

CALVARY BIBLE COLLEGE: SHILLONG

SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS WEEK 2013 PAPER PRESENTATION

TOPIC: *Turning the World Upside Down through Oneness Spirituality*

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Introduction:

I am one of the most unqualified people to write on this great and marvellous theme. There is nothing worth mention of my contribution in the ministry of turning the world upside down. But as I struggle on this world to be a spiritual man, I am really glad to deal on this subject of Oneness Spirituality which turns and will continue to turn the world upside down, that I myself also would learn more about Spirituality and be part of the group who turns the world upside down.

In this paper it is not possible to cover in detail the study of spirituality and the lives of people who turned the world upside down through their spirituality. But we will try to give a brief definition of the term Oneness Spirituality and only suggest means and ways to improve our spirituality so as to be able to turn the world upside down as the early Christians did.

This is my earnest prayer that the CBC Community may develop more desire to be spiritual and be part of the team to change the world upside down as we go through this paper.

I. Definition of term ‘Oneness Spirituality’:

We all know that man is created a spiritual being in contrast to other living beings. It will not be possible to know spiritual life unless we are certain that of this great privilege God has given us. It will not be possible to grow spiritually without understanding the functions of the spirit of man. CBC notes defining spiritual life and spiritual death may help us understand this better.

Spiritual Life:

This is the union of the spirit of man with the Spirit of God. This brings fellowship with God and eternal life.

Spiritual death:

The separation of man’s spirit from God’s spirit.¹

¹Ralph Vincent Reynolds, *Bible Doctrine Part II*, Hazelwood, USA: International Alpha Bible Course, 23

Man by and through his spirit is having a connection with the spiritual world and with the Spirit of God, both receiving and expressing the power and life of the spiritual realm. Man is linked with the spiritual world through his spirit. If the believer does not discern his own spirit, he is invariably ignorant of how to commune with God in the spirit. The following Scripture verses sufficiently prove that we human beings do possess a human spirit, and we worship God in the spirit:

1 Corinthians 2:11 “the spirit of the man which is in him”

1 Corinthians 5:4 “my spirit”

Romans 8:16 “our spirit”

1 Corinthians 14:14 “my spirit”

Zechariah 12:1 “the Lord ... Formed the spirit of man within him”

The term ‘spirituality’ is something hard to define specifically. ‘Spirituality’ is understood in different ways by different religions and Christian denominations. For some people it means the ability to live a holy life, the rejection of the worldly pleasures, living a monkish life, etc. Whereas for some it may be the ability to perform miracles, prophesy, discernment, etc. Still for others it may simply be a feeling of lightness or joy, peace, the absence of dull consciousness, and reduction of anxiety and fear.

Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia defines it a “The term "spirituality" is derived from the Latin *spiritualitas* and the Biblical "roeach/pneuma". It means to be put in motion, to be a living person, and being driven. In a Biblical context it means being animated by God. Spirituality means to be driven by the HolySpirit, as opposed to a life which rejects this influence²

Oneness Spirituality is to be distinguished from what the world understands as spirituality generally. It is firmly established on the word of God especially on the Apostolic Spirituality which is found in the book of Acts and the Epistles. Oneness Spirituality begins at the new birth, which is a spiritual quickening or the baptism of the Holy Ghost in which the spirit of the person mingles and have a mystical union with the Spirit of Jesus. But to become a spiritual man or woman one needs to be under the control and guidance of the Spirit continually. When a person lives such life fully control by God he is said to be a spiritual person.

²Wikipedia

“Pentecost did not come and go – Pentecost came and stayed. Chronologically the day may be found on the historic calendar; dynamically it remains with us in all its fullness of power”³

Spirituality is not a one-time experience, but a continual and experience of growth, because the Holy Spirit does not come one day and leaves us the next day. The Holy Ghost remains in the world but due to our negligence of Him and His word, we sometimes cannot feel His presence in our lives.

Spirituality and Fullness of the Holy Spirit:

In the Bible we find both these terms ‘Spirituality’ and a person being ‘filled with the Holy Ghost’. Baptism also can be said as filled with the Spirit, otherwise both the terms can only be applied to someone who already received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. After receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost one can be filled again and again as he yield to the moving of the Holy Ghost. But not everyone being filled of the Holy Ghost can be termed a Spiritual person. Not everyone who are touched by the word of God or the moving of the Spirit are born of the Spirit. When there is fullness of the Spirit, we usually see the manifestation of the Spirit in one kind or another. Dancing, jumping, shouting, prostrating, speaking in tongues, prophesying, interpretation of tongues, singing spiritual songs, etc are sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit but still then they may not necessarily be called spiritual person. Spirituality has to do something with the whole man. When his body, soul and spirit are control by the Holy Spirit continually he is said to be a spiritual person.

Spirituality on the other hand is a status or quality that a person attains in his yielding and continual growth in the likeness of Christ. This involves the whole of man not just his spirit yielding to God, and later becomes his character. Man is a tripartite being – Body, soul and Spirit, needs to be spiritual when the Spirit of God (The Holy Spirit) indwells and controls the whole person not just his spirit.

Spirituality touches all the three parts of the human body, soul and spirit as we shall see it below:

In the spirit:

He is a saved person: Rom 8:9 *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

³A.W.Tozer, *This world: Playground or Battleground?*, Mumbai: GLS Publishing, p. 99

Joh 3:5 *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*

1Jn 3:9 *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*

Forgiveness: Act 2:38 *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

Heb 8:12 *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.*

Assurance: Rom 8:16 *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

Security: Eph 1:13 *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*

Eph 1:14 *Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

Acceptance: 1Jn 3:1 *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*

Worth: Eph 2:10 *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

In his soul:

He is transformed: Rom 12:2 *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

He walks after the Spirit: Gal 5:16 *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

Gal 5:17-18 *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. There is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance in the will as the fruit of the spirit.*

In the body:

Crucifying of the flesh is the believers' responsibility on a day by day basis as he consider himself dead to sin. Rom 6:6 *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

The body is a temple of God. 1Co 6:19 *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

1Co 6:20 *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

Present as a living sacrifice. *Rom 12:1* beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

So, Oneness spirituality in its most fundamental meaning refers to the whole of man striving to think, imagine, feel, desire, choose and act under the control of the Holy Spirit. If one so strives, then he is seeking to live, act, die and be raised in the pattern of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, because the Spirit of Jesus is the divine power within us that can conform us to the pattern of Jesus' mystery while respecting totally the uniqueness of our own life and identity.

There are many promises found in the Scriptures for those who are Spiritual. Our Lord Jesus had done many wonderful works and turned the world upside down in different ways. He healed the sick, raised the dead, provided food for the hungry, opened the eyes of the blind, cast out the demons, loved and cared for the people and turned the way of the wicked upside down.

And later, He said in Joh 14:12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. His life was a life of self-sacrifice –not thought for His own but to do good for others. Spiritual people have this mind of Christ and in this way put the world upside down. A.W.Tozer put it rightly when he said,

“Spiritual people are indifferent to their feelings – they live by faith in God with little care about their own emotions. They think God's thoughts and see things as God sees them. They rejoice in Jesus and have no confidence in themselves. They are more concerned with obedience than with happiness.”⁴

So Oneness Spirituality is also different from the Old Testament people upon whom the Spirit of the Lord came upon. The Spirit of the Lord was said to have come upon people like Gideon, Saul, David and the prophets for a specific purpose. But these people were not necessarily spiritual in their lives.

⁴Ibid. p.23

II. How may one accomplish Spirituality:

Being a spiritual man is harder than it looks. This old world system doesn't want to hear about things of the spirit. It sounds funny and ridiculous to them. It would rather ignore spiritual things. They view men who are spiritual as weak. But if there's anything this world needs, it's men and women who will stand up for what the Bible deems as good and wholesome. We need spiritual men and women!.

You need to be that spiritual man. There are three principles lead to great spiritual power for the spiritual man. But there is an important prerequisite to gaining this strength. That important first ingredient is the power of salvation through Jesus Christ by receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This baptism of the Holy is Ghost is to be received by taking baptism in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38), and the laying on of hands by the Church leaders (Acts 8:17). Of course the person to receive the baptism must have the desire to receive.

Let us look at what Paul has to say of the Spiritual Man.

A. To Be Spiritual We Need To Be Led By God's Spirit. Gal 5:16-18 *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*

B. The Spiritual Man Or Woman Will Bring Forth Fruit;

Gal 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

C. The Spiritual Person Helps Others As Christ Also Did. Gal 6:1-2 *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*

1. The spiritual person will try to bring backsliders back into fellowship with the Lord.
2. He will pray for others.
3. Spiritual people will attend church and be active in the work of God.
4. A Pharisee is hard on others and easy on himself, but a spiritual man is easy on others and hard on himself.

D. The spiritual man discerns. In I Corinthians 2:15, But he that is piritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. the Bible says, .But he that is spiritual judgeth all things.. What does this verse teach? It simply teaches

us that the spiritual man discerns. He will pray. He will investigate. He will seek out. He will discern. It is not good enough for him that something feels right. It is not good enough for him that something looks right. It is not good enough for him that something seems right. The spiritual man will examine all things in light of the Word of God and then distinguish between right and wrong to make a right choice. He does not discern on the basis of his own personal experiences. He doesn't do that. He discerns on the basis of what the Word of God says. He discerns on the basis of what the Word of God teaches. The spiritual man is a student of the Word of God. In II Timothy 2:15, the Bible says, ".Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.. He knows how to take the Bible and determine what is right and what is wrong to make a right choice."⁵

E. The spiritual man acknowledges. In I Corinthians 14:37, the Bible says, ".If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. The spiritual man acknowledges the authority of the Word of God on his life. The Bible is not just a good book to him. The Bible is not just a good book of biblical principles to him. The Bible is a book of binding biblical principles to the spiritual man. He acknowledges the authority of God on his life. He acknowledges the rule of God on his life, as it is expressed in the Word of God. In other words, he gladly submits himself to God. In James 4:7, the Bible says, ".Submit yourselves therefore to God."⁶

F.The spiritual man restores. In Galatians 6:1, the Bible says, ".Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. A Christian who is taken over in a fault is usually trying to live for the Lord. He is usually trying to live for God; but for whatever reason, he is overtaken by a life of carnality. The Bible says, Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."⁷

G. The spiritual man matures. In I Corinthians 3:1, "Paul writes, ".I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ". We can see the carnal Christian here. He is not maturing. He is not growing. He is not moving forward in his spiritual growth. However, the spiritual Christian is maturing. He is growing. He is moving forward in his spiritual growth. The reason is that the spiritual man is feeding upon the Word of God every day. He examines all things in the light of the Word of God. He discerns on the basis of what the Word of God says. He discerns on the basis of what the Word of God teaches and then distinguishes between right and wrong

⁵http://www.evangelistnormanstevens.com/PDF%20_%20Sermons/The%20Spiritual%20Man%20_%20Website.pdf(8.8.2013)

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

to make a right choice. He acknowledges the authority of God on his life. He acknowledges the rule of God on his life, as it is expressed in the Word of God. And he gladly submits himself to the teachings of the Word of God, to the principles of the Word of God, to the commandments of the Word of God. And he is seeking to help restore carnal brothers or sisters in Christ.⁸

Apart from these he shall have the following qualifications:

- (1) hunger for God's word;
- (2) dependency through prayer;
- (3) humility and obedience;
- (4) compassion for the lost;
- (5) longsuffering and forgiveness;
- (6) love towards the unlovely;
- (7) endurance and faithfulness. These are marks of true spirituality and are supported by various passages.

III. How the Spiritual man is supposed to turn the world upside down:

J. Oswald Sanders, writing in his book on spiritual leadership said - "If those who hold influence over others fail to lead toward the spiritual uplands, then surely the path to the lowlands will be well worn. People travel together; no one lives detached and alone."⁹

In order to turn the world upside down it is not possible for an individual to do so, we need a corporate spirituality and we are to seek for people to be on our side. In order to do that our lives must influence others. There can be many Christian virtues that could be mentioned here, but let us consider the following primary things as the most important ones:

1. By prayer:

Col 1:9-10 *"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God";*

Paul knew the power of prayer. He knew those he had influence over couldn't make it without its power. He probably had never met most of these people. But he prayed for them. And in doing this he encouraged them to do the same. Also look at the life of our Lord, Jesus. His life was a life prayer.

In Luke 3:21 we see Jesus praying at His baptism and the heaven was opened

⁸Ibid

⁹J. Oswald Sanders, *spiritual leadership*

In Luke 6:12 we see our Lord praying **before** He choose His disciples...

In Mark 6:45 we see Jesus praying **before** walking on water...

In Luke 9:18 we see Christ praying before Peter made his great declaration that Jesus was the "Christ of God."

In Luke 9:28 we see Him praying before He is glorified on the "Mount of Transfiguration"...

And in Matthew 26:36-46 we see Jesus praying in Gethsemane to prepare Himself for His crucifixion, burial and resurrection.

The point is this: Amazing things happened when Jesus prayed! And He obviously saw importance in it. Shouldn't we as spiritual men see the same importance.

By Learning:

This one is a bit hard for us. No man wants to admit he doesn't know. That's why we never ask for directions. We're just too proud to learn! But that isn't spiritual! Let's look at Colossians 1:19 again. Paul said in this verse that he prays for them that they "might be filled with the knowledge of his will" and have "wisdom and spiritual understanding."

Prayer is only the first step. We must next **learn**. Our Lord Jesus said to the Sadducees in Mat 22:29 *Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.* Ignorance of the word of God can lead us to wrong teaching. So beware! To learn, we must admit we don't know everything. That's difficult because, in our minds, if we admit we don't know, we might be looked down upon. To admit we don't know is to admit weakness. To be a spiritual man we must learn. And to learn we must admit we don't have all the answers.

Psalm 1:1-2 says...

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night”.

Notice it says that a spiritual man is one who doesn't do wrong. He only does right. But how? Verse two (2) tells us the spiritual man's secret of success. He "delights in the law of the LORD." He learns. But he doesn't learn just anything. He doesn't get his spiritual learning from books, magazines, television or the internet. He learns spirituality from God's Word.

The "will" spoken of in Colossians 1:19 is God's will. And the "spiritual understanding" is knowledge that can only come from Him. God's Word must

rule in our lives if we are to find spiritual success. Without the direction of God's will and understanding, no man could ever be a spiritual man. We must seek the direction of **God's Word!**

By Fighting:

Let's look at 1Ti 6:12 *“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, where unto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. Who is the enemy of the spiritual man? Paul puts it this way in another passage, Ephesians 6:12.“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places”.*

Our enemy is spiritual. We are fighting for the Kingdom of God. Frankly speaking we are fighting Satan, the Devil. And we are out to destroy his kingdom by bringing the Good news to the people. Don't wait Satan to attack you but attack. God has provided us with the military might of all the legions of Heaven. We have "glorious power" at our fingertips. But we need to be ready to use it! But how do we do this? How do we become warriors for God? By praying, by learning the word of God and by fighting. Only after we have followed these steps can we turn the world upside down.

IV. What does the upside down world will look like:

1. The upside down world when the Kingdom of God will be realized:
 - i. The knowledge of God will fill the world. Isa 11:9 *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*
 - ii. The whole world will be evangelized.
 - iii. Everyone will enjoy the fellowship of God
 - iv. There will be peace and harmony everywhere.
2. The upside down world in relation to Christian living: The apostles and the early Christians lived the upside down world:
 - i. They preached about the risen Lord which the world could not accept.
 - ii. They baptized people in the name of Jesus of Nazareth for the remission of their sins.
 - iii. They preached about another kingdom.
 - iv. They chose what the world reject.
 - v. They enjoy the other side of the world:
 1. They chose poverty instead of riches.
 2. They chose to serve rather than being served.
 3. They forgive instead of taking revenge.

4. They regard themselves as strangers and pilgrims on this earth.
 5. When they are accused they opened not their mouth.
 6. They bless when persecuted.
 7. They esteem the reproach of Christ as greater riches.
 8. They always looked unto Jesus the crucified.
 9. They follow peace with all men and holiness.
- vi. They enjoy the power from above:
1. Signs and wonders follow them.
 2. The world looked things which are seen but they looked things which are not seen.
- vii. No boasting of their status or qualifications. E.g. Paul
- viii. No mediocrity though their status be very low. E.g. Peter

V. Conclusion: Dear friends to turn the world upside down seems to be not a small and easy thing, but since this is not to be won by our might, wisdom or wealth rather to let God fight through our submission to Him. It is something in which everyone of can take part. This is not the work of the CBC faculty alone, but every Christian who are ready for the task. Let us begin to turn the world upside down NOW!

VI. Questions for Discussion:

1. Why should there be a difference between Oneness spirituality and Trinitarian Charismatic Spirituality?
2. What suggestions can we make to develop our spirituality to change the world upside down?
3. What could be the reasons that some people who have already received the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit cannot be grow to spirituality? Suggest ways and means to bring them to spirituality.
4. In order to turn the world upside down, do you think it a must that we should perform signs and miracles? Why do you think so?