

The Lord God is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet, and makes me walk on my high places. (NAS Hab. 3:19)

Some Bible translations replace “high places” with “heights.” Others use the more earthbound image of “steep mountains.” But the underlying truth of the psalmist’s metaphor is that we can walk in these higher locations because God has given us the strength and agility to do so.

Extending the metaphor further, we could also see these “high places” as the God-inspired thoughts and individuality of human consciousness. As Lewis concluded in his book *Miracles*, “human thought is not God’s but God-kindled” (45). This higher, human capacity to reason or make inferences in our “own thinking” is not a “natural event.” It is a God-created gift, a “daily and hourly experience, as intimate as breathing” (65).

Within our gift of inspired consciousness, the Spirit of Christ is always speaking to us, encouraging us to purer deeds and kinder motives. We are either listening, opening ourselves to this higher region of inspired thought, or we are not. That is the basic choice that underlies all choices.

As Paul tells us in Romans, to “live in accordance with the Spirit” we must set our minds on “what the spirit desires.” He then continues on to describe an understanding I’ve also found to be essential in Christian believing. Paul writes that “the mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so” (NIV 8:5, 7).

“Nor can it do so.” The brain, the “mind governed by the flesh,” is not capable of abandoning the self-centered, survival instincts that have evolved over millennia. Listening to it, we’re always going to be pulled back down into the primitive demands of physical existence—the panic and anger, the fear that follows pain or humiliation, the selfishness that makes us greedy.

But, praise the Lord, our human individuality is greater than these natural, brain processes. That’s because the image of Himself that God created us to be does not originate in brain waves but, rather, in God’s gift of higher consciousness, in “the mind governed by the Spirit” (NIV Rom. 8:6).

And Christ’s presence, at our side and in conscious thought, pushes back at the brain’s mental and instinctual responses. He sustains our moral choices, nurtures our best motives and pours into our hearts his peace. That makes walking with the Lord day by day, in the “high places” of his choosing, not only essential for a Christian, but for everyone else as well.