

SECTION FOUR: THEORY AND SPIRITUALITY

CHAPTER 17 APPLIED SPIRITUALITY

WE MUST DISCOVER WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR INSIDE NOT OUTSIDE OF OURSELVES

We all have an inner peace we can learn to consciously access.

External rational thought creates external feelings.

Internal conscious thought accesses internal feelings.

SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE INVENTORY

1. Life works from out to in, the physical to the spiritual, seen to unseen.
True or False? .
2. Not all people have an inner peace. True or False?
3. It would be possible to be at peace at all times. True or False?
4. The key to eliminating dysfunctional behavior is to access one's inner peace.
True or False?
5. Things that are physical are more important to life than spiritual True or False?

The approach that defines spirituality for this study is, experiencing the presence of God. Learning to Experience the presence of God might be called "Spirituality 101". Staying in the presence of God is "Spirituality 201", and helping others get into the presence of God is "Spirituality 301".

You cannot do 301 unless you start with 101 then 201. It is all about starting with the basics.

I think of the story about Ernie Lombardie when his powerful Green Bay Packers lost to a lowly team. At the practice on the next Monday he held up a football and said, "All right men, we are going to start with basics. This is a football". One large tackle in the back said, "Duh! Not so fast, coach."

The key to spirituality is to have a proper definition - one that is reasonable, workable, meaningful and applicable. You have to start here or you will miss it all.

REASONABLE

Much of what is called "spiritual" is not reasonable. We like to tag words such as "mysterious", "mystical", or even "magical". Spirituality needs to be something that is

understandably rational and reasonable. It is! Everything that exists is either seen or unseen. There is the physical and the spiritual. We have both physical and spiritual organs. The physical faculty sees the seen, and the spiritual faculty senses - is aware of - experiences - the unseen. Actions are seen, experiences are unseen.

We have two faculties of thought, external (rational) and internal (consciousness). The physical or rational mind sees only what is seeable. The spiritual or conscious mind deals with what is unseeable. Which means there are two kinds of existence: the seen and the unseen. Some people think the seen is far more important than the unseen. But the things unseen are far more important to life than the things seen.

Life itself is unseen. No one has ever seen it, yet we all know life exists. Love, which poets have said "makes the world go around", is unseen. Yet without life and love there isn't much else worth existing.

When we talk about having two faculties, most people know what we are talking about. It is interesting to me that I have never heard or read about the two faculties as the clues to a spiritual experience. I have read and attended all sorts of conferences but have never heard a description of how to use one's spiritual faculties to access the things that are spiritual. This includes all the books in theology, as well as sermons preached, and speakers speaking or teachers teaching.

When people use their spiritual faculties unconsciously, they do not have a choice. However, when people make a conscious connection between what they are doing and its meaning, they then have a choice. You do not have to be a spiritual giant to use spiritual faculties. It is a common faculty all of us use naturally.

WORKABLE

Choosing to use our spiritual faculties is easily workable, once we become aware of what it is they do.

The basic premise for life is to find what we are looking for inside - not outside - ourselves. We must discover it for ourselves. The truth needs to be repeated again and again until it seeps down deep into our spiritual faculties until we understand that what we are looking for is inside, not outside of ourselves.

It is the principle not only for spirituality but for life. Our life depends on it in a very specific way. In order to access this peace we need to understand the two ways of thinking, outward (physical and seen) and inward (spiritual and unseen).

In one sense we all know we need to look inside of ourselves to find what we are looking for. We know this to be true, but no one tells us how to do it. It is like the king with no clothes on. The people see plainly that he is naked, but everyone thinks the others see him with clothes on. So they all pretend they too see his clothes. Everyone thinks everyone else knows how to look inside, and yet few people do.

The fact is, you and I do it all the time, but we have not made the connection, that is what we are really doing. So let us start with what we know.

What we are looking for are those moments in our life when things were going to hell in a handbasket around us and yet we were able to be at peace.

Here is an example from a prisoner serving a life sentence for murder. He wrote: "Most of the time I want out with a yearning that is as ancient as prisons. But, occasionally, I experience peace. I don't worry about getting out tomorrow. I don't worry about what I did yesterday. It's an "in-the-moment" awakening where suddenly all I'm concerned about is doing the next right thing. I literally feel the sunlight of the Spirit. For the first time in my life, I am okay. Really. It's crazy! Doing a life sentence and feeling more at peace than ever before." (from *Forward Day By Day*, Mar 5, 1998.)

SPIRITUALITY 101

Spirituality 101 means "getting in" or "experiencing" the presence of God. It means understanding the difference between rational thinking and conscious being. It is the difference between thinking and focusing. It is a scientific fact that you can only think of one thing at a time. If you are on the phone with another person, you cannot hear someone else talking to you.

You can go back and forth very fast to pick up bits and pieces of both conversations, but you can't get all of both conversations the same time. You can choose to be conscious of or focus on one of many different things.

You could be conscious of the light in the room, the temperature, the presence of people or items around you, like how paper feels as you hold it. If you are feeling their presence, you are using your spiritual faculties. If you are not feeling anything, you are only thinking about what is surrounding you. If you are feeling something all at once you are using your conscious faculty. You can now begin to focus on the presence of God within you. God's Presence is closer than anything outside.

SPIRITUALITY 201 MEANINGFUL

Experiencing the presence of God.

If you are right now experiencing the presence as you read this material, you have graduated to Spirituality 201.

It is not easy to make the jump, and some people will have to go back to Spirituality 101. Yet there are readers right now who are experiencing the presence while there are some who are not. It is not a matter of which person is a greater spiritual giant. It is a matter of those who are choosing to experience the presence right now, who are using their spiritual conscious faculties.

Those who are not experiencing the presence while reading this material, are simply not using their spiritual or conscious faculties. See if you can move on to Spirituality 301, by

staying in conscious contact with the presence.

SPIRITUALITY 301 APPLICABLE

The power that is within us is a healing power. You can test this for yourself. As you stay focused -- remaining conscious, sensing, being aware of the presence within -- begin to focus on a part of your body that has been giving you some pain. Just be aware of it, rather than thinking about it.

One of my best friends, Fr. Rob Bethancourt, tells the story of how he went to hear the well know-healer, Fr. Francis McNutt. Francis stood in front of the congregations and began talking about his stole, looking at the many bright colors, wondering what the symbols might mean, and then telling them how he got it.

It was given as an act of love by a group of people in South America. It is one of his favorite stoles because it reminds him of the love of those people.

Rob was getting impatient. He had come to hear about healing, not about a stole. Then Francis looked out at the people and asked if any there were experiencing healing. To Rob's surprise, people began to witness on how they were healed.

They had gotten in the presence of God, and His Spirit had brought them into healing. Sometimes as you understand and experience the process of moving from Spirituality 101 to 301, you will feel some heat, sometimes nothing. Sometimes the pain will be gone almost immediately, sometimes at a later date. Gradually you will begin to understand this is a "course", not in theory but in practice. It is really "Spiritual Intelligence 301".

Now check your answers and see if you have any change of heart.

RESPONSES TO SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE INVENTORY

1. Life works from out to in, the physical to the spiritual, seen to unseen.

False - Life goes from in to out.

2. Not all people have an inner peace.

False - Everyone has an inner peace.

3. It would be possible to be at peace at all times.

True - Why not?

4. The key to eliminating dysfunctional behavior is to access one's inner peace.

True Peace eliminates insecurity, the cause of all dysfunctional behavior.

5. Things that are physical are more important to life than spiritual. .

False - Spiritual things are all those important unseen things that exist, like life itself.