

Results of Intimacy With God

By Nancy Missler

One of God's purposes for the sanctification process is, amazingly, that He desires our fellowship. Thus, He works *through our spirit* not only to conform us into His image, but also to establish an intimate love-relationship with us. In order to accomplish this, He draws us to Himself in a variety of ways: After He *quickens* and makes our spirit alive, He then *purifies, renews* and *strengthens* our spirit. Once this is completed, His Holy Spirit is free to come forth (through our purified spirit) and *fill us and empower us*. This is what leads us to intimacy, communion and a love-relationship with Him that we never thought possible. Part of this relationship is the privilege *of worshiping Him in the spirit*.

Let's explore each of these ways that God works through our spirit. Then, we'll examine some of the results of spiritual intimacy.

Our spirit is *quickened* or made alive when God's Spirit unites with our human spirit and we are "born anew." A *purified spirit* is one that has been cleansed and separated from all soulish (fleshly) entanglements.

Our Renewed Spirit

A purified spirit and a *renewed spirit* are very closely related. A renewed spirit is simply a purified spirit that is taken one step farther. It's a spirit that not only has been cleansed, but also released and freed to serve God.

To be renewed simply means to "stand back up again" or to "reset to zero." It means a spirit that has been restored to its original image. As Psalm 103:5 says, "*...thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.*" What makes this Scripture so interesting is that after an eagle molts and loses its feathers, as his new feathers come in, he literally regains new physical strength.

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4:16, "...though our outward man [soul] perish, yet the inward man [spirit] is renewed day by day."

And it's the same with us. Once our soulish powers are deflated (or fall away, so to speak), our spirit can once again be renewed, strengthened and endowed with power. We have seen that our spirit can only be released according to the degree of brokenness in our lives. The more we are broken, the more God can release our spirit, and the more sensitive we can become, not only to Him, but also to others. Unless we have been truly broken and our spirit released, not only will our communication with God be hindered, but also our spiritual fellowship with others will be quenched. Others will not be able to hear or see *Jesus* through us. Our conversations will simply be "soulish communication." Therefore, unless we share *spirit to spirit*, we will not be able to touch the heart of another person.

The Spirit alone is who makes people "live." The Spirit is who quickens life and makes things come alive; it's who enables us to know God's Word better; it's who gives us discernment; and it's who helps us communicate with God. The Spirit of God through our spirit is who makes others want to know Jesus.

A renewed spirit means our *conscience* has become cleansed, our *intuition* heightened and our *communion* sweetened. So now, we *can* truly "serve God **with** our spirit." (Rom. 1:9)

Our Clear Conscience

A renewed spirit means that our conscience (which is the inner voice of God) is, once again, opened and cleansed. Remember that our conscience is what enables God to teach us, to guide us and to communicate with us. In other words, if our conscience is defiled, we won't be able to discern either His voice or His will.

Thus, the purer our conscience becomes, the clearer we will hear God's voice and the more He can teach us. Romans 8 tells us that the Spirit of God alone knows the Mind of Christ and He alone can make intercession for us according to the will of God (verses 26-27). In other words, when we're not sure how to pray, what to pray or what His will is, the Spirit of God will intercede for us. He is in the process of teaching us how to do His will from our heart (from our spirit). "Doing the will of God from the heart..." (Ephesians 6:6)

Do you remember the story of Stephen in the book of Acts? Stephen was so surrendered and yielded to God and so full of His Spirit that he knew exactly what God's will was and spoke accordingly. All the people who heard him were amazed at what he said and, thus, they couldn't resist the wisdom by which he spoke. They knew what he said was from God (6:8-15).

It's the same with us. When our spirit is cleansed and renewed, the Spirit of God will intercede for us and tell us what to say and how to say it. But if we do not obey the Spirit of God when He reveals things to us, then we will grieve Him and quench any further spiritual communication. This is why it's so very important not to have the slightest accusation in our conscience; otherwise, our spirit will be quenched. Our conscience needs to be totally pure, in order to hear God correctly and in order to know right from wrong. We should actually be more afraid of a reproach from our conscience than what all the men in the world might say about us.

An Example: Chris

I read an incredible example of this in the newspaper. Chris was a young man who accidentally killed a girl 25 years ago. He was only 17 at the time and "high" on drugs, but the authorities never caught him. The incident so scared him that he got his life turned around and never spoke of the incident to anyone.

He eventually became a Christian, married and had a family. He became very active in his church and a model family man. When he first married, he told his wife that there was "something bad" in his past that he was ashamed of, but he never told her specifically what it was.

As they began to grow in the Lord, one day his wife mentioned to him, "How can you serve God with a clear conscience if you never have taken care of that 'bad thing' in your past?" Even though she had no idea what that "bad thing" was, her comments really bothered Chris. And, as time went on, he found he couldn't do the things that he used to without feeling guilty. He knew God had forgiven him for the murder, because when he had become a Christian that's one of the first things he confessed and repented of.

But, taking that one step farther and turning himself into the authorities, was something he never considered—until his wife's comments. After months of wrestling with himself over this issue, he finally shared with her what the "bad thing" was. For a long time, they both prayed about what God would have them to do. Incredibly, they both came to the same conclusion, that Chris would never have total peace within himself until he turned himself

in. So, 25 years after the murder, Chris went to the authorities and confessed his crime.

The whole town—the police, the sheriff and all the authorities—already knew Chris as a model citizen and family man. They were completely shocked and didn't want to put him in prison. It ended up that the courts gave him only ten years in prison, which was a very lenient sentence.

Now Chris's conscience is clear and he is at peace with God. Hopefully, he will be paroled early for his good behavior. But, from the sound of it, God had some "work" that He wanted Chris to do "for Him" inside those prison walls. I'm sure Chris's life will touch and affect many lives.

A reproach in our conscience that we don't follow can cause us to miss God's will, misunderstand His ways and ultimately lose our fellowship with Him. Only under the Holy Spirit's control can our conscience grow more and more in tune to God's voice and His commands. This is why a Spirit-filled conscience is the organ of our faith.