

How Does the Mind Work with the Spirit?
(A study from The Spiritual Man by Watchman Nee)

The answer to this question is found in these three steps: (1) The Holy Spirit reveals God's will to our spirit (2) through the understanding of the mind we comprehend the meaning (3) with the will we perform God's will. The mind is that part of us closest to the spirit; therefore it has the ability to communicate with our spirit. As it is with our intellect that we learn the material realms, so it is in the spiritual realm that we perceive realities; the mind teaches us all about self, but we come to know God and the things of God through the spirit. So how do they work together? In Ephesians 1:17-18 we read that "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may grant you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him by having the eyes of your heart flooded with light, so that you may know. . . The meaning of spirit of revelation is that God makes Himself known to us in our spirit. "The eyes of your heart" points to the organ of reasoning and understanding which the mind is. The words know and knowledge serves to show two distinctive notions: knowing intellectually, the second understanding mentally. The intuitive knowledge is acquired from God's revelation to our spirit. This intuitive knowledge is known only to the inner man. The spirit, however, enlightens the mental capability for understanding the revelation in the spirit.

So we first have the knowledge of the will of God through our spirit; the intellect then interprets it to us and the Holy Spirit moves in our spirit giving us a spiritual sense. It takes cooperation of the spirit and the mind to comprehend fully the will of God. So all revelation comes from the Holy Spirit to man's spirit, according to this chapter of Ephesians. The mind very much depends on the enlightening from the spirit's light; otherwise it will be in darkness. The mind can only be renewed when directed by the spirit. The believers' mind is not only the outlet of the Holy Spirit, it is also His abode. It is needed to understand the revelation from the Holy Spirit, which is God's way of communication to us and in return for us to teach others. For this reason our walk in the spirit is very important to maintain God's communication to us. When we walk in the spirit we perceive the danger of walking in the flesh, because we do become slave to it and its desires; to walk in the spirit is to have the mind set on the things of God. Col. 3:1,2 says, If then you have been raised with Christ aim at and seek the things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God; and set your minds and keep them set on what is above, not on the things that are on the earth. The mind which is set on things above is a spiritual mind, controlled by the Holy Spirit of God. It shows its renewed ways and its closeness to God; it is also sensitive to the mind of God; it heeds to the spirit and it obeys God. Watchman Nee well expressed the thought: "If our mind is not governed by the spirit, it must be governed by the flesh; if not guided by heaven, it must be guided by earth; if not regulated from above, it must be regulated from beneath". To have the mind regulated from beneath, it is not to know the mind of God; it is to live in darkness and alienated from Him, and unable to please God, for Paul says, the mind-set of the flesh is death. It is hostile to God because it does not submit itself to God's law (Rom. 8: 5-11). The importance of minding the realities of the spirit is the assurance of the guidance in the spirit; we become incapacitated from following the spirit when we neglect the spiritual sense. The alertness of the mind is of great importance to

have a victorious spiritual life; otherwise the outer man will be misguided by the flesh and its desires.

The mind of the believer must be under the control of the Holy Spirit, so that the evil one will not take advantages over it. We must hold under control the thoughts of the mind. Peter tells us to gird up the mind (I Peter 1:13), or regulate the thoughts and let them not run wildly. To gird is to encircle it with the Word of God, the helmet of salvation, which will protect it against the enemy and his plan. Our objective should be that of Paul's: "Take every thought captive to obedience to Christ". This is the renewing of the mind guiding it to hear the spirit agreeing with it and leading the flesh to do the will of God. The mind which functions under the control of the Spirit of God, He will keep it in perfect peace (Isaiah 26:3).

The Lord commands us to love Him with the part of us that is closest to the spirit- the soul; for it is there that communication happens between God and our spirit and between our spirit and our soul. Keeping the Lord in our mind always the promise will stand: we will not be shaken (Psalm 16:8). Call then unto Him with a humble soul and He will answer you and reveal Himself to you; He will bless you and fulfill His promise to your life. Keep the communication channel open between you and Him! And you will be walking in the spirit, hearing from the spirit and following God's purpose for your life.