

# Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



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No matter how much the world of humanity advances in material civilization, it is nevertheless in need of the spiritual development mentioned in the Gospel. The virtues of the material world are limited, whereas divine virtues are unlimited. Inasmuch as material virtues are limited, man's need of the perfections of the divine world is unlimited.

Throughout human history we find that although the very apex of human virtues has been reached at various times, yet they were limited, whereas divine attainments have ever been unbounded and infinite. The limited is ever in need of the unlimited. The material must be correlated with the spiritual. The material may be likened to the body, but divine virtues are the breathings of the Holy Spirit itself. The body without spirit is not capable of real accomplishment. Although it may be in the utmost condition of beauty and excellence, it is, nevertheless, in need of the spirit. The chimney of the lamp, no matter how polished and perfect it be, is in need of the light. Without the light, the lamp or candle is not illuminating. Without the spirit, the body is not productive. The teacher of material principles is limited. The philosophers who claimed to be the educators of mankind were at most only able to train themselves. If they educated others, it was within a restricted circle; they failed to bestow general education and development. This has been conferred upon humanity by the power of the Holy Spirit.



ORIGINAL



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For example, Christ educated and developed mankind universally. He rescued nations and peoples from the bondage of superstition and idolatry. He summoned them all to the knowledge of the oneness of God. They were dark, they became illumined; they were material, they became spiritual; earthly they were, they became heavenly. He enlightened the world of morality. This general, universal development is not possible through the power of philosophy. It is only attainable through the pervading influence of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, no matter how far the world of humanity advances, it fails to attain the highest degree unless quickened by the education and divine bestowals of the Holy Spirit. This ensures human progress and prosperity.

Therefore, I exhort you to be devoted to your spiritual development. Just as you have striven along material lines and have attained to high degrees of worldly advancement, may you likewise become strengthened and proficient in the knowledge of God. May divine susceptibilities be increased and awakened; may your devotion to the heavenly Kingdom become intense. May you be the recipients of the impulses of the Holy Spirit, be assisted in the world of morality and attain ideal power so that the sublimity of the world of mankind may become apparent in you. Thus may you attain the highest happiness, the eternal life, the everlasting glory, the second birth, and become manifestations of the bestowals of God.

