

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROPER CONDITION OF THE SPIRIT

An erring spirit often leads to improper conduct. If a believer desires to walk according to the spirit, he must continuously keep himself in a proper condition. The spirit, like the mind, can become unrestrained and insolent, or it can shrink back. Without the Holy Spirit guarding his spirit, a believer will fail in his outward conduct once his spirit fails. We should realize that behind the many failures in outward conduct, the spirit has failed even before the conduct failed. If the spirit of a believer is strong and powerful, it can control the soul and body, not allowing them to become dissolute, regardless of circumstances. Otherwise, they will suppress the spirit and cause a believer to fall.

God emphasizes our spirit. This is where the new life dwells and the Holy Spirit works. This is where we fellowship with God, understand God's will, and receive the revelation of the Holy Spirit. This is where we are trained and have growth. This is where we resist all the attacks of the enemy and obtain authority to overcome the devil and his army. This is also where we receive power for the work. The spirit has received the resurrection life, only later will we have a body of resurrection. Therefore, the condition of our spirit will also be the condition of our spiritual life. Therefore, it is very important to keep our spirit in a proper condition. The Lord does not care for the outward man, the soul, in a Christian; He pays attention to our inward man, the spirit. If our inward man is not in a proper condition, our entire living will be upside-down, even though our soul-life is still very prosperous.

The Bible is not silent regarding the proper condition of the believer's spirit. Many experienced believers have already passed through the exhortations of the Bible. They are aware that a believer must keep his spirit in the various conditions taught in the Bible if he wants to keep his victorious position and ability to co-labor with God. We have already seen that the spirit is controlled by the believer's renewed will. This is very important because a believer can put his spirit in its proper position only by his will. Since we have already mentioned the importance of the spirit being in a proper condition, we do not need to repeat it.

CONTRITE

"Jehovah...saves those who are contrite in spirit" (Psa. 34:18). "For thus says the high and exalted One,/Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:/I will dwell in the high and holy place,/And with the contrite and lowly of spirit" (Isa. 57:15).

It is a common misunderstanding to think that we need a contrite spirit only when we repent to believe in the Lord or when we fall and commit sins. But God wants us to continually keep our spirit in a state of contriteness. Even though we may not commit sins daily, God wants us to constantly repent with contrition because our flesh still exists, and it can be active anytime. Such a spirit will keep us from losing our watchfulness. We should never commit sins, but we should continually be contrite because we are sinful. The presence of God can be felt in such a spirit.

God does not want us to occasionally repent, thinking that this is enough; He wants us to continually repent with contrition in our living. Consequently, as soon as there is any discord with the Holy Spirit in our living and conduct, we can immediately sense it and grieve over it. Only by this can we admit that we are wrong when people tell us that we are really wrong. Repentance with contrition is very necessary because a believer, even

though joined to the Lord in one spirit, still can err. The spirit can err (Isa. 29:24); even if the spirit does not err, the mind can become blurred, not knowing how to execute the intent of the spirit. A contrite spirit can cause a believer to immediately admit, without any cover-up, the small matters that others see in him that are unlike the Lord. God saves only those with a contrite spirit; He cannot save any other because He needs a contrite spirit to reveal His intent. Whoever covers-up and whitewashes his mistakes definitely does not have a contrite spirit. Even God cannot completely save him. We need a spirit that can receive rebuke from the Holy Spirit as well as from people in the world, and we need to admit that we have not reached the stage where we should be. Then we shall see the salvation of God in our daily living.

BROKEN

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit" (Psa. 51:17).

"Broken" in the original text has the meaning of "trembling." Some believers, after committing sins, remain unperturbed in their spirit as if nothing happened. A healthy spirit, after a sin has been committed, invariably would be broken—just like David's. Indeed, a man with a broken spirit can easily be recovered back to God.

TREMBLING

"But to this kind of man will I look, to him who is poor /And of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word" (Isa. 66:2).

"Contrite" in the original text has the meaning of "beaten." God is pleased when the spirit of the believer is very careful, as if it is always under rebuke and beating, fearing God and His word. A believer's spirit must reach a stage of constantly fearing God. The presumptuous and self-willed heart must be completely broken, allowing the word of God to be the guide in all things. A believer must have this holy respect, having absolutely no trust in himself. Since his spirit has already been beaten, he dares not lift up his head; instead, he always obeys the command of God. A hardened spirit is always an obstacle in obeying the will of God. Only after the cross has accomplished a thorough work in enabling the believer to clearly know the unreliability of his ideas, feelings, and desires does he dare not become presumptuous. He becomes extremely cautious in all things, knowing that they will doubtlessly fail without the intervening and keeping power of God. We must not become independent of God. Whenever our spirit ceases to tremble, it will have an independent (presumptuous) intent. We rely on God only when we realize that we are in a completely helpless situation. A trembling spirit keeps us from failing and causes us to really know God.

HUMBLE

"To be of an humble spirit with the lowly" (Prov. 16:19).

"Honor shall uphold the humble in spirit" (Prov. 29:23).

"I will dwell...with the contrite and lowly of spirit,/To revive the spirit of the lowly" (Isa. 57:15).

Being humble is not despising oneself; rather, it is not looking at oneself. An attitude of self-conceit in a believer's spirit is the proof of his fall. Humility is not only before God, it is also before man. A humble spirit can be seen in communicating with the lowly. Only

a humble spirit will not despise any man created by God. The presence and glory of God are manifested in the man with a humble spirit.

A humble spirit is one which can be taught, one which can be exhorted, and one which can receive explanation. Many believers are too haughty in spirit; therefore, they can only teach others and cannot be taught. Many believers are so immovably stubborn in spirit that it is hard for them to be taught. Even though they realize that they are wrong, they still hold on to their own view. Many believers are too hard in spirit to listen to others' explanation regarding a misunderstanding. Only a humble spirit has the receiving capacity. God needs a humble spirit to manifest His virtues. How can a proud spirit listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit and co-labor with the Holy Spirit? The spirit must be void of any trace of pride and must always be soft, tender, and flexible. A spirit with any amount of hardness is unlike that of the Lord; therefore, it is unable to fellowship with the Lord. The spirit must be humble, always waiting on the Lord, and without any resistance towards the Lord before it can walk with Him.

POOR

"Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matt. 5:3).

Being poor in spirit is realizing that one has absolutely nothing. The danger for a believer is that there are too many things in his spirit. Only those who realize that they are poor in spirit can be humble. A believer's experience, growth, and progress very often become self-valued treasures in his spirit, causing it to lose its poverty. To meditate on one's gains and pay attention to one's experiences are very subtle dangers. The believer, however, often does not realize this. What is being poor? Being poor is having nothing. If a believer has the deepest experience and constantly remembers the experience, it is like cargo in his spirit and becomes a snare to him. Only an empty spirit will cause a believer to lose himself in God. A rich spirit will cause a believer to become self-centered. Complete salvation frees a believer out of self and back to God. If a believer retains something for himself, his spirit will immediately turn inward and be unable to "reach out" to be joined in God.

MEEK

"A spirit of meekness" (Gal. 6:1).

This is a very important condition for the spirit. Meekness is the opposite of hardness and stubbornness. God requires a meek spirit of us. An unyielding spirit will often lose the leading of God. A meek spirit can forsake one's will and obey God in the shortest time. Whoever has a meek spirit can immediately stop, according to the Lord's leading, without any previous notification from God, even when he is in the midst of utter prosperity in his work. Philip was like this when he was called in Samaria to go to the wilderness. A meek spirit turns freely in God's hands as God wills. A meek spirit does not know how to resist God and follow one's own will. God needs such a submissive spirit to accomplish His will.

A meek spirit is not any less important towards man. A meek spirit is a spirit which is like a lamb, a spirit of the cross. "Who being reviled did not revile in return; suffering, He did not threaten" (1 Pet. 2:23); this is a meek spirit. A meek spirit is willing to be wronged. Even though one is protected by the law and able to take revenge, he would by no means use his fleshly arm to redress himself. This spirit, though suffering pain and damage, causes no harm to others. Whoever has such a spirit conducts himself in

righteousness but does not demand righteousness from others. He is filled with love, grace, and kindness; therefore, he is able to melt those who are surrounding him.

FERVENT

"Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord" (Rom. 12:11).

The flesh can become enthusiastic for a moment from stimulation or emotion, but this is only temporary and does not last long. Even when the flesh is most zealous, it can still be very lazy because it will only be zealous for the things which suit its will. Its zealousness is merely helped by emotion. It cannot serve the Lord in those things which it dislikes or when it is emotionally cold. The flesh cannot labor with the Lord in continually doing things slowly, step by step, rain or shine. Being "fervent in spirit" is a long-term matter; only then can we always serve the Lord. We should avoid all fleshly enthusiasm. We should let the Holy Spirit fill our spirit and keep our spirit fervent. Then, even when our emotion is cold, our spirit will not become cold and immovable in the Lord's work.

The apostle's word in this verse is a commandment. Therefore, our renewed will can choose this. We should exercise our will to choose fervency. We should say, "My spirit desires to be fervent and is unwilling to be cold." When our emotion is utterly disinterested, we should let our fervent spirit control everything, not letting our lukewarm feelings overcome us. Always serving the Lord in singleness is a demonstration of a fervent spirit.

COOL

"He that is of a cool spirit is a man of understanding" (Prov. 17:27, ASV).

Our spirit needs to be fervent. It also needs to be cool or calm. Fervency is related to not being "slothful in zeal...serving the Lord"; coolness is related to knowledge.

If our spirit is not cool, our actions will often be uncontrolled. The purpose of the enemy is to cause the saints to go astray and lose contact with the Holy Spirit. We often see that when a saint's spirit is not cool, he changes his living from one which is according to principle to one which is according to emotion. The spirit and mind originally were closely linked together. As soon as the spirit is not calm, the mind becomes provoked; as soon as the mind becomes fervent, the believer loses control of his many actions which then become abnormal. Therefore, it is always profitable to maintain a calm spirit. In order to keep our walk always on the path of the Lord, we have to constantly ignore excitement in the emotion, an increase in our desire, and confusion in the mind; instead, we should retreat to ponder every question in our calm spirit. If we act whenever our spirit is provoked, we fear that all the resulting actions will be against the will of God.

Because of our knowledge of the self, God, Satan, and our thorough perception of all things, we should have a calmness in the spirit which soulish believers never have. The Holy Spirit should fill the believer's spirit. The soul should be completely put to death so that the spirit can have an unspeakable calmness. Regardless of any changes in soul, body, or environment, the calmness within the spirit will definitely not be lost. Just like the sea, regardless of how much the waves roar on the surface of the sea, the bottom of the sea is always very quiet and still. Before a believer separates his soul from his spirit, whenever something happens unexpectedly, his whole person immediately becomes

confused, bewildered, or at a loss as to what to do or is at least shaken in his purpose. This is because of the lack of spiritual knowledge and the lack of separation between the soul and spirit. Therefore, in order to maintain a separation between the soul and the spirit, he must maintain a coolness in the spirit. The believer will then have an "unshaken" experience. No matter how disturbing the outward circumstances are, they cannot cause him to lose the calmness and peace within. Even if a mountain collapsed in front of him, he would not lose his calmness. This is not gained by man's meditation but by the believer's reliance on the Holy Spirit's revelation of the real condition of all things and by the restriction of the believer's soul. This prevents the soul from controlling his spirit.

The matter we are discussing relates to the control of the will. Our spirit should be subject to the control of our will. Our will desires fervency; it also desires calmness. We should not allow our spiritual condition to go beyond what our will is able to control. It should be fervent in the Lord's work, but it should also maintain a cool attitude when doing the Lord's work.

REJOICING

"And my spirit has exulted in God my Savior" (Luke 1:47).

The spirit of a believer should take the attitude of brokenness towards self (Psa. 51:17), while simultaneously rejoicing in God. The believer rejoices not because of something joyful or because of any personal experience, work, blessing, or environment. He rejoices because God is his center. Actually speaking, apart from God, there is nothing which can make a believer rejoice.

If a believer's spirit is suppressed by worry, grief, or sadness, his spirit immediately becomes derelict. It becomes depressed and loses its proper position, unable to fulfill the Holy Spirit's leading. Once a believer's spirit is suppressed by heavy burdens, it immediately loses its agility, freedom, and brightness, and it falls from the ascended position. If the period of grief is prolonged, the extent of the damage suffered by the spirit is immeasurable. At such a time, nothing else can help except to rejoice in God. Rejoice in the fact that God is God; rejoice in how God has accomplished everything to be our Savior. A believer must not lose his "hallelujah."

NOT COWARDLY

"For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness" (2 Tim. 1:7).

Cowardice is not humbleness. Being humble is absolutely forgetting one's self—one's weaknesses as well as one's strengths. Being a coward is remembering one's weaknesses and one's self. Shrinking back and timidity do not please God. On the one hand, God desires us to be trembling because we are nothing, but on the other hand, He wants us to be bold to step forward because of His power. To be bold is to witness for the Lord, to suffer pain, to bear shame, to lose everything, to rely on the Lord, and to trust in His love, wisdom, power, truthfulness, and promises. This is what the Lord desires of us. Whenever we see ourselves shrinking back in matters like witnessing for the Lord, we should realize that our spirit has left its proper condition. We should keep our spirit in "fearlessness."

We should have a spirit of power, love, and a sober mind. Our spirit needs to be strong and powerful, but it should not be so strong as to become unloving. Being quiet, self-disciplined, and not easily provoked are also important. To resist the enemy, our spirit needs to be strong; to deal with people in the world, our spirit needs to be loving; to conduct ourselves properly, our spirit needs to be sober.

QUIET

"The hidden man of the heart in the incorruptible adornment of a meek and quiet spirit, which is very costly in the sight of God" (1 Pet. 3:4).

Even though this word is spoken to the sisters, spiritually speaking, the brothers also need such a teaching.

"To aspire to be quiet" (1 Thes. 4:11) is the responsibility of every believer. Today there is indeed too much talking among the believers. Sometimes, there are more unspoken words than those that are spoken. Confused thoughts and garrulous speakings are sufficient to cause our spirit to wander outside the control of our will. An "uncontrolled spirit" will often cause man to act according to the flesh. When the spirit of a believer is uncontrolled, it is very difficult for him to keep himself from sinning. An erring spirit often leads to wrong conduct.

Before the mouth will be quiet, the spirit must be quiet, because whatever is in the spirit will come out from the mouth. We should always be careful to keep our spirit quiet so that we can remain quiet when things become confusing. A quiet spirit is indispensable in order for us to walk according to the spirit. Otherwise, we will fall into sin. If our spirit is quiet, we can hear the voice of the Holy Spirit in our spirit. Then we can execute God's will and understand what we cannot understand amid confusion. This quiet spirit is the ornament of a believer. It is what a believer should express outwardly.

NEW

"In newness of spirit" (Rom. 7:6).

This is a very important step in spiritual life and work. A stale spirit cannot touch people. At the most, it can give people some kind of thought. Even so, it is powerless; it cannot make people think earnestly. A stale spirit only generates stale thoughts. A vivacious life can never flow out of a stale spirit. Whatever the stale spirit generates—words, teachings, attitudes, thoughts, living—is stale and old and belongs to the past. Many doctrines only reach the believer's mind, they have no root in the spirit. Behind the teaching there is no spirit to "touch" another's spirit. Maybe a believer has a doctrine which he once experienced, but now the doctrine has become something of the past, a souvenir, a memory in the mind—it has passed from the spirit to the mind. His thought may be quite fresh, newly received in the mind. But since the thought has not been substantiated by life, those who hear him and those who are near him will not feel that there is a fresh spirit touching them.

Many times we have seen a kind of Christian who always obtains something new from the Lord. When we stand in front of such a person, we almost feel as if he has just come from the Lord's presence and has brought us before the Lord. This kind of person seems to continually obtain new strength, just like eagles do. This is the way young people are. They do not give people dry, rotten, and infested manna in the mind but fish and bread

on the fire of coals in the spirit. This is newness. Apart from this, everything is stale. No matter how deep and how marvelous some thoughts may seem, they can never touch people the way the new and fresh spirit can.

We must keep our spirit new and fresh. If our spirit has not been in the Lord and blessed by the Lord, it is unfit to meet others. No matter whether it is our life, thought, or experience, if something becomes a memory in the past, it is stale. All we have must continually be new from the Lord. Imitating others, without the experience in life, definitely does not count, but even imitating one's own past experience also has no effect. This should make us realize the importance of "I live because of the Father" (John 6:57). Only when we constantly draw the Father's life to be our life can our spirit be new and fresh all the time. A spirit that is not new and fresh cannot bear fruit in labor, cannot walk according to the Spirit in life, and cannot overcome in battle. A stale spirit cannot see man because it has not yet seen God. For the spirit to remain fresh all the time, it must always be touching God.

HOLY

"Be holy both in body and in spirit" (1 Cor. 7:34).

"Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and of spirit" (2 Cor. 7:1).

If we want to walk according to spirit, we should always keep our spirit holy. An unholy spirit will mislead people. Having improper thoughts in criticizing people or conjecturing about matters, remembering others' sins, lacking love, talking too much, criticizing harshly, and being self-righteous, unreceptive towards exhortation, jealous towards the brothers, conceited, and so forth are all able to defile the spirit. An unholy spirit cannot be new and fresh.

In our pursuit of a spiritual living, we cannot ignore a sin even for a minute. Sins damage us more than anything else. Even though we understand how to be free from sins and how to walk according to spirit, we still need to be careful that we do not unconsciously return to our past sinful situation. When sin comes, it is impossible to walk according to the spirit. We must always be watchful to have the attitude of being dead so that sin will not overcome us or enter into our spirit to poison it. Without holiness, no man can see the Lord.

STRONG

"Became strong in spirit" (Luke 1:80).

Our spirit must gradually grow and become strong. This is indispensable in spiritual living. Many times we feel that our spirit is not strong enough to control our soul and body, especially when our soul is stimulated or when our body is weak. Sometimes when we want to help others, seeing the heavy burden in their spirit, we feel how powerless our own spirit is. We are unable to release them. Sometimes in our battle with the enemy, we see that we are not strong enough in our spiritual strength, finding it difficult to "wrestle" unto victory with the enemy for a long time. Many times we really feel that our spiritual strength is not enough to control everything. There are many areas in our living and work which we can barely manage. How we wish that we had a stronger spirit!

Once the spirit is strong, there is a sharp intuition and discerning power. There is also the ability to refuse everything which does not belong to the spirit. Some believers intend to walk according to the spirit, but they are unable because the power in their spirit is not sufficient to control everything; on the contrary, it is subject to being controlled. We cannot expect the Holy Spirit to replace us in doing all the work; our regenerated spirit needs to co-labor with the Holy Spirit. We must learn how to use our spirit and use it as best we know how. If a believer uses his spirit, it will gradually become strong and have the power to break through all that is hindering the Holy Spirit, regardless of whether it is the stubborn will, the confused mind, or the unrestrained emotion.

The Bible tells us that the spirit can be wounded (Prov. 18:14), meaning that the spirit can feel hurt. A wounded spirit is very weak. If our spirit is strong, we are able to stand the stimulation of the soul and not be shaken. Moses' spirit may be considered as being very strong, but because he did not constantly keep it strong, the Israelites were able to provoke his spirit unto sinning (Psa. 106:33). If our spirit is strong, we will be able to declare victory in the Lord whatever the situation and however great the suffering in the body or sorrow in the emotions.

Only the Holy Spirit can grant us the strength needed by the inner man. The strength in our spirit comes from the power of the Holy Spirit. Yet there is also a need for the spirit itself to be trained. After a believer has learned how to walk according to spirit, he will learn how to use the power of his spirit in his work and not his natural power. In life, he will know how to live by the spiritual life and not rely on the soulish life. In battle, he will learn how to use the strength in the spirit and not his soulish strength to resist, attack, and oppose Satan and his evil spirits. This naturally will improve and needs to improve. As a believer walks according to the spirit, he receives more power from the Holy Spirit. At the same time, his spirit becomes stronger. A believer should always keep his spirit in a strong condition. He should never let it lose its power lest it become unable to deal with any needs when they arise.

ONENESS

"One spirit" (Phil. 1:27).

We have already seen how the living of a spiritual man is joined with other believers. Oneness in the spirit is very important. If God, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a believer's spirit, is completely joined with the believer, the believer's spirit will also be one with the other believers. A spiritual man is not only one with Christ in God; he is also joined to God who dwells in every believer. Therefore, if a believer allows the soulish life to work, he cannot walk according to the spirit. If a believer allows his mind or emotion to control his spirit, then his spirit cannot be one with other believers. Only when the mind and emotion submit to the control of the spirit can the believer disregard or stop the discord in the mind and emotion and be one with the other children of God in spirit. A believer must keep his spirit in a condition of being one with all the believers. This is not being joined only with a small group of those with the same opinion, but with the entire Body of Christ. Our spirit must be without hardness, bitterness, or restrictions; instead, it must be completely open and free before our contact with others can be without barrier.

FULL OF GRACE

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit" (Gal. 6:18).

We must constantly guard our spirit. Therefore, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is precious. The grace of the Lord in our spirit is our help at any time. This is a word of blessing; this is also the height of what a believer can receive in his spirit. We should always keep our spirit in the grace of the Lord.

THE RAPTURED SPIRIT

Apart from the conditions of the spirit discussed above, we should also keep our spirit in a condition of being out of the world and ascending to the heavens at all times. We call this the raptured spirit. The raptured spirit is deeper than the spirit of ascension. The person who has obtained the raptured spirit not only lives as if he is in the heavens; he also, through the Holy Spirit's leading, believes and expects the second coming of the Lord and his own rapture. When the spirit of the believer and that of Christ are joined as one spirit, he becomes a citizen of the heavens in experience, living in the world as a sojourner. The Holy Spirit will call him to advance step by step so that he can receive the raptured spirit. Formerly his cry was "Forward!" Now it is "Ascend!" This causes his whole being to go heavenward. The raptured spirit enables a believer to have a foretaste of the spirit which has "tasted...the powers of the age to come" (Heb. 6:5).

Everyone who believes in the doctrine of the second coming does not necessarily have this raptured spirit. Believing in the Lord's second coming, preaching about it, or even praying for it does not mean very much. We can have all of these but still be without the raptured spirit. Not every mature believer has this spirit. It is a gift of grace from God. Sometimes it is given according to His pleasure; sometimes it is given in response to supplication in faith. With this raptured spirit, the believer's spirit is always in a position of being raptured, believing not only in the Lord's return but also in his own rapture. This is not believing a doctrine but knowing a fact. Just as Simeon, by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, knew that he would see the Christ of God before his death, a believer should also believe with assurance in his spirit that he will be raptured to the Lord before he dies. This faith is the faith of Enoch. Naturally, we are not stubbornly believing a superstition. If we are in the period of the rapture, we cannot help but be filled with the faith of being raptured. This kind of faith will enable us to better understand the work of God in this age. Thus, we will receive the heavenly power to help us in our work.

If a believer receives this raptured spirit, or in other words, if his spirit is in the condition of being raptured, we will see that he is more heavenly. His path to the heavens is not like that in the past when he assumed that he must pass through death.

When a believer is doing a spiritual work, he often has many expectations and plans. He is filled with the Holy Spirit, wisdom, and power. He believes in and expects that God will greatly use him, as if the effect of his work will shortly result in much fruit. But in this prosperous situation, God's brake presses down as if to ask him to terminate all the work and prepare for another path. This comes as a surprise. "Why? Is my strength not for the work? Is the wonderful knowledge I obtained not for helping others? Why is everything closed and cold?" Yet under this kind of leading, the believer knows that God's purpose is to call him to take another path. Before it was to go forward; now it is to ascend. This is not to say that there is no more work but that the work can be terminated at any time.

At other times, God also uses the environment—persecution, opposition, plundering, etc.—so that the believers will know that God wants them to have the raptured spirit and not think that the work in the world will gradually progress. The Lord wants to change

the path of His children now. Many of God's children do not know that besides the best possible work that progresses, there is something even better—to ascend.

This raptured spirit is not fruitless. Before the believer receives such a spirit, his experiences were frequently changing. If the believer has the witness of being raptured in his spirit, if he has firm faith regarding his rapture, and if his conduct also matches the raptured spirit in life and work, then this spirit will cause the believer to prepare for the coming of the Lord. This preparation does not merely relate to outward corrections; it also causes the believer to be fully prepared in spirit, soul, and body to welcome the Lord.

Therefore, a believer should pray to the Holy Spirit to show him the way to receive and keep this raptured spirit. Believers should pray, hope, believe, and be willing to remove all obstacles in order to obtain this raptured spirit. Our life and work should always be checked against the raptured spirit so that we will know where we have failed. In case this spirit is lost, we should know when we lost it and how it can be recovered. We should pray in order to know how matters in the world relate to our spirit; in this way we know how to overcome. Once we receive this raptured spirit, it is very easy to lose, because we do not know the special prayer and work we should have at this stage in our life in order to maintain our position in the heavenlies and have the clearest sight. Therefore, we should pray that the Holy Spirit would teach us how to constantly be kept in this kind of a spirit. The result of such prayers is that we will be led to have our mind set on the things that are above (Col. 3:2). This is a prerequisite of being kept.

Since we are standing at the gate of the heavens and there is a possibility of being raptured at any moment, we should choose the heavenly white garment and work because we might be called to ascend the very next minute. This kind of hope totally separates us from earthly things and connects us with those above.

Even though God wants us to expect ascension with a single heart, we should not just care about being raptured. We should not ignore the needs of others and forget about the final work on the earth, as God has distributed to us. This only means that God does not want us to allow the work which He has given to hinder us from being raptured. In our living and work we should always see that the "gravity of the heavens" is much stronger than the "gravity of the earth." We should learn to live not only for the Lord's work but also for the rapture by the Lord. May our spirit be lifted up daily to hope for the next coming of the Lord. May the worldly things be so powerless that we not only dislike being "of the world," we also dislike being "in the world." May our spirit ascend heavenward daily and long to be with the Lord soon. May we be so single in minding the things which are above that even the best works in the world cannot distract us. From now on, may we earnestly pray in spirit and with understanding the prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus."