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The Cultural Christian Chiropractor

Where There Is Low Demand,
There Will Be Low Response

I know something about me. I'm the kind of guy that has to be sold out. Sid Williams used to say about me that I was like a robotic soldier, tell me to get in the foxhole and shoot and I will never get out, never quit shooting, and never surrender. I also know I like to follow a strong leader, and, when I am bonded to him, I am faithful through thick or thin. I still wonder today why I could not sell out and bond to Christ early on.

I knew at the time of my salvation that my spiritual life as a believer should be lived inside and close to Jesus. Yet, over half of me chose the world outside over righteousness from my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I chose the so-called "comforts," of the world and thwarted spiritual dependence. It took me years to even consider the fact that I needed constant Biblical study, teaching and cleansing from my many sins to stay in the spiritual life. While salvation had changed my young life to a degree and the church brought comfort to my soul, as it does to all Christians, and I could say I loved the Lord, prayed and trusted God, as I grew, my life was not Christian so that anyone would notice.

There is something else I know about me. I like to appear holy, close to God, without sin, but I know what a sinner I really am. I wanted Jesus, but what I didn't know was that I could not add Him and subtract sin. As time went by and I become more "on top" of things (*thinking this world had a spot for me, instead of me having a spot for it*), Jesus seemed to be just for Sundays. Bible reading and study became miniscule at best. When I went away to chiropractic college, one of the first things I did was visit a lot of churches. I made sure I kept going every Sunday. This gave me comfort, but it was more from habit than from anything else. When I was sitting in my classes, it was easy to add on the natural, innate healing principles in chiropractic to what I already knew as a Christian. I was drawn to our powerful natural healing philosophy. This understanding based on the body's ability to heal itself is still an amazing science that I am completely sold out on.

Yet, there is no mention of God in a professional school or even the fact that healing is about mind, body, and spirit. Everything has to be empirical. The closest my chiropractic education came to spiritual things was the mention of this vitalistic philosophy - that our physiology was being controlled by an in-born intelligence, and that this innate intelligence was part of Universal Intelligence. I understood right away the principle that innate intelligence is the life force that creates my tissue cells and controls my physiology. As I learned how cellular regeneration worked, I began to see what the chiropractic system of health had for the world. It was about the healing paradigm that our body is always changing, so each of us new doctors had the responsibility to practice and teach daily health disciplines to help innate change us for the better. Being as subluxation-free as possible was the part I was destined to

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study and practice.

However, there was an underground concept at school. This was fostered mostly by the book B. J. Palmer wrote in 1949, *"The Bigness of the Fellow Within."* This *"Bigness"* was not taught in school, but the undercurrent in the student ranks was to spread the rumor that you could *"tune into your innate"* and then you could wake up at night like BJ did and write down what innate was telling you. It was like having a spirit guide. It was the philosophy of the humanists. Some of us almost made a cult out of this one concept. Of course, the next step to this spirit guide thinking is the oldest lie recorded in history - that we can become like God, eat the forbidden fruit (sin) and it was fine. What was I to do with this false doctrine? Because I was a cultural Christian, I added it on my already busy and overcrowded life. I watered down even more the meaning of having a personal relationship with my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The problem was that I was not, nor had I considered, selling out to a totally surrendered life. My lukewarm spiritual life, with a compartment for Jesus, the church and innate left me partially surrendered - living the life of a cultural Christian. Being not fully committed and not fully uncommitted, I was never at peace with my genetic longings.

Patrick Morley wrote about the cultural Christian in his famous book *"The Man in the Mirror."* In his next book, *"Walking with Christ in the Details of Life,"* he helps us examine how we become such a cultural Christian. We have to look at the fact that the churches, the world and we ourselves place a low demand on our Christian-ness - to be surrendered Christians. When there is low demand, there will be a

low response. The truth of the matter is that Jesus and the Holy Bible calls for us to come to a great turning point, to a radical, life-transforming change - and then sell out completely. This turning point is no mean challenge, but a full surrender to history's most ideal, most radical leader - the Lord Jesus Christ.

When God breathed life into us at birth (*innate intelligence within*), natural principles of health and healing were born. I think the proof of this is the fact that chiropractic is still around, teaching how healing can work inside, without drugs and surgery. But innate is not a spirit guide. Rather, this *"intelligence,"* without any thinking from us - is controlling our physiology, just as the microbe world is all around us, affecting us every second, even though we can't feel it or see what innate is doing with these bacteria and viruses - just as Jesus is there every second, calling us to obedience.

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Later I had to fall into deep apostasy before I realized that all along the path of my life, I was contacting and seeking the god I wanted but not fully surrendering or developing a personal relationship with the God who is. Therefore, there was no spiritual peace or joy in my soul. Also in Morley's book, he talks about a similar road to the one that I traveled until he became sold out to Christ - surrendered. He wrote, *"To fully surrender to Christ doesn't mean to become a recluse, but a reformer; not a monk, but a manager; not a loner, but a leader. A Biblical surrender is a thinking surrender, carefully carved by thoughtful self examination and submission to Christ."*

Jesus cannot be reflected in and through us unless we are preoccupied with Him. It is about living the spiritual life in a secular world, even around secular Christians. No one will ever achieve a sin-free, or full-surrender, in this life, but we are commanded to seek the process of spiritual growth by grace (*sanctification*). Grace will not stop at death, but transcend over to worshiping at the feet of our Savior. Can you imagine being at His feet, like the disciples were long ago? The irony of this surrender is that it ends in victory, not defeat. You and I are called to leave the comforts of this world and our peers - the life of a cultural Christian. We must be so sold out to Christ, like I am to chiropractic, so completely dependent - that obedience brands our behavior.

As we begin, drawing close to the light in full surrender - we become exposed, leaving us bare. We see all our flaws, past and present sins and are called into action. As the doctrine of sanctification calls us to practice holy living, depending on the grace of God to draw us to the light, so must we believe that after our confession and cleansing, Jesus picks us up and moves us onward. It is hard to take the heat of a flawed person, so often we retreat to where our culture makes us comfortable, or focus on believing the false premise that our sins are so great even Jesus cannot love us or forgive them. We keep hearing the sirens of these safe, warm, comfortable cultural places. They keep us from being cold, but also from being on fire! So write down your mission, carry it with you - to be on fire for Christ, to trust Him completely, to obey, to live out of the overflow of an abundant life, filled with purpose and meaning.

Dr. Thomas Outler Morgan, DC is a 1963 graduate of Palmer Chiropractic College, recently celebrating his 50th year in the profession. He has been a member of the CCA since 1988. Retired from practice, Dr. Morgan lives in Cedartown, GA and has authored several books.

