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Truth in The Inward Parts

by T. Austin-Sparks

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"Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts" (Psalm 51:6).

PSALM 51 might well have as its title *DE PROFUNDIS*.

It is here that the Psalmist reaches the deepest depths of sorrow and remorse. The bottom is touched when it is a question of "bloodguiltiness", for, in all the provisions for sin in the Mosaic ritual, there is no provision for bloodguiltiness; death alone is the answer. This is what David knows and is facing in this Psalm because of the episode over Uriah the Hittite (2 Sam. 11-12). David well knew that the mercy of God had to go deeper than death; death which was his due. In his deep agony David has come to a vital question or issue. It is here that "Deep calleth unto deep". Deep suffering calls for a deep solution, if the suffering is related to sin. The solution is that in verse six: "Thou desirest truth in the inward parts". To reach that deepest place and solution God uses our failures and wrongs.

There is a -

Progressiveness In God's Dealings

In the course of our spiritual history God deals with us in ever-deepening ways. Down, down, down, He goes, until He touches bottom to have things true at our very depth. He undercuts all our professions, doctrines, assumptions, pretensions, illusions, and customs.

There is no mere formalism about this; no mere Jewish ritual in this; no mere outward observance of rites and ceremonies in this! No! This has got to go right into the inmost being, in the *inward* parts. God works toward that. God is ever working toward the most inward parts. Do you recognize that? Do you understand what He is doing with us? Oh, He will meet us with blessing on a certain level, as we walk before Him, like the man in Psalm 1. He will meet us with His gracious provision when we transgress and trespass and fail, and do wrong - He will meet us there in grace. But God is going to pursue this matter to the most inward place of our being, and register there His work of grace and redemption.

"Thou desirest...", and David did not come to that until he reached the profoundest, the deepest place of need, of failure, of conscious weakness and worthlessness. Then he cried. It is not enough to just please God in ordinary ways; it is not enough to observe the ritual of the Law, and go to the ceremonies, and carry out all that which is external. God is after truth in the *inward* parts, right down into the depths of our being. Why? Why? Because truth is a major feature and constituent of the Divine nature. God is called the God of Truth; Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Godhead, called Himself the Truth - "I am... the truth"; "To this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth"; the Holy Spirit is described as the Spirit of Truth - "when He, the Spirit of truth, is come...".

The Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are characterized by this one feature - truth! And God desires and has set His heart upon having people who are partakers of the Divine nature, and so He is working ever more deeply toward this end: what is true of Himself shall be true of His children - those begotten of Him - that they should be *true* sons of God in this sense.

All Untruth Is Satanic

Satan is described as the liar and the father of lies. For that reason all untruth is an abomination to God. God has consigned all liars to the lake of fire; He has excluded from the New Jerusalem everything that maketh a lie. God hates everything that is not true, and true right through and through like Himself. He must have truth in the *inward* parts.

The interference of Satan with God's creation - man - resulted in man becoming something false where God is concerned: he is a misrepresentation of God's mind; and he is a deceived creature. "The god of this age", says Paul, "hath blinded the mind of the unbelieving". Man is a deceived, blinded creature; but God desires "truth in the *inward* parts".

Now, you see how large a matter this is, and one is hard-pressed to know what to say, and what not to say about it. But let us dwell for a moment upon this clause "the *inward* parts" - the *inward* parts. You will detect in this Psalm that that is running right through. Here it is: "create in me a clean *heart*"; "renew a right *spirit* within me"; "a broken *spirit* and a contrite *heart* Thou wilt not despise". You see, it is all this innermost realm of things that has now arisen as the *real* need. No more deception, no more falsehood, no more mockery, no more make-believe, no more going on as though it is all right when it is not all right; no more using external means to cover over inward unreality; no more going to meetings, and saying prayers, and joining in the whole system, when the *inward* parts are not right before God. Seeing then that we are what we are by nature now, this represents a re-constituting of us. Anything that does not minister to that is false in itself. Any system of religion that just puts on from the outside, and covers over the inner life by mere rite and

ritual is false, it is not true. The work of God is to reconstitute human nature. And that, of course, involves two things.

On the one side, it involves a breaking down. And if you know anything about God's dealings with lives who come into His hands, there is undoubtedly a large place for that - a progressive breaking down; a getting to the root of things, and undeceiving us. If we have any illusions about ourselves, they will all be gone when God has done with us. If we are governed by any kind of falsehood about ourselves, and our position, and our work, when God has done with us, that will all be gone. He is going to break us down until we see ourselves stark, as an unclean thing, with all our righteousnesses as filthy rags. So He will break us down, and He does.

But there is the other side, of course, all the time, for God is not only, and always negative; there is the constructing, bringing up to the place where anything that is false, anything that is not absolutely transparent and true, straight, clear, is hateful to us. More and more our inner man revolts against our own falsehood. Any exaggeration comes back on us at once with conviction of wrong; any false statement hits us hard, and we know that we have not spoken the truth. It is a tremendous thing to get into the hands of the Holy Spirit, until, like God, the one thing that we hate is anything that is false. "I hate", said David, "every false way". We must come there. But we must be lovers of the truth. And this is going to pursue us everywhere; it will pursue us into our own life within ourselves, that we are not deceiving ourselves at all. Before God we know exactly what God thinks about us, and we know where we stand in the light.

Truth In The Social Life

It will pursue us into our social life, and all our social lies and make-believe will have to come under the hand of God. Oh, what a tremendous amount of falsehood, make-believe, there is in the social realm. What about all the 'make-up'? is it not to make out that you are something that you are not?! to give a semblance of something that is not true? The whole social life is like that; it is a fabric of untruths, and we have many ways of just saying things that really are not true.

Truth In The Business Life

It pursues us into our business; the lie that gets us a good sale or a good buy - the commercial lie. And so, through and through, God will pursue this matter of truth. Forgive me, but it is a very, very important matter with God. If God does hate what is untrue, and desires truth in the inward parts, how can He bless where there is anything that is false, of any kind at all - His eyes see.

And this is a work of time - indeed, it is a lifelong work. This thing comes more to light, becomes more intense, the further on we go. The Lord lets us off with a lot of things as spiritual infants, as we do our children. We know that they are children, and we do not take too much notice of certain things which we know are not quite right. And God is very patient and very tender to bring us on. It would not do to come right in with all the fulness and the exactness of His nature too soon - He spreads it over the whole lifetime. And the nearer we come to the Lord, the more meticulous the Holy Spirit is over this matter of truth; the closer are His dealings with us. It is very true, you see, "perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord" - *perfecting*. The nearer we get to the end, the more stringent will be the Lord's dealings with anything false in our lives. It is a time matter, but God is very faithful - He is very faithful; He does not let things pass. Do we want Him to be faithful? Well, it is

not comfortable to say, Yes, but it is good that He should be faithful with every inconsistency, every contradiction, every falsehood, in the inward parts.

That carries the matter deeper than our own natural, moral life. I am not talking about morals now. It is right to be honest; it is right to have integrity; it is right to be straight; it is right to be true, naturally, humanly: but I am not talking about that. This thing goes deeper than our natural moral life at its best, for the simple reason that, by nature, we have not got God's conceptions and God's standards. God's thoughts about things are very different from ours. We would often allow what God would never allow. He has an altogether different point of view about things. We judge in one way about things, and God judges in another. It is necessary for us to come to God's standpoint. Oh, we would say, there is no harm in such-and-such a thing. Oh, there is no wrong in that; look at so-and-so and so-and-so, and we take our standard, perhaps, from other people. We have known people to do that; point to some outstanding figure in the work of God, in whose life was a certain thing - that one has been taken as the model, to be copied, and so the thing has been taken on. Oh, there is no harm in it; look at so-and-so. And I have known lives and ministries to be ruined on that very excuse. The question is: What does the Lord say about it? God says, Walk before Me! Not before any human model; not before any human standard; 'There is no harm in it; so-and-so does it; it is quite a common practice'. No, no! "Walk before Me", says the Lord. We have got to get this in the spirit, the *inward* man. It is deeper than our best moral standards. Otherwise there is no point in it being in the Bible at all, if our moral standards can rise to God's satisfaction - why must we be so handled and reconstituted? It is deeper than our intellect, than our reason. You cannot, by reason or intellect, arrive at God's standard at all. Not at all! Oh, do not think that by any method of reasoning, you are ever going to reach God's standard. You never will. Here, it is only by revelation of the Holy Spirit. Christ has got to be revealed in our hearts by the Spirit. There is no point in Jesus saying: "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the truth", if we could get there by our own intelligence. Not at all. It must come by the revelation of Christ in our hearts, in the inward parts. This is something spiritual. "God is Spirit; they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in *truth*" - spirit and truth go together. Only what is spiritual, what is of God, is *truth* - *only* that!

The Apostle Paul had a great intellect, as everybody knows, and he had a very high standard of moral life, but he was an utterly deceived man before his conversion. "I verily thought that I ought...." 'It was a matter of conscience with me to do many things contrary....' He was conscientious. He could say as concerning the righteousness which is of the Law -blameless! There is a moral standard; there is an intellectual standard, there is a conscientious standard! But it can be all mistaken, deceived. No, that is not the way. It is only by the work of the Holy Spirit Himself in us, changing us, completely changing us. It may be that common honesty, sincerity will be a way along which the Lord can come. I am quite sure, if we are not going to be honest and straight with God, He is not going to meet us, but that will not get us there. He may require the gangway across which to pass to us, the gangway of meaning business with Him, and being thoroughly honest with Him. But let us never think that any sincerity of ours will bring us to be partakers of the Divine nature - not at all! "Thou desirest truth in the inward parts", in the deepest realm of our being - in our spirits.

If we are in a false position we are in great weakness, and our foundation will collapse, sooner or later. But the Lord's way is to deliver us from such.