

If we let that flesh become our master instead of our servant then it becomes an evil and the flesh lusts against the spirit. So I believe that a sane viewpoint on this matter is tremendously important for the development of each of us as God wants us to develop. We must recognize the two areas: the world of cause and effect which God knew all about from the beginning and put/in the particular situation because that is what He knew would be desirable for our development into the ones He wants us to be. We also recognize that God has given each one of us a spirit that should keep the flesh, the body subordinate, secondary. Not to destroy it, not to consider it evil. But to consider it as a good to be used but secondary. The primary is God's purpose for us.

We've spoken of the materialist attitude that tries to say there is nothing but cause and effect, and that this idea of spirit is purely imaginary--the idea of thought or anything. We have the opposite extreme which is called existentialism. It is if anything more absurd than materialism. The existentialist idea is very well enunciated by Dostoevsky, by one of the characters in one of his novels who said, "I must remember that I am a man, not a piano key." I am not subject to this law of cause and effect; I can be supreme. We find the extreme of that attitude in Henley in his poem. When I graduated from college we had a very fine singer sing a solo, very beautifully but it certainly ruined the day for me to hear him sing it, because though it expresses one thought that is true and vital to all of us--that we should be superior to our circumstances, it carries that supremacy to a point that is absurd. It is Henley's poem, Invictus, and I can hear that man singing now:

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced, nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeoning of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.