

Msg #134 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

"Inspiration"

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to talk about being inspired. Inspiration is the word we toss around in our English language, but sometimes we don't really understand what the word means. Inspiration is a part of everyone's life. We all get inspired about different things. Sometimes it seems that the inspiration comes occasionally, such as when a writer needs to be inspired in order to write. But actually, inspiration takes place in our lives every moment of the day, each and every day that we live.

Let's take a couple of minutes and look at the concept of inspiration from a secular point of view. If you were an author, and you wrote novels, or short stories, and if this was the way you made your living, you would have to write each and every day. It's a fairly well known fact that writers often get something which they call, writer's block. Writer's block is when a writer sits down to write and can't get his thoughts together. He's trying to write, but nothing is coming out. He's sitting at the typewriter, or at the computer, but he doesn't know what to say. It's at this specific point in time that the writer has a mental block. The words just aren't flowing. And, we know that when a writer writes, if his words are not inspired words, they really won't be that interesting to read. Good writers have to be inspired.

We don't usually think of a spirit as being part of a writer's inspiration. Yet, you can't get inspired without being moved by a spirit. To see this side of the inspiration concept, just take a look at the word, inspiration. The root part of the word, inspiration, is spirit. If you take the initial word spirit, and add the word (in), I. N., then the word becomes, in-spirit, which just means that you are in the spirit. Now, normally, a writer of secular works doesn't think of himself as being in the spirit when he is inspired to write. That's because we don't generally use

that term in this modern age. But, that's what it is. When a writer is inspired, he is moved to write by a spirit. And when he has finished his manuscript, someone might read it and comment that the writer had definitely been inspired, or shall we say, in spirit when he wrote it. This means that there was some kind of stimulation applied to the writer in order to get the writer to write what he wrote. Something that moved him to write. Something that stirred him up, something that caused a certain amount of excitement, at least enough to get him moving in the right direction.

Now, this is a very interesting and important concept for Christians who want to understand who and what God is and how he works. We're all moved to words or actions every day of our lives. When this happens, as it does constantly, it is nothing more or less than being moved by something. We are moved by our thoughts and imaginations. Certainly, a writer is moved by his thoughts and imaginations. If he has no thoughts or imaginations, it's easy to see that he will also not be able to write. He will have writer's block.

Now, of course we know that when a writer is sitting at his desk and has writer's block, he is looking for words to come to mind that he can write. Writers block doesn't mean that you have no thoughts or imagination. It just means that when the writer has writer's block the thoughts and imaginations that come to his mind are inappropriate for what he's trying to write. He has thoughts and imaginations, but they're not the thoughts and imaginations he needs for the specific work that he's trying to accomplish.

We are constantly, as human beings, moved by the spirit within us. Whatever we do we do it with a measure of spirit. If you like something extremely well, you will enter into that thing with a measure of excitement, and with a measure of heat. You will demonstrate outward emotions. These emotions are the outward sign of the spirit within you.

Now, I think everyone knows what it means to speak in a monotone. It's with hardly any inflection of the voice. When you hear someone speak in a monotone, it puts you to sleep. If you sit in a college class and the professor speaks in a monotone, you probably won't learn very much. It's the same thing in church. If the Minister speaks in a monotone, a certain percentage of the congregation will doze off. Maybe you've had this experience yourself. It's not uncommon, as every preacher knows. However, if you listen to a minister who uses a lot of voice inflection and movement of arms and body, or maybe uses additional presentations, such as overhead projections or sound, then probably most of the congregation will stay awake. We like our ministers to be inspired. We like them to be moved. If they're not inspired, then there is less interest in what they're saying.

You see, when the inspiration is strong, there will be greater reaction by the person who is inspired. The Bible talks about this concept as being fervent. Fervent means to have heat. When a Christian is inspired, then they have heat for the things of God. Of course, we have to assume that we're talking about being inspired by God's Holy Spirit and not by evil spirits.

As I said before, we are all inspired moment by moment on a daily basis. However, sometimes the spirit within us moves us very strongly, and sometimes very subtly. But, no matter how strongly we are moved by the spirit within us, we will demonstrate that urging by exhibiting emotion. Our emotions are greater or lesser depending on how strong we feel about something. However, emotion is always present in all of us, but it is the spirit within us which affects us, and then it is our bodies which demonstrate our feelings by presenting them outwardly for other people to see or hear.

When we humans get information, or when someone around us acts or speaks, we react to that stimulus. Whatever we hear or whatever we experience, we compare it with our thoughts, beliefs, and convictions. It is then that the spirit within us takes the results and moves the body to respond accordingly. When this happens, the body will move, either by word, actions, or both. However, along with the words or actions, there will also be the demonstration of emotion. When we are moved to act or speak, we don't normally do it with a deadpan expression, nor do we act or speak without some kind of emotion accompanying it. Can you imagine what your response would be if someone said to you, [*monotone*] "I love you?" It would be much more acceptable if they said, [*with feeling*] "I love you." And this is what I want you to see. When you are moved to actions or words, you demonstrate your true feelings by two ways. You not only act or speak, but you also present those actions or words with emotion. Other people understand you not only by what you say or do, but also by how you say it, or in what manner you act it out. The emotion you demonstrate will testify as to what spirit was behind your words or actions. Your voice inflection and your body posture, along with the fervency of your words or movements, will give other people a greater comprehension of your true feelings.

Now, maybe all this is too technical for you, but if you can grasp the concepts of inspiration, it will help you to understand God better. You see, the Bible tells us that God is a Spirit. We also know that God puts his Holy Spirit into those who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit of God abides in us. Now, if the Holy Spirit abides in you, you will be inspired by it. This means you will be moved to words and actions because of what the Holy Spirit moves you to say or do.

Now, when the Holy Spirit moves you, you will be inspired to act or speak things that are godly. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize that if it is the Holy Spirit moving you to words and actions, your words and actions will be those that glorify God. And of course, if it is an evil spirit that you allow to have access to you, then your words and actions will not glorify God. You can be inspired by either God's good Spirit, or by bad spirits.

Now, think of this. If you think about doing something, and it seems like a great thing to do, something that really appeals to you, then you will do it. And, when you do it you will demonstrate emotion. And, if you do something that really appeals to you, you also won't do it halfheartedly. If you really want to say something, and you feel strongly about it, your speech won't be in a monotone. You will demonstrate facial expressions that show how much you appreciate what you're doing. You may smile, you may jump up and down, you may scream for

joy, but whatever you do, those around you will recognize that you are truly moved by the experience because they will have witnessed your demonstration of emotions.

Now, here's another point. Emotions are nothing more or nothing less than that feeling within you that you, now get this, that you "e-moted." E-moted, is not really proper English, but it just means that you have emitted or projected your feelings in an outward manner. When you demonstrate your emotions, it means you emit, or bring to the outside, evidence of the spirit within you. Let me say this again. Emotions are nothing more or less than your body demonstrating the force that moved you. Your emotions show others the degree of feeling you have. If you speak words like a robot, it might give someone some information, but it is your emotions that reveal what spirit moved you, and how forcefully you were moved.

Recognizing the testimony of the spirit within a person is something we all do, all the time. We not only watch others, and listen to them, but we also watch for their emotions that accompany their words and actions. By this we have a much greater understanding of the person's true intent of the heart.

Now, here's the next thing. Each one of us has a heart. Of course, we all have a physical heart that pumps blood. But from a spiritual perspective we also have a spiritual heart which is considered to be the seat, or the center of our being, where our deep down thoughts, beliefs, and convictions reside. No, not just the physical thoughts from a mental perspective, but also the things that affect you deeply. I'm not talking about data, information that's stored in your brain, I'm talking about things that mean something special to you.

Now, as Christians, we always talk about having Jesus in our heart. We know that this means that the goodness of Jesus Christ, and the word of God, is precious to us. Whatever you hold dear, what ever you hold to be precious, you would consider these things to be matters of the heart. Your spiritual heart is a very important part of you. The most important reason that your heart should be guarded carefully is because God looks on your heart. The Bible tells us in 1 Samuel 16:7, that God does not look on the outside of us, but that he looks upon our heart. What he sees in our heart, is how he will determine his judgment against us. No matter what you do or say in this world, God is going to judge your heart. From the perspective of God being our judge, he isn't too interested in your words or actions, except as they come from our hearts. We can do a lot of things, and we can say a lot of things, but the bottom line for God's judgment is when he looks into our heart and sees what is truly there. All the stuff that we've displayed outwardly will be evaluated, but those words and actions will be compared to our spiritual heart.

Now, if the body acts or speaks one thing, but the heart tells a different story, the testimony of the body will be thrown out, and the testimony of the person's spiritual heart will remain. God looks on the heart, because he wants to know the real story, not just what you outwardly claim to be with your lips. So, in order for God to look at your heart, he uses your spirit. Your spirit tells him what the condition of your heart really is. Let me explain this with a portion of scripture.

It's found in the book of Proverbs. In chapter 20, verse 7, it says, "the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly."

Now, this isn't easily understood, like many of Solomon's Proverbs. But what it means is this. Whatever spirit is within you, it will move you to action or words, and when God sees your actions or words, he will also recognize the emotions that accompany them. When he sees your words and actions, and sees that they are accompanied by the proper emotions, then he will know that the words and actions you demonstrate are your true feelings. It is the emotions which demonstrate the spirit within you. You can make yourself say anything, and you can act in any way you determine to act. But God does not accept actions or words just on their own testimony. He looks for the emotions, which are the evidence of what spirit is the force behind the actions and words. When he recognizes the spirit which is moving you, then he knows what is truly in your heart.

Now, this brings us to a verse in the book of Matthew. Matthew 7:21-23 says, "Not every one that says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but only he who does the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? And in your name have cast out devils? And in your name have done many wonderful works? 23 And then I will profess to them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity."

We see from these verses that there can be words and actions that people do that will not be accepted by Jesus Christ when he comes back for us. And, these verses aren't talking about the wicked people down at Joe's bar, but are talking about the people sitting in the pews next to you in church. We know this because the verses refer to people who claim that Jesus is their Lord. But if Jesus Christ is your Lord, which means your master, your boss, your authority, your ruler over your words and actions, than your actions should be accompanied by similar emotions. If you call Jesus, Lord of your life, then your spirit should move you to things of Jesus. If your spirit does move you to heavenly things, then you will demonstrate emotions that prove this.

Now, think of this. If you get bored with your Bible, and you get bored with church, and you get bored with Christian fellowship, then you may be sitting in Church on the weekends, and you may be claiming that Jesus Christ is your Lord, but your emotions are demonstrating something else. If you aren't pleasantly moved toward the things of God, but you are moved toward movies, television, shopping, and sports, then your emotions are clearly demonstrating what spirit has truly found a home down deep in your spiritual heart. And, because God looks on the heart of a man, rather than on the outside, he's not going to put much weight on the fact that you showed up in church on the weekend, but he's going to look into your heart and realize that the spirit within you is evil because it moves you to demonstrate emotion for earthly things, but doesn't move you to demonstrate emotion for heavenly things.

As Galatians 6:7 says, "God is not mocked. What ever you sow, you're going to reap it."

I wish that you would stop for a minute and just consider what kind of things really interest you. You know, we talk about being Christians, but in today's church there is fewer and fewer instances of stressing the need to have our minds concentrated on the things of God. I personally know of a woman who was raised in the church all her life, and is now past 40 years old. Interestingly enough she claims to be a good Christian, and attends church on Sunday. Her parents also claim to be Christians, and attend church regularly. In fact, the whole family is considered to be Christian. However, when the woman was asked why did she think God created us and put us on this earth, she responded that she had no idea. She said that she never could figure out what she was doing here, but just assumed that God had some agenda in mind, and that he didn't tell her, so she just spends her time on earth trying to find interesting things to do.

Now, when I heard this, it made me very sad. I must say that it is very difficult for me to hear a person claim to be a Christian, claiming to be a follower of Jesus Christ, but then to have no clue as to what our purpose on earth is. When it was suggested to this woman that our purpose is to bring glory to God, and to his Son, Jesus Christ, she responded that she didn't think so, because God had all those angels up in heaven that do a much better job of glorifying him than she ever could, so whatever God was doing it didn't have much to do with her. She figures that when God is finished doing his thing, then he'll come back and take her to heaven.

You know, some of you probably cringe at the thought of a person who claims to be a Christian being this deceived. But, you know, it's not all that uncommon. In fact, remember that Jesus said there would be many who claimed to be Christians, but who weren't. Let me leave you with a description of what Jesus said would be some of the attributes of those who will falsely claim to be followers of him. He said that they would claim that Jesus had taught in their streets, and that they have eaten and drank in his presence, and that they have prophesied in his name, and will even claim to have cast out evil spirits in his name. They would claim to have done a lot of wonderful works for Jesus.

Now, of course, people can claim anything they want, but just claiming to love Jesus will not change the condition of our spiritual heart. And, if God is going to judge us according to the condition of our spiritual heart, then we could be in a lot of trouble if our claims are proven to be false. Remember, God is greater than our heart. If our heart deceives us, God certainly is not deceived. When he sees our lack of fervency for heavenly things, but sees that we demonstrate a great amount of heat for earthly things, God will know exactly who we really are.