

## Chapter 25. The Inward and the Outward

*"Foolish ones! Did not He who made the outside make the inside also?" – Luke 11:40*

Every spirit seeks to create for itself a form or shape in which its life is embodied. The outward is the visible expression of the hidden inward life. The outward is generally known before the inward. Through the outward, the inward life develops and reaches its full perfection. *"However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual."* (**1 Corinthians 15:46**). One of the greatest secrets of the Christian life is to **understand and maintain the right relationship** between the inward and outward life.

If Adam in paradise had not listened to the tempter, his trial would have resulted in the perfecting of his inward life. His sin and ruin, and the cause of all his misery, were that he yielded himself to the power of the visible outward world. Instead of seeking his happiness in the hidden inward life of a heart in which God's command was honoured, in the inward attitudes of love and faith, of obedience and dependence, he fixed his desire on the world outside of himself, on the pleasure and the knowledge of good and evil that it could give him.

All false religion, from the most degrading idolatry to the corruption of Judaism and Christianity, has its root in this: that what is outward, what pleases the eye, or interests the mind, or gratifies the taste, takes the place of truth in the inward heart, and of the hidden wisdom that God seeks and gives in the heart and life.

The distinguishing feature of the New Testament is that it is **a dispensation of the inner life**. The promise of the New Covenant is: *"I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."* (**Hebrews 8:10**). *"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit **within you**."* (**Ezekiel 36:26**). *"I will put My Spirit **within you** and cause you to walk in My statutes."* (**Ezekiel 36:27**). The promise of the Lord was: *"The Spirit of Truth...**dwells with you and shall be in you**."* (**John 14:17**); *"At that day **you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you**."* (**John 14:20**).

Religion consists in the **state of the heart**, in a heart into which God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son, a heart in which the love of God is shed abroad. In such a heart

**true salvation** is found. The inner chamber, with its secret interaction with the Father Who sees in secret, is the symbol and training school of the inner life. The true and faithful daily use of the inner chamber will make the hidden inner life strong and fulfilled.

The great danger in all our religion is giving more time and interest to the outward appearance than to the inner reality. It is **not the intensity** of your Bible study, **nor the frequency** or **the fervency** of your prayers or good works, that constitutes a true spiritual life. No! We need to realise that God is Spirit, so we have a spirit (a new-born spirit) that can know and receive Him, become conformed to His likeness, and be a partaker of the character and dispositions that animate Him as God, in His goodness and love.

Settle this firmly in your mind, that **our whole salvation consists of the manifestation of the nature, life and Spirit of Christ Jesus in our outward life and inward new man**. Only this restores, renews, and regains the first life of God in the soul of a human. Wherever you go, whatever you do, at home or abroad in the world, do everything with a desire to be one with Christ, to imitate His character, His attitudes, and His desires. Determine to desire nothing less than that which exercises and increases the spirit and life of Christ in your soul; and to have everything within you transformed into the image and character of our Lord Jesus.

Consider the treasure that you have in you, the Saviour of the world, the eternal Word of God, hidden in your heart. A seed of the Divine Nature that can overcome sin and death within you and generate the life of heaven again in your soul. Turn inward to your heart, and your heart will find its Saviour, its God, within itself. You feel and see nothing of God, because you seek for Him outside, in books, in the church, in outward exercises; but you **will not find Him there until you first found Him in your heart**. Seek for Him in your heart, and you will never seek in vain. **He dwells in your heart, there is the seat of His light and Holy Spirit!**

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, You are more important than anything else in my life. I desire that the seed of your Divine Nature in me will overcome sin, the flesh and the world. Here am I. I am seeking You in my heart. Let me find You here."*