate things we have to deal with. Often the “practical things” do not involve a major moral decision on our part but they are still of such a “pressing” nature that we have to deal with them.

Sometimes in this battlefield there *are* major life-changing, pivotal events we have to deal with. In either case, we have a choice in the manner in which we'll face these situations. We can face them through the emotions or through the spirit.

The dictionary defines emotions as “feelings.” Dr. Clyde Narramore, the Christian psychiatrist, defines emotions as “an experience or mental state characterized by a strong degree of feeling and usually accompanied by motor expression often quite intense.” (*The Psychology of Counseling*, pg. 279.) If we walk in our emotions, we let the *outward circumstances of a given moment or given situation* dictate our response, usually on the basis of

limited information available to us at the given moment. We go off into fear, stress, anxiety, hate, etc., on the basis of how we perceive a given situation at a given moment. Our outward circumstances dictate whether we are happy or elated or whether we are fearful or despairing. The condition of life is such that there will always be sufficient circumstances to cause us fear, anxiety, or stress even on our best days. Consequently, the person who lets his emotions rule his hidden man will always have a constant, underlying unhappiness. Sometimes it will be described as an uneasiness that “you just can’t put your finger on.”

Such an “emotion-driven” life will be like a poison or an undrained abscess on our inner man. We’ll be “higher than a kite” one moment when we think something good is happening only to plunge to the depths of despair hours later if we are confronted by a sudden crisis. Thus, we become “yo-yo” Christians with a soap-opera in our hidden man.

God’s answer to the battlefield of the emotions is the remedy of walking in the Spirit. It is the remedy of taking the Word of God and what that Word states about the situation we face and affirming in our heart that God’s Word, His promises, His solutions are true. The Word of God is spirit and life (John 6:63). We affirm that our situation and the final outcome of anything we face is not determined by the outward circumstances we see, hear or feel at any given moment. The final outcome will always be determined by what God’s Word and God’s promises say about our situation. We literally take God at His Word. We don’t deny that our present difficulties exist, but we affirm that the final outcome of any battle we face in life *is already settled as a victory in our favor. The basis for our boldness is the faithfulness of God to His promises in His Word. The basis for our boldness is the fact that He raised Jesus Christ from the dead in victory after Jesus experienced a horrible death on the cross, seemingly senseless at the time.*

The victory will be won in this battlefield as you immerse yourself in the Bible, in God’s own Word, and you trust the Holy Spirit to make the Word real and effective to your heart and mind. The victory comes by your agreeing with what God’s promises say about your situation. You agree about God’s promise and provision for your spiritual needs, financial needs, health and healing needs; you agree with His promises for your loved ones and for all the situations they face. You become so knowledgeable about God’s Word that it automatically comes out of your heart and mouth and *it* — not your emotions — is what rules your situations. Some will argue that’s just brainwashing. So be it. Most people’s brains that I’ve encountered need

a good washing and I can't think of a better "soap" than the Word of God. Walking in the spirit and in the Word of God is infinitely and eternally better than being ruled by your emotions. "Now thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." (2 Corinthians 2:14, King James Version.)

### **CHAPTER THREE VICTORY IN THE HIDDEN MAN**

As a Christian, do you have victory in your hidden man? In the world system, we have a lost people running to and fro seeking happiness and fulfillment. The reality of the hidden man of the unsaved world is inner turmoil, anxiety, confusion, and an inner soap opera where even the noblest of dreams turn to ashes.

This state of affairs should *not* be the case in the hidden man of the heart of a Christian. All too often, though, we find the hidden man of the Christian undergoing a similar, though lesser, turmoil to that of the unsaved. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this is often because as Christians, we line up our heart on the wrong side of the inner battlefield. Our inner victory starts by lining up our choices with God's choices for us.

The heritage of the Christian hidden man is a constant awareness of righteousness, peace and the joy of the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17). This is part of the package of salvation; it is *your* inheritance as a believer! Jesus said:

*"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."*

- John 14:27

*"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."*

- John 16:33

*"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full."*

- John 15:11

If you have the living, resurrected Christ within your spirit, then all that He is resides in you. Your victory then becomes a question of letting Him and Who He is live in and through you. As John the Baptist said, *you* must decrease so *He* (Jesus) can increase in you (John 3:30). So, how do we win the battle and keep the victory in the hidden man? God has three weapons for you.

1. *First, we are told to take our thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ.* The Apostle Paul stated, “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of obedience of Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:4) We make a quality decision to take control of our thought life and take every thought that is not in harmony with the character and nature of Christ, and roll that thought up into an invisible ball and cast it away.

The Word of God says we have been given the power and authority to do that. You would be surprised at the ability God has placed within you to take your bad thoughts captive and nip them in the bud and cast them away! You have authority over your thoughts of unbelief, murmuring, anger, dishonesty, lust, and covetousness. James tells us in James 1:13-15 that every sin is the end result of a process that was birthed with a thought that should have been cast away! Paul assures us that there is a way of escape in every moment of temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13).

The great reformer Martin Luther stated that we can't stop birds from flying over our head, but we can stop them from building a nest in our hair! If a Christian plays with or entertains thoughts that are contrary to the nature of Christ and thinks on them long enough, then worldly and carnal attitudes will take root in the hidden man and slowly stifle, hinder and quench the victory of the Christ-life within. Paul urges us to bring our thought life into the obedience of the thought patterns of Christ (Philippians 2:5-11; 4:4-9; Romans 12:2).

If you have Christ within you, He *wants to and will* give you victory in your thought life. One of the great self-deceptions many Christians have is that they cannot overcome “stinking thinking” when the truth is they *like* to play “spiritual patty-cake” with worldly thoughts because deep in their heart, simple surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ is not exciting enough for

them. Make that effort to bring your thoughts captive to the mind of Christ and watch what great things He does in you!

2. *Secondly, we are to be in the place God wants us to be.* There is perfect peace and perfect provision when we are in God's will for us. Just the promise of God's perfect, victorious provision should make each of us desire to be in the place of God's will for us. Every person God calls to a certain task has always had God's promise of guaranteed success and guaranteed provision. God has called each of us to a specific plan. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)

There is also the promise of perfect peace when we are in God's will for us. Oh, the joy and peace of the Christian who knows he is doing exactly what God wants him to do! There is peace when he puts his head on the pillow at night knowing he has done what he can that day to please the only One he really has to please (Psalm 4:3-8; Matthew 10:28-31; Acts 23:1). When a person has surrendered to God's will and then difficulties arise, there is perfect peace in their heart because the responsibility for success when the battle gets beyond our human strength and ability then rests on God's shoulders! God has never lost a battle!

Perhaps *the* single most important breakthrough in our hidden man comes when we desire, accept, and fully embrace the place God wants us to be. "In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold I have come (in the roll of the Book it is written of Me) to do Thy will O God.'" (Hebrews 10:6-7)

We are, first of all, to be in that place *physically*. This involves the obedient action of our bodies and human efforts and energies.

More important, we are to be in that place *in our heart*, where the very life springs of our spirit flow and create (Proverbs 4:23). Sometimes, people will grudgingly obey God's will for their lives, but there is no embracing of that will from the heart. *The true joy and power of the victorious life comes from an unconditional acceptance of and trust in God's plan for an individual.*

If you don't know what God's specific plan and purpose for you is, then go to Him and ask Him, and don't stop seeking Him until He gives you a satisfactory answer. Finding His plan for your life is so important, it should be of *top* priority in your life until you find it. As Evangelist Kenneth Copeland wrote: "You have a right to know God's plan for your life." (*Six Steps To Excellence In Ministry*, pg. 53). I believe with all my heart that God has a responsibility to let you know His plan for you. Once He does,

however, you have the responsibility to accept, obey and *embrace* that plan with your heart. You have no right to disagree with His plan or try to barter with Him to make modifications to your own liking. Your life is not your own; the Lord Jesus Christ has the right to “call the shots” in your life (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 5:15). More than likely, though, objections to God’s will for you would not arise from your spirit, but from your flesh and your ego. A good, loving Heavenly Father actually knows us better than we know ourselves (Jeremiah 29:11; Psalm 84:11), but it is our “self” that fights God’s plan for us.

If you’ve been disobedient and have now lost your way, and you don’t know what to do, go back to the last thing you *know* God wanted you to do and start doing it again. God will take over from there!

3. *Thirdly, we must eliminate “sin consciousness.”* What do I mean? I mean we must let the blood of Christ truly and once and for all free us from the guilt, shame and fear that arise because of our past sins. Understand me, this is *not* a license to sin or have a callous conscience. It means that we let the work of Christ be effective in our lives. Your sinful past is indeed in the past. If it is at the foot of the cross in sincere godly sorrow and repentance, and covered by the blood of Jesus Christ, it, in reality, no longer exists (Psalm 103:12; 2 Corinthians 5:17,21; Colossians 2:13-14). The Word of God tells us, “How much more will the blood of Christ, Who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Hebrews 9:14)

The blood of Jesus Christ should cleanse us from sin and sin consciousness (Hebrews 10:1-18). Our hidden man should stand before God without shame, guilt or fear. Shame is the sense of disgrace we have at being found out or exposed for our sin. Guilt is that sense of being responsible for having committed a wrong act which has caused harm, hurt or injustice. Fear is that sense of torment, anxiety and dismay at having earned the displeasure of someone who can harm you and you expect them to harm you. Because we have the righteousness of Christ, we can stand before God reconciled to Him in our hidden man. This is the great gift of Jesus’ salvation. He took all our dirty, filthy, malicious sins and signed His name on them and went to the Father and said that He (Jesus) did them. In a very real sense, Jesus is the older brother who took the beating we deserved for our sins. Freedom from sin consciousness is His gift to us.

These three steps will indeed secure the victory in our hidden man. We nurture this victory through reading the Word of God, which is food for our inner man, and by praying in the Spirit, praying in “tongues” (Jude 20), and

by inner fellowship with God. Your inner, hidden person is the most precious thing you have. It will endure forever. "When Christ, Who is our life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory." (Colossians 3:4) I pray that on that day, when your hidden person is revealed, it will truly shine with the same brilliance of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

Take care and God bless you.

\* \* \*

We invite you to send any prayer requests you might have for prayer at our chapel prayer meetings. Send to:

Christ's Chapel  
PO Box 3182  
Fall River, MA 02722

Also write to be put on our mailing list to receive periodic letters. Let us know specifically if you'd like to receive the Daily Devotional.