

## Spiritual Wedge

One night in a dream, the Lord revealed to me a thought about the need to have a Spiritual Wedge in our lives. I didn't completely understand all He was sharing or what He wanted me to do with the information until I was in a Wednesday night service two days later. He seemed to put it all together as we worshiped and talked about God's everlasting love for us. I did not sense the information was for me alone, but to be shared with friends and loved ones.

2 Corinthians 5:17 says, *"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away, all things have become new!"* From the time you accept Christ into your life you know He gives you a new heart and a new nature. But you can't stop there. You've also have been told that if you don't do something with the new heart and new nature you can easily return to the old habits and patterns of living.

The Lord is interested in having a relationship with you and pursued you before you knew He existed. He loves you that much; even before you loved Him. Once your attention and focus are on Him, you need to recognize the significance of His love for you. You need to begin to grow in both your love for Him and your relationship with Him.

The information above is not new. You know you should continue to pursue a Christ-like character. This is done by reading the Bible, learning and obeying what you've read and meditating on His Word. You also must be praying, worshiping, attending church, participating in small groups and serving.

Too often though, even knowing God gives the Holy Spirit for guidance, we think we can grow and change on our own. We end up making few, if any, attempts to hear when the Holy Spirit is speaking or directing us toward or away from some action or behavior. When God reveals a truth to you, you might understand it and think it's good, but don't let it sink into your heart and change your life. You still haven't released the independent "do it my way" approach.

Here is where He revealed a new perspective to me. Every step we take closer to Jesus needs to be solidified with a spiritual wedge to keep us from returning to the place we were or the person we used to be. The wedge is, in a sense, a changed behavior or new habit we develop based on God's Word. The key is to not jump too fast or too far, thus resulting in backsliding.

For example, you begin the first step of committing to the habit of Bible reading. You must allow enough time to pass, that the habit is formed and you are committed to reading everyday with no chance of stopping the new behavior. Because God has developed the importance, through His Word, and impressed it into your heart, the first wedge is driven between the old self and the new self.

This wedge is the first of many that will keep you from leaning back toward the old self. It works the same as you develop your prayer life and believe and apply each revealed truth from God. Another wedge is put in place or a single wedge goes deeper.

If you think of this as a single wedge, picture a large tree in the forest being cut down. Sometimes after it's cut through part way, a wedge will be driven into the cut to keep it from falling back in a direction the tree cutter does not want it to go. Occasionally a hammer is used to drive the wedge deeper into the cut toward the center, to make the tree lean farther and farther in the direction it needs to go.

In this example, Jesus is the tree cutter, the Holy Spirit is the hammer, and the Word of God revealed is the wedge. The center of the tree? That's your heart.

All you have to do is to cooperate with the tree cutter, hammer and wedge. As each new piece of truth is revealed, meditated on, accepted, obeyed and put into action, the wedge is driven one step closer to our heart and a deeper love of God. You get one step closer to God and one step farther from Satan.

How fast you progress and what path you take is determined by your efforts and God's purpose. As it says in Philippians 2:12-13, *"Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."* Each must work out his own salvation.

Eventually, in time, the wedge will reach the center of the tree and the tree will fall toward the direction of Christ (symbolic of the Christ-follower truly committed to Christ). As Beth Moore said, "this is the giant step in your walk of faith; when you realize God is no longer a part of your life, He IS your life!"

*Heavenly Father, I thank You for Your presence and the gift of the Holy Spirit in my life. I pray You will continue to use the Spirit to drive Your Word deep into my heart toward a better understanding of You. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen!*

You are making progress. You are becoming more committed to God, developing new patterns and habits of living, spending time with other believers and you don't ever want to go back to where you were. You want to stay focused and determined, because to continue a life with Christ in our fallen world is not an easy task. To continue your walk right through the end of your life will take more than determination, it will need to become a passion or a discipline or both.