

Spiritual or Physical?

Many students seem to be confused by the terms “spiritual” and “physical”. It seems wise, therefore, to indicate just what the Builders mean by those terms. For us “spiritual” is a general term applicable to all different manifestations of the Life-Power. The term “physical” designates a certain plane, or field, of spiritual activity. A lump of mud is just as spiritual as an aspiration; and what an aspiration is in the mind of an incarnate human being is just as physical as a lump of mud. For when we have aspirations, each of them is a modification of brain-cells, which are physical. Each aspiration is also astral, because of its emotional quality; mental, because of its intellectual quality; and causal, because it represents a tendency stored in the causal body from past experience.

People who do not see that the physical is just as much an expression, or differentiation, of the spiritual as the mental, astral or causal, are ill-qualified for the work of the Builders. We seek freedom from bondage to the physical, but to win that freedom we must learn to direct and control the physical manifestations of spiritual energy. This is the reason why we find ourselves in physical bodies, and in a physical environment.

Those to whom our work seems materialistic simply do not understand it. A materialist is one who denies that there is anything beyond the physical plane. We do nothing of the sort; but we are not driven by a deluded hatred of the physical expressions of the Life-Power. We seek to be conscious of the physical as the Life-Power is conscious of it.

Our work begins here, not in the beyond. The specific change that is wrought by it is a physical change, whose nature has already been indicated in this lesson, and elsewhere in our texts. I do not by any means wish to convey the impression that our work is restricted to the physical plane. I am trying to make perfectly clear the fact that its beginning is right here, where we are; and I am trying also to correct a misconception of “spiritual” which seems to be wide-spread. One student said to me recently that he understood our work was intended to develop spiritual centers. So it is, but not in the way he had in mind just then. Our contact with the Inner School

is made through a physical apparatus, a special organization of a group of cells in the brain. That group of cells is a spiritual center, right enough, but it is not a superphysical spiritual center.

At the same time, it should be remembered that what ever is done on the physical plane involves the activities of corresponding centers that are superphysical. You cannot purify your body of flesh, and bring your self-consciousness under control, without modifying the finer vehicles also. The only question is, "Where shall the work begin?" In the light of such knowledge as we possess, the Builders answer, "Where we are, with the control of the physical vehicle and the forces playing through it."

Some people may be so constituted that they cannot agree with this answer. Nobody has to. I want to make our position perfectly clear, so that nobody will waste any valuable time on work for which he has no real sympathy. Whoever elects to continue with us will do so because the work appeals to him. One who is not qualified for this particular undertaking will be more comfortable pursuing his quest for more light in another way. That's why I'm very particular, just at this point, to tell you just what we're aiming to do, and how. We seek associates who can understand that the all-pervading Spirit is present in every plane. People who have a complex that makes them despise the physical will never be able to do what we mean by 'building the Adytum' until they are free from that complex. Who can work satisfactorily while he thinks the plans are all wrong?