

The importance of spiritual to human condition



The Importance of Spiritual to Human Condition It is argued that a human being goes is not purely physical. A human being is also imbued with spirit which stimulates his spiritual needs. Even if an individual despises or neglects his spiritual being, it is irrefutable that the religious constructs in his social environment inevitably affects his way of life. Thus, it can be concluded that spirituality is a central component to the human experience. This concept will be explored further by looking at the three novels namely, The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne, Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte, and Sula by Toni Morrison.

The Scarlet Letter is a portrayal of the fallen woman in the person of Hester. Within the Puritan society, Hawthorne reveals how religion and spirituality had strongly influenced the individual lives of its members. Being an adulterous in a religious society, Hester's sin brought her to become an object of ridicule and snickering. However, we can see that towards the end of the story, Hester's recognition and repentance for her sin brought about a transformation in her life. The story tells of her acceptance of the punishment as well as the determination to move on amidst the shame inflicted to her by the society. This perspective together with her good deeds and admirable character which represents moral transformation enabled her to partially regain the favor of the society. Thus, this story states that the spiritual condition of an individual directly influences her whole being. Hester's life in sin brought unpleasant things to her while her transformation leads the way to a happier existence.

It should also be noted that in this novel, the spiritual condition of an individual is not limited to what the public perceives. Though it was portrayed that Dimmesdale, the highly regarded minister who was the secret

lover of Hester, gained the favor of the society, he was constantly tormented by the sin that he had committed.

In *Jane Eyre*, Bronte tells the story of a woman who was determined to live with morality through the example of her friend, Helen. This novel shows the agonizing fact that spirituality often leads to the suffering of an individual as being spiritual often means the denial of one's desire. Helen, being a firm believer in God suffered was willing to endure all the punishments for her. Jane, in her moral status, chose to forego the happiness of being wed to a married man. However, it can be seen that in the end, it was portrayed that spirituality leads to happy endings. Founding faith in God, Rochester was transformed and God designed a way for him to marry Jane. The novel showed that if spirituality becomes a guiding light to an individual, it will find a way to create a happy life.

Sula, like the two novels become a struggle between good and evil.

However, it should be noted the author did not clearly define what is good with what is evil. In the end of the story, Sula asks her best friend who was considered to be the good girl all along " About who was good. How you know it was you" This story, as a portrayal of how two utterly different individuals have become friends, indicates how spirituality and immorality can be together. However, as with the two novels above, it strongly supports that the spiritual condition of an individual influences his actions and shapes his way of life.

Reference

Bronte, Charlotte. " *Jane Eyre*." 1990. Signet Classic: New York

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. " *The Scarlet Letter*." 2000. Random House, Inc.: New

York

Morisson, Toni. " Sula." 1982. Penguin Books: New York