

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **FELLOWSHIP**

Just as man has fellowship with the physical world through his body, he has fellowship with the spiritual world through his spirit. This fellowship with the spiritual realm is not through the mind or emotion but through the spirit. It is through the intuition of the spirit. Once we understand the functions of the intuition, we will understand the nature of the fellowship between God and man. For a man to worship God and have fellowship with Him, he must have a substance that is similar to God's. "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit" (John 4:24). There cannot be fellowship between two different substances. Therefore, unregenerated persons, whose spirits are not resurrected, and those regenerated believers who do not worship with their spirits cannot have any real fellowship with God. Although a person may have some beautiful thoughts and strong feelings, he can never enter into spiritual reality and have personal fellowship with God. Our fellowship with God is in the deepest part of our being; it is in the part that is deeper than our mind, emotion, and will. We fellowship with God through our intuition.

First Corinthians 2:9 through 3:2 explains clearly how man fellowships with God through the intuition in his spirit and how he understands the things of God. Let us now look into this carefully.

### **THE HEART OF MAN**

Verse 9 says, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him." This verse talks about God and the things of God. All of His acts are things which man's outer body (the eye and the ear) has neither seen nor heard. They are things which have never come up in man's heart. "Man's heart" is man's understanding, mind, or intellect. Man's thought can never fathom God's acts. God's acts are far beyond man's thought. Those who want to know God and have fellowship with Him can never reach God by simply using their mind.

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Verse 10 says, "But to us God has revealed them through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God." The Spirit searches all things. The Spirit does not have to use the mind to figure out all things. The Spirit knows even the deepest things of God. The things which man does not know, He knows. He searches all things by His intuition. Therefore, through Him God can reveal to us things which have not come up in our heart.

This is "revelation." It is not the understanding which comes after an exercise of our mind. Since it is something that has not come up in our hearts, it is even more unlikely that it would come up in our thoughts. This is a "revelation" or an unveiling. There is no need for help from our mind. God does not reveal anything to us through our ears, eyes, or mind. How does revelation come? The next two verses answer this question.

### **THE SPIRIT OF MAN**

Verses 11 and 12 continue, "For who among men knows the things of man, except the spirit of man which is in him? In the same way, the things of God also no one has known except the Spirit of God. But we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit

which is from God, that we may know the things which have been graciously given to us by God." Only the spirit of man knows (not understands or apprehends) the things of man. Similarly, only the Holy Spirit knows the things of God. Both the spirit of man and the Holy Spirit know things directly, not by deduction or investigation. Therefore, they both know through the intuition, not through the mind.

Since only the Holy Spirit knows the things of God, we can only know the things of God when we receive the Holy Spirit. The spirit of the world is a spirit which does not have any fellowship with God. Even though it is still a spirit, it is dead. Hence, it cannot bring us fellowship with God.

The Holy Spirit of God knows the things of God. Therefore, when we receive in our spirit what the Holy Spirit already knows in the intuition, we also know the things of God. This is why it says, "we have received...the Spirit which is from God, that we may know the things...given to us by God."

But how do we know? Verse 11 says that we know through our spirit. This makes the matter very clear. The Holy Spirit reveals to our spirit all that He knows in His intuition, causing our spirit's intuition to also know what He knows. Through the intuition we know the things revealed by the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, whenever the Holy Spirit reveals the things of God, He reveals them in our spirit. In God's eyes, other than man's spirit, there is no other organ in man which can know the things of man. Hence, the Holy Spirit does not reveal the things of God to our mind because He knows that our mind is incapable of knowing the things of God. The mind is not an organ for knowing things pertaining to God and man. Although the mind can think and even design many things, it cannot say that it knows these things because only the spirit of man can know the things of man.

Here we see how highly God esteems the regenerated spirit of man. If a man is not regenerated, his spirit is still dead; thus, God has no way to reveal to him the things pertaining to God. Although he may be very intelligent, he still cannot comprehend the things of God. God's fellowship with man and man's worship of God require the regenerated spirit as the unique uniting ground. Without a regenerated spirit, there will always be a separation between God and man; He cannot come to our side, neither can we go to His side, because man's intuition, apart from his mind, emotion, and will is still dead and unable to know the intention of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, man is unable to know the revelation of the Holy Spirit. The enlivening of the spirit is the first step towards fellowship between God and man.

Man has a free will. He has the full right to decide his own things. Therefore, even after a sinner has been regenerated and has become a believer, he still has many temptations. Due to ignorance or prejudice, many believers do not give a proper place to their spirit or to the intuition of the spirit. God regards the spirit as the unique place where He can have fellowship with man and as the only location where man can worship Him and communicate with Him. However, many believers only walk according to their mind or emotion. Many times they almost ignore the voice of their intuition. The principle of their conduct is to do things according to what they regard as reasonable, appealing, pleasing, and interesting. Even when they have a heart to carry out God's will, they mainly take the instant thoughts of their heart or some logical ideas as God's will and follow those. They do not realize that they should follow the notion expressed by their intuition through their spirit, not their own thought. Even when they are willing to listen to their intuition, they do not maintain their emotions in a calm position; they fluctuate

up and down according to their emotion and confuse the voice of their intuition. Consequently, walking according to the spirit becomes an occasional event in the believers' life and not their lasting, daily, life-long experience.

Since this is our situation even in the initial step of knowing the will of God, it is no wonder that we do not have any deeper revelation. In this condition, we will never be in our spirit which enables us to know God's plan for this last age, the reality of spiritual warfare, or the deep and profound truths in the Bible. Furthermore, in the matter of worshipping God, we will follow either what we deem to be right, or we will follow the transient outbursts of our emotions. In these circumstances, fellowship with the Lord in our intuition becomes nonexistent.

A believer must know that only the Holy Spirit knows the things of God, and that He knows the things of God through the intuition, not through the mind. Therefore, only He can impart this knowledge to men. However, the one who receives this knowledge must receive it in the same way. This means that he also must use his intuition to know what the Holy Spirit knows through His intuition. The union of these two intuitions will result in man knowing the things of God.

Verse 13 says, "Which things also we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things with spiritual words." Now we come to the way to speak to others about what we know by our intuition in our spirit. The things pertaining to God are already known in our spirit. Our responsibility is to preach these things. The apostle said that he would not use "words taught by human wisdom" to speak about the things he knew in his spirit. Man's wisdom belongs to man's mind; it is the product of man's brain. The apostle said that he would not use words conjured up in his mind to speak about the things of God that he knew in his spirit. The apostle Paul's wisdom was very great. He was well able to come up with novel expressions. He knew how to speak, what illustrations he should use, and how to structure his speech. He could use his natural eloquence very well to make his listeners fully understand his meaning. However, he said that he would not use words taught by man's wisdom. This means that not only is man's mind useless in knowing the things of God, it is also useless in speaking about spiritual wisdom.

He spoke in words "taught by the Spirit." This refers to the instruction of the Holy Spirit which he received in his intuition. Nothing is of any value in the Christian life except being in the spirit. Even when we speak about spiritual knowledge, we must use spiritual utterances. Not only does the intuition know the things revealed to us by the Holy Spirit, it also knows the words that the Holy Spirit has instructed us to use to utter what He has revealed. Many times a believer receives God's revelation, becomes clear about a certain matter, and wants to preach this to others. For him, this matter is very clear, and he understands it. However, his preaching cannot convey his thought fully because he has not received the words in his spirit. Sometimes when a believer is waiting before the Lord, something seems to rise up in his innermost being. It may be just a few words, but those few words when spoken in a meeting fully convey God's revelation. Through this experience, he realizes that God has truly used him to testify for Him.

These experiences show us the importance of receiving "utterance" from the Holy Spirit. There are two kinds of utterance. The first is our natural utterance, and the other is given to our spirit by the Holy Spirit. The utterance mentioned in Acts 2:4 is indispensable in spiritual works. No matter how good our natural eloquence is, it cannot speak forth the things of God. Even when we feel that we have expressed everything well,

we still may not have conveyed the intention of the Holy Spirit. Only spiritual words—those which we receive in our spirit—can relate spiritual knowledge. Sometimes we have the Lord's message in our spirit; it seems to be compelling and burning us, and we feel that there is a spiritual burden pressing on us. Yet we have no way of discharging it. At these times we have to wait for the Holy Spirit to grant us the "utterance," so that we can speak forth the message in our spirit and discharge the burden. If we do not receive the utterance from the Holy Spirit through our intuition, but instead replace it with the words of man's wisdom, all spiritual value will be lost. All these words only make people feel that our ideas are good. Sometimes we have many spiritual experiences, but we do not know how to express them. However, one short remark by another believer often clears away our clouds, enabling us to know the significance of a past experience which was hidden from us because the Lord had not yet instructed us in our spirit with a clear word. But someone can, with the simplest of words, open up our past experiences.

"Spiritual things" must be explained by "spiritual words." We must use spiritual means to achieve spiritual goals. This is what the Lord is diligently teaching us these days. It is not enough for the goal to be spiritual; the means and procedures must also be spiritual. Whatever is fleshly, no matter what it is, cannot fulfill what is spiritual. If we try to use our mind and emotion to fulfill a spiritual goal, it is just like hoping that a bitter fountain will yield sweet water. Everything related to our fellowship with God, whether seeking His will, obeying His charge, or preaching His message, will only be useful if we do it in our intuition and in fellowship with God. If we use our own mind, talent, and methods, it will be dead in the eyes of God.

There is a small note in the Chinese Union Version Bible, recommending that these last two phrases in verse 13 be translated as, "communicating spiritual things to spiritual men." This is very meaningful and relates to the next verse. Let us study this together with the next verse.

## **SOULISH AND SPIRITUAL**

Verse 14 says, "But a soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him and he is not able to know them because they are discerned spiritually."

Soulish men are those who have not been regenerated and who do not have a new spirit. They do not have an intuition; what they have is only the mind, emotion, and will of the soul. They can reason, judge logically, and express what they like, but they cannot "receive the things of the Spirit of God" because they do not have a regenerated spirit. In man's intuition God reveals His things to man. Even though a soulish man can think and observe, he lacks the capacity of the intuition. As a result he cannot receive what God reveals. Whatever man originally has is useless. Although man has many things in himself, none of them can replace the work of the intuition. God has not intentionally tried to be particular. He has not purposely exalted the spirit and intuition, which He gave to man through regeneration, above everything that man originally possessed. However, because man is dead in his spirit toward God, He cannot communicate Himself and His things to man. There is not a single organ in man which can receive God's things. Among all the things which comprise a soulish man, there is not one which can fellowship with God. Even the mind, intellect, and rationality that is highly esteemed by man is as corrupt as man's lusts; none of them can understand God. Not only is it impossible for unregenerated ones to fellowship with God with their mind, it is even impossible for the regenerated believers to fellowship with God without using their

regenerated spirit. It is equally impossible for believers to use their mind and observation to understand the things of God because it does not change in function after regeneration. The mind is still the mind, and the will is still the will; these cannot become the organs for fellowship with God.

Not only is a soulish man incapable of receiving these things; he also thinks that they are foolishness. This again turns us to man's mind. According to man's mind, the things that are known through intuition are foolish because they cannot be rationalized. They are far beyond human feelings and contrary to the worldly mentality. They even contradict man's common sense. Our mind likes what is logical and analytical and what suits its natural psychology. However, none of God's acts are according to human law. Therefore, they are foolishness to him. The foolishness spoken of in this chapter refers to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus on the cross. The message of the cross not only speaks of a Savior who died for us, but of all the believers who died with Him. Everything that belongs to a believer's self has to pass through the death of the cross. If this is only an idea, the mind may receive it; but if it is something to be put into practice, the mind rejects it.

Since the soulish man cannot receive, he cannot know. Receiving is first, and knowing is second. Whether or not a person can receive is determined by whether he has the Spirit. Whether or not a person can know is conditioned on whether he has an intuition. He must first have the Spirit before he can receive the things of God. If he has the Spirit and has received the things of God, the intuition has a chance to know these things of God. Other than the spirit of man, no one can know the things of man. A soulish man cannot know because he does not have a new spirit. Hence, he does not have the intuition to know.

Later the apostle says that a soulish man "does not receive" because the things of God are "discerned spiritually." Do we see that the Holy Spirit is repeatedly emphasizing that man's spirit is the organ for fellowship with God? The focus of this portion of the Scriptures is to prove, indicate, and clarify that through God's Spirit, man's spirit is the basis for fellowship with God and for knowing the things of God. There is nothing else besides the spirit of man.

Everything has its own function. The function of the spirit is to discern the things of God. We are not annulling our mind, emotion, and will. They all have their functions and stand in a secondary position. They should be restricted; they should not be in control. The mind should be under the restriction of the spirit; it should act according to the will of God which is known through the intuition. The mind should not suggest a thought by itself and demand that our whole being act according to its thought. The emotion must also obey the command of the spirit. All of its love and hatred should be according to what the spirit wants and not according to what it wants. The will should also follow God's will as expressed in the intuition. The will must not ignore the will of God and have other desires. If the mind, emotion, and will are all being kept in a secondary position, a believer will advance swiftly in his spiritual progress. If this does not happen, the mind, emotion, and will become the masters, and the place of the spirit will be usurped. Spontaneously there will be no spiritual living and spiritual usefulness. The spirit must be given its own proper position. A believer must wait on God's revelation in the spirit. If the spirit is not elevated, a man will not be able to discern what is only discernable to the Spirit. The previous verse refers to communicating spiritual things to spiritual men because only those with a keen spirit can know the things in the spirit.

Verse 15 says. "But the spiritual man discerns all things, but he himself is discerned by no one." A spiritual person takes the spirit as his center, and his intuition is very keen. The mind, emotion, and will of his soul do not disturb the quietness in his spirit. His spirit is able to perform its duty.

"The spiritual man discerns all things" because the intuition obtains its knowledge only through the Holy Spirit. "He himself is discerned by no one" because others do not know how the Holy Spirit touches his intuition and what the senses in his intuition are. If a believer can only gain knowledge through his intelligence, only those who are more intelligent will discern all things. If this were true, scholarship and worldly education would become indispensable. These ones would also be discerned by others because whoever is their equal or whoever is more intelligent would understand their thoughts. Spiritual knowledge, however, has as its base the intuition of the spirit. If a man is spiritual and has a keen intuition, his knowledge will be unlimited. Even though his mind may be slow, the Holy Spirit can bring him into spiritual reality. His spirit can also enlighten his mind. Revelation by the Holy Spirit is often beyond the expectation of man.

Verse 16 says, "For who has known the mind of the Lord and will instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ." Here is a question. No one in the world has known the mind of the Lord to instruct Him, because all men are of the soul. The way to know God is solely through the intuition. Then where can we find one, without the spirit, who has known the mind of God? This question confirms the last sentence in the previous verse. A spiritual man is "discerned by no one" because no one has yet known the mind of the Lord. "No one" refers to the soulish man. The spiritual man knows the mind of the Lord because he has a keen intuition. The soulish man cannot know because he does not have the intuition. Hence, he cannot fellowship with God. Since the soulish man cannot know the mind of the Lord, he cannot know the spiritual man who fully submits to the Lord's mind. This is the meaning of this verse.

"But we," means that we are different from soulish men. This "we" includes all the saved believers, even though there are many who are fleshly. "But we have the mind of Christ." Those who have been regenerated, whether infants or adults, all have the mind of Christ. We all know the intention of Christ because we all have obtained the resurrected intuition. This is why we can know and already do know what Christ has prepared for us in the future (v. 9). The soulish man does not know, but those who have been regenerated can know. The difference is whether or not one has the spirit (Jude 19).

## **SPIRITUAL AND FLESHLY**

First Corinthians 3:1-2 says, "And I, brothers, was not able to speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to fleshly, as to infants in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food, for you were not yet able to receive it. But neither yet now are you able." These few sentences are closely connected with the previous section. Furthermore, the teaching here follows the previous section and continues on the subject of the spirit of man. The division of the Bible into chapters and verses was made by men later for the sake of convenience; they are not inspired by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we should look at these words together with the words in the previous chapter.

Before we cover the proper meaning of these two verses, let us look at the apostle Paul and consider how clear his spiritual perception was. He knew what kind of people would receive his letter, whether they were spiritual or soulish, and whether they were controlled by the spirit or were under the domination of the flesh. Although his speech

was concerning the spiritual things, he did not feel that he could simply pour out everything to his listeners regardless of whether or not they could receive it. He only communicated spiritual things to spiritual men. It was not a matter of how much he had but how much his listeners could receive. There is not any sense of boasting in his own knowledge. The apostle received in his spirit the words which he needed to speak. He had the spiritual knowledge, and he also had the spiritual words. He knew how to deal with believers on different levels. Therefore, we ought to know the spiritual words or the words taught by the Holy Spirit. Spiritual words are not necessarily words fully loaded with profound matters of the Holy Spirit of God. Spiritual words are the words revealed by the Holy Spirit in the spirit. They may not be very high or profound. They may be very ordinary words and may not be special at all. The fact that these words are known through our intuition, as taught by the Holy Spirit, is what makes them spiritual words. When these words are spoken, there will be significant spiritual effects.

In the previous passages, the apostle told us that the intuition is the only faculty to know God, to fellowship with God, and to know the things of God. He also told us that in every regenerated spirit there is the mind of Christ; this means that every regenerated spirit understands what Christ will give us in the future. He then proceeded to divide all Christians into two categories—the spiritual and the fleshly. He also mentioned the difference between the intuitive power of these two kinds of Christians. These two verses are a response to the question, "If the spirit of man knows all the things of man, and if a spiritual man discerns all things, why are there so many Christians who are regenerated in their spirit yet do not feel that they have a spirit and are unable to know the many deep things of God through their spirit?"

In response to this kind of question, the apostle said, "But the spiritual man discerns all things." Even though Christians have a regenerated spirit, not all Christians are spiritual. There are many who are still fleshly! Although man's intuition has been revived, man must still reserve a place for it and provide a chance for it to work. Otherwise, the intuition will be suppressed and unable to fellowship with God; it will not know what it is able to know. The "spiritual" believer does not do anything according to the mind, emotion, or will. He puts all these on the cross so that they will take a submissive position. In this way the intuition will have the full freedom to receive the revelation of God and direct the mind, emotion and will to carry out the revelation. However, "fleshly" believers are not this way. They are regenerated, and their intuition has become alive to God. They even have a good chance to become spiritual believers; nevertheless, they are bound by the flesh. The lusts of the flesh are still very strong and powerful, pressing them to sin. There are still many unbridled thoughts, reasons, and plans in the fleshly mind; there are still many fleshly interests, likes, and inclinations in the emotion; and there are still many worldly judgments, decisions, and opinions in the will. As a result, these believers walk according to the flesh day and night. They are busy and cannot find the time to listen to the voice of their intuition. The voice of the spirit is always very small. Even if a believer calms everything down and listens very attentively to this voice, he still may not hear it. How much worse will it be when every part of the flesh is stirred up throughout the day? When a believer is very manipulated and in every way affected by the flesh, his spirit becomes numb and unable to receive "solid food."

The Scripture likens a newly regenerated believer to a baby because the life he has obtained in the spirit is as feeble as a physical baby. There is no problem if the believer grows out of babyhood within a short time, because every grown-up begins by being a baby. However, if a believer remains a baby for a long time, and if the stature of his spirit remains the same several years after regeneration, then something is wrong. A



man's spirit can grow, and the intuition in the spirit can also grow and become stronger. A newborn baby does not have self-consciousness; his nerves are very feeble, and he is childish in every way. A newly regenerated believer is just the same. His spiritual life is like a spark of fire, and his intuition is feeble and not very functional. However, a baby should grow daily. His knowledge should be broadened daily through use, exercise, and growth until his self-consciousness becomes fully developed, and he can utilize his senses. The same is true with a believer. After he is regenerated, he should gradually learn to use his intuition. The more he uses it, the more experience and knowledge he will gain, and the more he will grow. Just as a person's consciousness is not very keen when he is born, a believer's intuition is not very sensitive when he is first regenerated.

Fleshly believers are those who remain as babies for a long time and do not grow. This does not mean that they do not have the outward suppression of sin or an increase in biblical knowledge during that time. It does not mean that they do not strive to work for the Lord or have not received the gift of the Holy Spirit. The believers in Corinth had all of these. They were "in everything...enriched in Him, in all utterance and all knowledge...[with no] lack in any gift" (1 Cor. 1:5, 7). According to man's view, are these not growth? We would probably say that they were the most spiritual believers because of their growth in utterance, knowledge, and gifts. Even so, the apostle said that they were still babies and fleshly. How could this be? Is growth in utterance, knowledge, and gifts not growth? We can observe a very important fact that the Corinthians grew in secondary issues, but their spirit did not grow, and the intuition in their spirit had not become stronger. An increase of eloquence in preaching, an increase in biblical knowledge, and an increase in the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not increases in spiritual life! If a believer's spirit, with which he fellowships with God, has not become stronger and keener in the eyes of God, he has not grown at all! How many Christians are growing in the wrong direction today? How many think that after they are saved, they should pursue higher biblical knowledge, better eloquence in preaching, and more gifts of the Holy Spirit? They forget that they should pursue the growth of the spirit with which they have fellowship with God. Eloquence, knowledge, and gifts are just outward; only the intuition is inward. The most pitiful thing today is that believers allow their spirit to remain as a baby, but they fill their mind, emotion, and will with eloquence, knowledge, and gifts. Even though these things are precious, they cannot be compared with the position of the spirit. God has newly created this spirit in us which can be called our spiritual life. What should grow and become full-grown is this spirit. If we misunderstand and do not pursue the growth of the spiritual life and the intuition, which enable us to know God, the matters of God, and have fellowship with Him, but instead we pursue the increase of riches in the soul, we will not have any progress at all in God's view. In the eyes of God, our spirit is all-inclusive. He is concerned with the growth of this spirit. According to His view, no matter how much our eloquence, knowledge, and gifts increase in our mind, emotion, and will, they are worthless in the spiritual realm if there is no growth in the spirit.

We expect daily to have greater power, broader knowledge, more gifts, and better eloquence. But the Bible says that even if we have all these things, our spiritual life has not necessarily grown. On the contrary, our spiritual life may remain the same, without an inch of growth. The apostle said that the Corinthians "were not yet able to receive it. But neither yet now are you able." In what aspect were they not able? They were not able to use the intuition to serve God, to know God deeply, and to receive the revelation of God. The Corinthian believers were not able to do these things. "Were not yet able" means that they were unable when they had just believed in the Lord. "Neither yet now are you able" means that even after they had believed in the Lord for several years, after



they were full of eloquence, knowledge, and gifts, they were still not able. Through the word "yet," the apostle indicated that even though they were rich in eloquence, knowledge, and gifts, their spiritual life was the same as when they were without eloquence, knowledge, or gifts. There was no difference. Real growth is measured by the growth of the spirit and intuition. Everything else is fleshly. These words should be deeply engraved in our hearts.

The most pitiful thing today is that Christians appear to have growth in almost everything; but their spirit, which is for fellowshiping with God, has not grown. After believing in the Lord for years, one may still say, "I do not feel that I have a spirit." How different is our thought from God's thought! We are like the Corinthians in that we try to utilize the intelligence in our minds to search for the so-called spiritual knowledge, and we really do acquire a great deal of it. But growth in the mind is not and cannot substitute for the growth of the intuition. In God's view, we have remained the same. Please remember that God wants us to grow not in our knowledge, eloquence, or gifts. He only wants the growth of our spirit, our spiritual life, and the intuition of our spirit. He expects the new life that we received in our regeneration to grow. The old creation should be totally forsaken. Otherwise, even if we are full of eloquence, knowledge, and gifts, He will still say that we are fleshly believers, babies without an inch of growth in the spiritual life!

When a believer is overly influenced by the flesh, he cannot successfully become a spiritual man and take solid food. Only one who has a sharp intuition and unceasingly fellowships with God will really know the deep truths. If one's intuition remains weak, he cannot help but drink milk. It is said that milk comes from the mother after she digests solid food. This means that the fleshly believers are unable to fellowship with God clearly in their intuition. They can only depend on more experienced believers to tell them the things of God. Experienced believers fellowship with God through their intuition, transform what they know into spiritual milk, and give it to fleshly believers. At the very beginning of a young Christian's life, the Lord allows this to happen. However, the Lord does not want His people to be dull all their life and unable to fellowship directly with Him. Drinking milk only means that one cannot fellowship directly with God and needs the transmission through others. A full-grown man is one that has his intuition well exercised; he knows how to discern. If we cannot fellowship with God and know the things of God in our intuition, all of our idealistic thinking is useless. The Corinthian believers had much eloquence and knowledge and many gifts, but their spirit was very inactive. The church in Corinth was of the flesh because they only had what was stored in their minds.

Many Christians today err in the same way as the Corinthian believers. They study theology with their dispassionate mentality to search out the hidden meanings in the Bible in order to arrive at the best explanations. The Lord's words are spirit and life, but they do not receive them as spirit and life. They only want to satisfy their own "lust for knowledge" and want to tell others, either verbally or by writing books, what they have learned. Although their meanings, theories, and outlines are the best, and although they appear very "spiritual," in reality they are dead in God's view. Their knowledge comes from the mind of one person and is transferred into the mind of another without passing through the spirit. Those who listen to them or read their writings may say that they have been helped, but what kind of help have they received? Nothing has happened other than the addition of a thought into their mind. This kind of knowledge has no spiritual effect. Only that which comes from the spirit will enter into man's spirit. Whatever comes from the mind will enter into man's mind. Furthermore, only that

which comes from the Holy Spirit will enter into our spirit, and only that which comes out of the Holy Spirit through our spirit will enter into someone else's spirit.

## **THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION**

In our fellowship with God, a spirit of wisdom and revelation is indispensable. "That...the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him" (Eph. 1:17). At the time of our regeneration we received a new spirit; however, many of the functions of the spirit are not manifested and remain concealed inside the spirit. Therefore, the apostle prayed that the regenerated Ephesian believers would receive a spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they could really know God in their intuition. Whether this spirit of wisdom and revelation is a hidden potential within the believers' spirit, which is enlightened by God through prayer, or whether it is some fresh wisdom and revelation, which comes from the Holy Spirit being added into the believers' spirit, the fact remains that a spirit of wisdom and revelation is indispensable in a believer's fellowship with God. It is also a fact that believers can receive this spirit through prayer.

Although our intuition can fellowship with God, it needs wisdom and revelation. We need wisdom to know what comes from God and what comes from us. We need wisdom to recognize the counterfeits and attacks of the enemy. We need wisdom to deal with people. In numerous matters we surely need God's wisdom in order not to err. How foolish we are! How hard it is to do everything according to God's will! God wants to give us wisdom; He does not give it to our mind, but He gives us a spirit of wisdom so that we can have wisdom in our spirit. God wants us to have wisdom through our intuition. He will guide us to the pathway of wisdom through intuition. Our mind may still be foolish, but there is much wisdom in our intuition. It often seems that our wisdom is useless, but inside us there is a gradual feeling which brings wisdom along with it. Wisdom and revelation are tightly connected. This is because all God's revelations are revelations of wisdom. If we live only according to our nature, we will never be able to fathom anything of God by our thoughts. When we are in our flesh, whatever we have is just darkness. God and the things of God can never be fathomed by our minds. Even when our spirit is alive, we would still live in darkness if we did not have the revelation of the Holy Spirit. When our spirit is alive, there is a possibility for our spirit to receive the revelation of God. It does not mean that the spirit alone can do anything independently.

In our fellowship with God, He often gives us revelation, and we should often ask God for revelation. A spirit of revelation means God's revelation in spirit. Therefore, the phrase "spirit of wisdom and revelation" merely indicates where God gives us revelation and wisdom. Sudden thoughts are not a spirit of revelation. A spirit of revelation is God's operation in our spirit to the extent that we know His intention through our intuition. All of the fellowship that we have with God takes place only in our spirit and nowhere else.

Having a spirit of wisdom and revelation gives us "the full knowledge of Him." Only when we receive God's revelation in our spirit can we really know Him. All other words are superficial, imaginary, shallow, and, therefore, false. We often speak of God's virtues, including His holiness, righteousness, kindness, love, etc. It seems that through our thoughts alone, we can speak of these virtues and know these virtues of God. But this knowledge is not like seeing through a window; rather, it is like trying to see through a stone wall. When a believer receives God's revelation of His holiness, he knows that God dwells in the light and is unapproachable by natural and sinful men. He finds out how

inferior, dirty, and unclean he is in comparison. There should be many among us who have had this kind of experience. We should make the comparison to see if the holiness of God in our heart which we receive from God's revelation is the same as the holiness of God which is spoken by men without revelation. The words used may be the same. But for those with revelation, it seems that there is so much more significance to the words that they speak. Their whole being is in their speaking. This is the spirit of revelation we have mentioned. Only by receiving revelation in our spirit do we really know God. It is the same with many doctrines in the Bible. Many times we understand teachings in our mind and know that they are important, but God gradually reveals these words to us in our spirit. Then it seems as if we have a different emphasis when we preach the same words again. Only knowledge that comes from revelation is real knowledge; everything else is just the activity of the mind.

If we seek for many things concerning God outwardly and do not acquire these things through revelation, they do not move us and do not move others. Only the revelation that is in our spirit has any spiritual usefulness. Proper fellowship with God is receiving God's revelation in our spirit. It is true that God's revelations are not frequent, but how frequently do we wait and pray for God's revelation? If we are constantly busy, how can we be guided just by revelation? Actually, if we are willing to give God the opportunity, we will have revelation frequently. The apostle's living is a testimony to this fact.

## **SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING**

There is soulish wisdom, and there is spiritual wisdom. Soulish wisdom comes from man's mind, but spiritual wisdom is given by God to us in our spirit. If a fleshly man does not have a good understanding or is short of wisdom, this can be remedied by education. Of course, this never changes a person's natural endowment. However, this is not the case with spiritual wisdom. It can be obtained by prayer through faith (James 1:5). We have to remember one thing: in God's redemption, "God is not a respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). He places all sinners, whether wise or foolish, in the same position. They need the same salvation in all matters. Wise men are as fully corrupt as foolish ones. In God's sight, the minds of the wise and foolish are equally useless. The wise and foolish need the same spiritual regeneration. Even after regeneration, the wise are not able to understand God's Word more easily than the foolish. Finding the most foolish person in the world and trying to lead him to know God is very difficult. Even so, finding the wisest person in the world and trying to lead him to know God is equally difficult. This is because the knowledge of God is discerned clearly in the spirit. Although their minds are different, their spirits are both dead and equally foolish. Man's natural wisdom cannot more easily enable him to know God and His truths. It may be easier for us to make the wise one understand and comprehend than the foolish one, but this would only be in the realm of the mind. However, the degree of ignorance in the intuition is the same in both cases. They both need resurrection in the spirit.

Even after the spirit has been resurrected, we should never think that the wise will progress faster than the foolish because of their better mind. If there is no difference in their faithfulness and obedience, whatever differences they have in the understanding of their minds will not produce a difference in the intuitive knowledge in their spirit. The old creation can never be the source of the new creation. The speed of progress depends on faithfulness and obedience. Natural talents never help one to excel on the spiritual path. According to the flesh, a man has the opportunity of being better than others because of differences in natural talents. But in spiritual experiences, every person has to start from the same place, go through the same procedures, and arrive at the same

goal. Therefore, every regenerated believer, even if he is more clever than others, must still acquire a spiritual understanding before he can have proper communication with God. Nothing can replace this.

"Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, to walk worthily of the Lord to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God" (Col. 1:9-10). This is the apostle's prayer for the Colossian believers. This verse shows us that one must have spiritual understanding before he can know God's will. After knowing God's will, one can then (1) walk worthily of the Lord to please Him, (2) bear fruit in every good work, and (3) grow by the full knowledge of God.

No matter how good a man's understanding is, it is not enough for him to know God's will. Knowing God's will and having fellowship with God require spiritual understanding. Only spiritual understanding leads one to the realm of the spirit and enables one to know God's will. Fleshly understanding enables one to know some truths, but these truths will only remain in one's mind and not issue in life. Because spiritual understanding comes from the spirit, it can transform what it has understood into life. Even the word "know" is connected to God; there is no real knowledge that does not come from the spirit. A spirit of revelation and spiritual understanding go side by side with each other. God has given us a spirit of wisdom and revelation; He has also given us spiritual understanding. The wisdom and revelation we receive in our spirit must be realized by the understanding before we can know the real meaning of the revelation. Revelation is what we receive from God; understanding is comprehending the revelation we have received from God. Spiritual understanding tells us the meaning of all the movement within our spirit; it enables us to know God's will. Our fellowship with God relies on our spirit receiving God's revelation, on the intuition of the spirit sensing this revelation, and on the spiritual understanding to interpret the meaning of this revelation. Our own understanding can never resolve anything. When our spirit enlightens our understanding, the latter knows the purpose of God's movement.

According to Colossians 1:9-10, we can see very clearly that if we want to please God and bear fruit, we should know His will in our spirit. The relationship with God in our spirit is the basis of God's pleasure and our fruit-bearing. It is vanity for a believer to try to please God on the one hand, while walking according to the soul on the other hand. God is pleased with His will and nothing else. Nothing else can satisfy His heart. The most painful thing for believers is to not know God's will. Although we can conjecture and search, it seems that we cannot touch God's will. These verses tell us that the way to know God's will is not to have more thoughts, considerations, and judgments according to human sentiment, but by spiritual understanding. Only the human spirit can fathom God's will in the spirit because only the spirit has the intuition to know God's movements. By the understanding of the intuition, believers can know God's will.

When believers continue to know God's will, they will be "growing by the full knowledge of God." This means that the believers' real knowledge of God will grow gradually. These verses also speak of the spirit. If in everything we seek God's will in our spirit, we will know God more. The intuition in our spirit will grow without limit. The intuition can grow. The growth of the intuition speaks of the believers' total growth in the spiritual life. Each time we have real fellowship with God, there is a result; it trains us to know how to fellowship with Him more the next time. Since a believer has been regenerated and can fellowship with God in his intuition, he should pursue perfection. He should utilize

every opportunity to train his spirit so that he can know God more. We need to really know Him in the deepest part of our whole being. Many times we think that we really know His will, but with the passage of time and events, it is proven that we have made a mistake. Everyone of us needs to really know Him and His will. Therefore, we should seek to be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual understanding.