1. Spiritual Living

Introduction

Most of us are very comfortable living in our home town among our own people. But what happens when we’re placed in a foreign country with a language and culture unfamiliar to us? Many people become confused, anxious and even depressed. The name for this condition is Culture Shock. Culture Shock occurs when we find ourselves in surroundings completely new to us. Familiar customs no longer apply and many things must be relearned.

Becoming a Christian can be a Culture Shock as we find ourselves having to learn to live by the Spirit. After living so much of our lives in the Physical world, we must now learn to live in the Spiritual.

Spiritual Nature of the Christian

The Bible describes Man as a Living Soul, existing in a Body, and having a Spirit. Our Bodies connect us to the Physical World, while our Spirit is our link to God and the Spiritual World. Our Soul, which includes our mind, emotions and will, is influenced both by our Body and our Spirit.

All men are born with a Sin Nature, but Christians are Born Again by God with a New Nature and possess the Holy Spirit!

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Spiritual Nature of People

The Bible describes *Three Kinds of People* in 1 Corinthians 2:14-3:3.

- **The Non-Christian**
  - Does Not Have Christ or Eternal Life.
  - Life Influenced by Satan and the World.
  - Has no Fellowship with God.
  - Is an Enemy of God.
  - Is Unable to Live a Life Pleasing to God.

The Non-Christian does not have Christ in his life and is *spiritually separated from God*. His essential nature is *sinful*, and because of this, he is strongly influenced by the *World* and *Satan*. He is an *enemy of God* and *cannot please God*.

- **The Spiritual Christian**
  - Has Christ and Eternal Life.
  - Life Dominated by Christ.
  - Life Influenced by God and His Word
  - Is a Child of God.
  - Has Fellowship with God.
  - Is Living a Life Pleasing to God.

The Spiritual Christian has Christ in his life and is *spiritually alive to God*. His essential nature is *holy*, and he is strongly influenced by *God* and His *Word*. He is a *child of God* and *pleases God* with his life.

- **The Worldly Christian**
  - Has Christ and Eternal Life.
  - Life Influenced by Satan and the World.
  - Is a Child of God.
  - Has No Fellowship with God.
  - Is Not Living a Life Pleasing to God.

The Worldly Christian has Christ in his life and is *spiritually alive to God*. His essential nature is *holy* and *pure*, but lives according to the *Sin Nature*, opening himself to the influence of the *World* and *Satan*. He is a *child of God*, but *does not please God* with his life.

Application:
- Which *Person* above best represents your life?
- If you are the *Non Christian*, receive *Christ* and let Him *fill* your life!
- If you are the *Worldly Christian*, allow Christ to *fill* your life.

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*Warning!*
A Christian who continually lives in sin may not be a true Christian at all.

*see 1 John 2:3-6*
**Spiritual Growth**

**Spiritual Growth** occurs as we yield more of our lives to Christ until He fills every part: Will, Mind, Emotions and Body. As we grow spiritually, we move from being predominantly *Worldly* in our lifestyle to being *Spiritual*.

### Our Minds Filled with Christ

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

*Romans 12:2*

The word *conform* means to be ‘squeezed in a mold’. We must resist being *squeezed* into the mold of the world’s values and patterns. Instead we are to be ‘transformed’ (Grk metamorphosis), or changed from the inside through the renewing of our minds!

### Our Wills Filled with Christ

“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”

*Luke 22:42*

In Luke 22:42, Jesus prays that if His Father were *willing*, He be somehow spared the suffering awaiting Him on the Cross. But He yields His Will to His Father’s. Why? Because He is *convinced* that God is *all wise, all knowing, and all loving*, and that God’s Will is “good, pleasing and perfect”!

### Our Emotions Filled with Christ

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”

*Colossians 3:12*

**Our Emotions** can be one of the most difficult areas of our lives to control. Feelings are so often *dependent on circumstances which can change unexpectedly*. But we can experience God’s emotion as we yield our lives to Him and live moment by moment in the Spirit.

**Read John 2:13-17.** What does this passage teach you about Jesus and anger? Can you think of times when it is right to be angry? When would those be?
Faith: The Only Way

“We live by faith, not by sight.”
2 Corinthians 5:7

In the Physical World, we live by our Physical Senses: Sight, Touch, Hearing, Taste and Smell. But how do we live in the Spiritual realm while still in this physical body? 2 Corinthians 5:7 provides the concise answer: by Faith!

Living by Faith in God and His Word is like flying a plane by instruments. Though you may feel like you’re flying right side up, your instruments may indicate the plane is really upside down! The pilot must discipline himself to trust the instruments and not his own feelings! In the same way, Christians must discipline themselves to trust God’s Word, and not their feelings!

Feelings versus the Truth of God’s Word.
1. I don’t feel God’s presence. vs (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5)
2. I don’t feel forgiven. vs (1 John 1:9)
3. I am afraid of dying. vs (John 14:1-3; Psalm 16:11)
4. I am anxious. vs (Philippians 4:6 & 19)

“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”
Hebrews 11:6

For More Information Read “Birthright” by David Needham