

#8 A SPOKEN WORD.....

In my sleep this word is spoken to me, "You must determine in your heart to serve Me."

The key word here is "determine"! It means to make up your mind or settle it. Yes, in following God we need a heart or spirit that is steadfast and determined for we will have many a trial that will test our determination. God will, when He finds it necessary, speak very plainly to us and we need no great revelation as to what He is saying. It is often falsely assumed that God will do all, and we can sit down and do nothing. Far from the truth. We are often given commands such as "put on", "put off", "seek" and "resist." Yes, there is the divine side of spiritual things and there is the required human response. We are also told to "repent", "trust", "submit", "obey", "pray" and "fear not." God will not do these things alone for us. He will grace us but we must unite with Him in these matters. It is our yielding to His Spirit that brings about spiritual fruit---not God without us, but God in and through us. It is not our mere human labor, but His laboring in us to do His will and accomplish His plans.

Let us determine, settle and fix our wills to submit to the Spirit of Christ. We must stand for Him and His will even when it means suffering and conflict. Let us put real steadfastness into our profession of faith and give it some substance. Our spirits, if born from above, are empowered to subdue our fleshly wills and desires and to obey God. Our minds and wills are neutral objects that can be channels of the Lord, of ourselves or of the devil. We determine such by our yielding. In temptation, we must remember that the tempting in itself is not evil, it is the yielding that is evil. Until we cross over into heaven above we will still have to contend with our lower nature which will rule if we do not by the spirit keep it in the grave. We here are referring to our practical duty.

Our lower nature wants one thing; our higher, born-again nature wants something else. We have the choice as to which one will rule. It is the will that makes the decision. You and I can say "no" to our own desires, emotions and bodily wants when they are in conflict with God's desires and commands. You and I make that choice, not God. We have the power to choose as we please. Temptations yielded to will produce downward spiritual decline. Temptations resisted and overcome will produce strong Christian character and upward spiritual progress.