

Spirit, Soul and Body

Part 1 – Tripartite Being of Man

1. Spirit, Soul and Body – 1 Thessalonians 5:23

“May the God who gives us peace make you holy in every way and keep your whole being---spirit, soul, and body---free from every fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1. Man is a tripartite being

- i. Tripartite means three-fold or three parts.
 - God’s word distinctively tells us that man is spirit, soul and body - a tripartite being.
- ii. Scripture never confuses spirit and soul as though they are the same.
 - Not only are they not the same, their very natures are also different.

2. Keep your whole being holy

- i. The whole being means man’s spirit and soul and body.
- ii. Not one or two but all three parts be kept free from every fault till Jesus return.

3. Understanding the division of spirit and soul – Hebrew 4:12

“The word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It cuts all the way through, to where soul and spirit meet, to where joints and marrow come together. It judges the desires and thoughts of the heart.”

i. The makeup of a human being

- The physical and non-physical part
 - The physical part is the physical body, which includes the joints and marrow, which gives motion and sensation.
 - The non-physical part is divided into two parts, i.e. spirit and soul.

ii. The application of the double-edged sword

- Physically
 - The priest uses it to cut and completely dissect the animal sacrifices, separating even joints and marrow.
- Spiritually
 - The Word of God is sharper than any double-edged sword.
 - It will cut and divide thoroughly the spiritual, the soulical, and the physical.
 - Since soul and spirit can be divided, they must be different in nature.

iii. The need to understand the difference between spirit and soul.

- Spiritual knowledge is very important to spiritual life.
- The main reason why many Christians remain in a soulish state is because they often account for what is soulish as spiritual.
- Even the dictionary define wrongly the soul as “the spirit of a person”

2. Man was designated a living soul

4. In the Beginning – Genesis 2:7

- i. “Formed man of dust from the ground” refers to man's body.
- ii. “Breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” refers to man's spirit
- iii. “Man became a living soul” refers to man's soul.

5. How man became a living soul.

- i. God formed man from dust and breathed into him the breathe of life.
 - The Greek word for ‘life’ is ‘chay’ which is in the plural.
 - God’s breathe of life upon entry into the body became man’s spirit and when man’s spirit touches the lifeless body it produces the soul.

- The body has no life without the spirit; it became a living soul only when the spirit merges with the body.

ii. Man's soul is therefore the combination of man's spirit and body.

- The spirit merging with the body brought forth a living and self-conscious man with his own individual identity and personality.
- From this point forward, scripture refers to man as a living soul.
 - Unlike the angels who were created as spirits, man was created predominantly as a living soul.
 - What the man is depends on how his soul is because it represents him and expresses his personality and individuality.
 - If man's soul wills to obey God, it will allow the spirit to rule over the man but it can also suppress the spirit in taking delight as lord of the man.

6. A practical illustration of spirit, soul and body

i. The Light Bulb – It represents the total man.

Within the bulb is a filament. It will not illuminate until and unless electricity passes it. Once electricity passes through it will light up. The filament is therefore the material substance that carries the electricity as well as manifesting the light. Electricity is the cause of the light while light is the effect of electricity.

- The spirit is like the electricity, the soul the light, and body the filament.
- The spirit coming into contact with the body produces the soul and the soul, in turn, expresses itself through the body.

3. The Functions of Spirit, Soul and Body:

7. The Spirit, the Soul and the Body

i. The Spirit – God-consciousness

- It is where we communicate with and worship God.

- It is where our relationship with God is build.
- ii. The Soul – self consciousness
- It is the seat of man’s intellect and personality.
 - It is where man’s emotion is being express.
- iii. The Body – world consciousness
- It is where man’s five physical senses operate.
 - Through it, man has contact with the physical, material world.
 - It can affect the physical world as well as being affected by it.
- iv. God dwells in the spirit, self dwells in the soul, senses dwell in the body.

8. The Physical and the Spiritual Worlds

- i. The soul belongs to and stands between these two worlds.
- It has the power of free will, to make choices and to choose freely.
 - As the spirit is used to communicate with the spiritual world and the body with the natural world, so the soul stands between and exercises its power to discern and decide whether the spiritual or the natural world should reign.
 - Sometimes too the soul itself takes control over man through its intellect, thus creating an idealistic world that reigns.
- ii. The spirit cannot act directly upon the body.
- It needs a medium (a middle-man), which is the soul.
 - The soul stands between the spirit and the body.
 - The spirit can subdue the body through the soul to obey God; likewise the body through the soul can draw the spirit into loving the world.
 - In order for the spirit to govern, the soul must give its consent; otherwise the spirit is helpless to regulate the soul and the body.
 - But this decision is up to the soul, for therein resides the personality of the man.

9. Before man sin against God.

- i. The power of the soul was completely under the control of the spirit.
 - The spirit controlled the whole being through the soul.
 - The soul's strength was therefore the spirit's strength.
 - After man sin, his spirit died and the soul began to dominate with the body.

- ii. God desires that the spirit, being the noblest part of man, should control the whole being.
 - Yet, the will, - the crucial part of individuality - belongs to the soul.
 - It is the will, which determines whether the spirit, the body, or even itself is to rule.
 - It is only when the soul is willing to assume a humble position than and only than can the spirit ever manage the whole man.
 - If the soul rebels against taking such a position the spirit will be powerless to rule.

- iii. This explains the meaning of the free will of man.
 - Man is not an automation that turns according to God's will.
 - Rather, man has full sovereign power to decide for himself.
 - He possesses the organ of his own volition and can choose either to follow God's will or to resist Him and follow Satan's will instead.

Quote from Pember's in his book "Earth's Earliest Age".

"Man became a living soul expresses not merely the fact that the combination of spirit and body produced the soul; it also suggests that spirit and body were completely merged in this soul. In other words, soul and body were combined with the spirit, and spirit and body were merged in the soul. Adam in his unfallen state knew nothing of these ceaseless strivings of spirit and flesh, which are matters of daily experience to us. There was a perfect blending of his three natures into one and the soul, as the uniting

medium became the cause of his individuality, of his existence as a distinct being”.