

## SPIRIT, SOUL, AND BODY

Before we open God's word this morning, I'd like to share part of an email I received from Robin. Because of the virus, Robin's not able to get out and distribute literature and associate with others, but he's doing what he can to witness through the Internet. Things were getting better for a while and there were hopes he could carry on with life as usual, but things have taken a turn for the worse in the Philippines and because of COVID-19 a strict lockdown is in place once again and he would appreciate our prayers. In his note to me he says, "A few weeks ago, I sent some materials to a young lady who saw my offer on social media, she seemed to be so interested that she couldn't believe that those (that is, the literature he offers) are free including the shipping. And yesterday I was surprised to hear from her again. She informed me that she had read most of the materials I sent her and she asked about the Sabbath and some of our beliefs so I sent her our ministry's website and hopefully she'll find all the information she's looking for. Please pray for her that the Holy Spirit would guide her into all the truth and through her, and the materials she received, that others may find the truth as well."

I hope you're praying for Robin and our brothers and sisters in the Philippines, and around the world for that matter, that God's hand of protection might be over His people during this time. However, it seems that those who are dying from the virus, for the most part, are those who have a weak immune system, whether because of age, underlying health conditions, or a poor diet, so it's imperative that we follow the health message that God has given us so He can then bless us with good health, because if we do our part, guess what? God will do His. I want to thank those of you who have been sending funds for the Philippines, for Robin's support, and so he can have literature to distribute like the leaves of Autumn. I just ordered a shipment of literature to send to the Philippines, which usually takes several weeks if not months to arrive, and we're hoping that conditions will soon be such that Robin can get out and associate with others once again.

We've pretty much depleted our literature fund now, so please remember that when you give. So far this year Gospel Workers Ministry has reached over 100 countries via the Internet and around 15,000 visitors have come to our website to access the truth for this time, and again thank you for the funds so we can continue to reach out to the honest at heart. Time is short brothers and sisters, and we must not allow the devil to slow the spread of the everlasting gospel. I don't believe we need to look so much at the signs of the times any more to tell us when the coming of the Lord is drawing near, we need now to be listening for the sound of the trumpet and we must be about our Father's business. Let's pray before we open God's Holy Book.

I'd like to begin with a Scripture reading this morning in **1 Thessalonians 5:19-23**. The

apostle Paul says a mouth full in just **5 verses**, and beginning with **verse 19** he says the following, “Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. **(And if we do these things, what’s going to happen?)** And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Now we could spend a lot of time talking about each one of the various things mentioned in these verses, like not causing the Holy Spirit to be extinguished in our lives, not treating with hatred inspired messages, putting everything to the test of God’s word and tenaciously holding on to what that word says is good, and not having anything to do with evil, or even what someone could construe as evil, and how observing these things will preserve us blameless right up to the time when Jesus comes, but I want to zero in on just one part of **verse 23**, where it says we need to be wholly sanctified in our spirit, in our soul, and in our body. Sanctification is defined as holiness, and in *The Desire of Ages, page 555* it says, “holiness is wholeness for God.” And so, we are to be wholly holy, or completely holy in our spirit, in our soul, and in our body if we plan on spending eternity with the One who died for us.

We see from this verse that each person born into this world is made up of three parts. We have a spirit, a soul, and a body, but just what exactly is meant by these three parts? It’s not too difficult to distinguish the body from the soul and spirit, is it? The body is physical and with the five senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch, it connects and interacts with the material world, but soul and spirit are not so easy to define, and in many cases there seems to be not much distinction between the two.

Also I don’t think it’s a coincidence that both the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries have three distinct divisions; the courtyard, the Holy Place, and the Most Holy Place. The sanctuary represents the experience we go through as we develop the three parts of our being. As we enter the sanctuary we lay all on the altar of sacrifice and we’re cleansed at the laver and sanctified in the Holy Place where our spirit is changed as we partake of the Holy Spirit, eat God’s word, and pray for ourselves and for others. Only then can we be empowered to keep the commandments that are in the Most Holy. This is a study in itself, and if you want more information about that you can go to my website at [gospel-workers.com](http://gospel-workers.com) and listen to the sermon titled “The Breath of the Soul.” The sanctuary doctrine is the central pillar of our faith for a reason, and it would be well for us to acquaint ourselves with every aspect of it

Several times in the Bible we see a repeating of the same word three times, like Holy, Holy, Holy and Woe, Woe, Woe. Jesus goes back to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane three times; God calls the prophet Samuel three times; and Jesus repeats the phrase “feed my sheep” to Peter three times. Also we mustn’t forget how Jesus rose from the grave after

three days. In Jewish culture, three days past the time of death indicated they were truly dead. Therefore, Jesus truly conquered death by not rising until the third day. In the Old Testament we have three patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the fathers of the nation of Israel. Daniel prayed three times a day modeled after what it says in **Psalm 55:17**. The Magi presented three gifts to Jesus: gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and of course in **Revelation 14:6-12** we have the three angels' messages, and the Scriptures present three persons in the Godhead, and I'm sure we could think of more. And so, there seems to be something special about the number three in Scripture, and I believe this also has something to do with our three parts, and we'll be exploring some of these things a little further as we go along.

When we go to the concordance we find that our spirit, which is the first thing Paul mentions, has to do with our "breath" and our "mental disposition", or our thoughts and intellect, which right off the bat reminds me of what happened in the Garden when God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul, or a living person. In the Bible the word "soul" is identified as simply "a person", such as in **1 Peter 3:20** where it says eight souls were saved in the ark, but in other places it means more than that. But if each person realized that they owe their very existence to the Creator that breathed into Adam's nostrils to make him live, rather than some big bang theory and evolutionary process that has taken billions of years to form the human race, don't you think they might be more inclined to worship that Creator rather than some erroneous theory? But no, the trend in all public schools and most nature programs on TV are indoctrinating the masses with teachings that originate with the father of lies. He will do anything to distract and call attention to that which leads away from the Creator and the creation story, and he's been very successful in his endeavors.

In ***The Sanctified Life, page 50*** it says, "The sanctification set forth in the Sacred Scriptures has to do with the entire being—spirit, soul, and body. Here is the true idea of entire consecration." So here we see that spirit, soul, and body makes up the entire person, and all three parts are to be consecrated entirely to the Lord. Why? Because these three parts make up the whole, and whatever affects one part affects the other two. So it's important that we understand something about each part as being essential to our wellbeing here in this life and for the development of our entire being for the world to come.

A few moments ago I suggested that our three parts have something to do with the three persons of the Godhead, and the reason I think that's true is because the Bible tells us that we are made in God's image and after His likeness. And so, with the Godhead we have three divine beings that together embody all three of the same parts that we have. I don't even pretend to understand how this all works together for our good, but if we are in God's

image and likeness, then spirit, soul, and body must be the three parts of the Godhead as well, and I think that's as far as I'll take this, because I don't want to get into trouble. **Deuteronomy 29:29** says, "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever." And so, we can only go so far in explaining and understanding God, but that which has been clearly revealed we can by faith believe and cherish and teach to others, and we'll have to leave the rest for our forever learning experience when we get to heaven.

There's another Scripture that mentions the three parts of our entire being, and that's **Hebrews 4:12** if you'd like to turn there with me. Paul writes, "For the word of God is quick (or living), and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow (that would be the body), and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." And so, the word of God is a powerful thing if it can do all that, isn't it? But in order to do that it has to work through the three parts of our being.

This verse reminds me of a movie I watched many years ago when I was probably in my teens, before I knew better. There was a scene where two men were getting ready to have a sword fight, and one of the men, the bad guy, told his armour bearer to hold out an iron rod, and he lifted his sword and with a mighty blow it cut that thick iron rod right in half. Then it was the good guy's turn and he told his armour bearer to toss a very light piece of cloth high into the air and he just held his sword out and let the cloth come down on it and it cut that cloth in two. Then the good guy said to the bad guy, who was now trembling, "You have showed me the strength of your arm, but I have showed you the sharpness of my blade." But you know what? The word of God is even sharper than that. It can divide, or separate, or show the difference between the soul and the spirit, and hopefully before we're done we will see that difference and how important it is to allow God to help us develop them in a way that will prepare us to be witnesses for Him in these last days.

Some time ago I heard of an illustration about the threefold nature of man as being like three circles within each other, and it seems to make sense to me. The outer circle represents the body of man, the middle circle the soul of man, and the inner most circle the spirit of man. In the outer circle, the body touches the physical or material world through our five senses. The middle circle, the soul, has to do with the imagination, the conscience, the reason, the affections, the emotions and feelings and so forth. And then the inner most circle, the spirit, has to do with our mind and intellect that receives impressions from the various elements of body and soul, which in turn shapes our faith, hope, reverence, prayer and worship on the spiritual level. And so, it's the development of the spirit as it's influenced by the things of body and soul that seems to be the most important, because that determines where we're going to end up.

Our spirit cannot connect with the Holy Spirit as it should if body and soul are out of

harmony with God's word. For instance, if we're looking at and listening to forbidden things and tasting that which affects the body negatively, then the Holy Spirit doesn't have as clear a pathway to our spirit as it otherwise could. If we are letting our imagination run riot and have its own way and letting our feelings and emotions dictate how we live rather than a Bible educated conscience, then the Holy Spirit will have a very difficult time connecting with our spirit. Does that make sense? And so, it's important that we realize that what affects one part of our threefold being, affects the whole, and it's the whole, you'll remember, that God designs should be entirely sanctified. Now it's true, the Holy Spirit has a way to get through even to the drunk or the addict, because I've heard testimonies from those who have been converted while under the influence, but there's no guarantee that the Spirit will convict those who know better, or those who have been privileged to know the truth and then deliberately reject it. And so we want to be very careful not to fall into that category.

One day, after restoring the sight of a blind man, some of the Pharisees heard Jesus say the following in **John 5:39-41**. "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, we see; therefore your sin remaineth." And so, there's a big difference between how the Holy Spirit can work with a person that knows better and one who doesn't. God winks at ignorance, but not at those who have a knowledge of right and wrong and choose the wrong.

Turn with me please to **1 Corinthians 2:9-11**, because the apostle Paul has something interesting to say about the spirit of man. Beginning with **verse 9** he says, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." And most people stop right there, but it goes on to say that "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

Just as you are the only person who knows what's in your own mind, God's Spirit is the only one who knows what's in God's mind. And so, if we want to know what's in God's mind for us as individuals, we have to have His spirit connect with our spirit, does that make sense? Otherwise we're not going to know what God's will for us is. The person who has not been born again of the Spirit has no idea what they're missing, because one third of their being has not been renewed so as to recognize their lack. Remember the young man who asked Jesus, "what lack I yet?" He went away full of sorrow because he was not willing to surrender all to Jesus and have his spirit born again. You see, the reason we must be born again is because there's something wrong with our first birth. At the first birth our spirit is not connected with the Holy Spirit, because we are carnal, sold under sin, and until

our spirit is renewed, we have no hope of eternal life.

In **Job 32:8**, notice what it says there. “There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.” Here we see that it’s the spirit of man that is given understanding by the inspiration of the Spirit of God. And so, the spirit of man has to do with the intellect, because that’s the way understanding comes to us, and it’s clear from Scripture that it’s by our spirit that we serve and worship God.

In **Romans 1:9** Paul says, “For God is my witness, Whom I serve (**how**) with my spirit in the gospel”, and in **John 4:24** it says, “God is a spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” And so, we serve and worship God with our spirit, or our intellect and our choices based upon truth and not based upon our feelings and emotions, although feelings and emotions can and should be part of our worship experience. Feelings and emotions have to do with the soul part of our being, and because feelings and emotions are up and down depending on circumstances, they are not dependable when it comes to whether or not we serve and worship God, or how we make our decisions. If we get up in the morning and say, “I don’t feel like taking the time to study God’s word”, then we are in danger of making wrong choices the rest of the day, and not only that, but we begin to form a habit of doing the same the next day, and pretty soon our spirit has lost the connection it once had with the Spirit of God.

Let’s take a look at several verses of Scripture that deal with the word “soul.” The first is in **Genesis 34:8**, “And Hamor communed with them (**Jacob and his sons**), saying, the soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife.” When you read the story you’ll see that lust was the motivation between Hamor’s son and Jacob’s daughter Dinah, and it didn’t turn out well for the Hivites when Jacob’s sons found out that their sister had been defiled by an uncircumcised Gentile.

Go also to **1 Samuel 18:1**. Of David and Jonathan it says, “The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul”, and in **2 Samuel 5:8** another emotion is also associated with the soul of man. Here it says, “And David said on that day, whosoever getteth up to the gutter (**or the watercourse**), and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, that are hated of David’s soul, he shall be chief and captain.” These passages show that the soul is the seat of our affections and are associated with both love and hate, which can both be good things if properly directed. Nothing wrong with love if it’s the right kind of love, and hate can also be a good thing, because we are supposed to hate sin, aren’t we?

It’s the soul where fleshly lusts, desires, and appetites arise. In **1 Peter 2:11** a warning is given where Peter says, “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which (**do what?**) war against the soul.” “Fleshly lusts” have to do with our carnal nature and our animal passions. Because of our fallen nature, we all have these forbidden desires that are at war against the righteous principles that should guide our

souls desires, and without God's help we cannot conquer these fleshly lusts.

And so, here's the important point of all this. The soul of man with his affections and desires and lusts can never be directed Godward until after his spirit has become regenerated. In other words, we can never love God or the things of God until we are born from above. It's possible to have a troubled conscience or be stirred emotionally and even weep over certain things and still remain dead in trespasses and sins, because the soul is not directed by the born-again spirit.

Our desires are turned toward God only when we realize our sinful condition and accept Jesus as our Saviour. It's through God's grace that we receive forgiveness and cleansing and become a new creature, and it's then that the Holy Spirit can illuminate our spirit and we begin to yield our affections and desires to God. And by the way, we need to be born again every day and not just once in a life time. We must partake of the divine nature daily if our spirit is to remain connected to the Holy Spirit. And so, we need a spiritual nature to control our carnal nature, and when we partake of the divine nature, as is our privilege to do, then our whole spirit, soul, and body can be entirely sanctified and prepared for the return of our Lord.

By the way, since we have been talking about the soul, you should know that there are 459 references to the word "soul" in the King James Bible and not one of them suggest in any way that it is immortal. That is another concocted story that comes from the father of lies. **1 Timothy 6:16** says God is the only One who has immortality, and He gives it to those only who come up in the first resurrection when Jesus returns, according to **1 Corinthians 15:52-54**. Also the false idea that the soul is immortal has spawned another error that is swallowed by nearly the whole of Christianity today, and that is that those who are lost will burn forever in the fires of hell. Here again, the Bible doesn't teach this at all, but since the majority thinks that the soul is immortal, it has to have someplace to go when one dies, so this false teaching was invented in order to make some sense out of the immortal soul theory.

The same can be said about the word "spirit" as it relates to man; it occurs 378 times, and here again there is nothing that would suggest that man's spirit is immortal. There's one reference that's used to try to prove that it is, but you'd have to twist the Scriptures to come to that conclusion. In **Ecclesiastes 12:7** it says when one dies, "shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." The word "spirit" in this instance simply means the breath or the spark of life that makes a person live, and that's what goes back to God. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that there is life apart from the body. At creation Adam had a body that was dead until God breathed into his nostrils to make him live. **Ecclesiastes 12:7** is the exact counterpart of **Genesis 2:7** where it says, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Genesis teaches how man was first

formed, and Ecclesiastes describes the action in reverse, that's all! What God did in creating, death undoes by dissolving. Man forfeited his right to live by sinning against God, because **Romans 5:12** says death entered by sin. And so, death came as a result of Adam's disobedience. In the beginning God gave to man life, and instructed him that if he would obey Him, he should continue to live, but the devil, telling Eve she should by sinning be introduced to a higher life, brought death upon our race. And here's another point; if **Ecclesiastes 12:7** really teaches that death ushers men into heaven, then that would mean that all people who die go to heaven, because this text does not say that it applies only to the righteous, does it? Can it be true that every wicked man is to enter the gates of the holy city when he dies? If so, then it's certainly not a place where I want to go.

Now let me share a couple more things while we still have a little time left, because we shouldn't neglect the importance of the body. In **Romans 12:1** the apostle Paul writes, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies **(1/3 of our being)** a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Once our spirit has been renewed, we are to take care of our bodies according to what the word of God says is the right thing to do. There are worldly people who take good care of their bodies, but they neglect the soul and the spirit, but as Christians we are to take care of our entire being. Isn't it reasonable to present our bodies to the Lord since He gave all to purchase our redemption?

In **Testimonies for the Church, volume 6, page 91** it says, "The light of the word carefully studied, the voice of conscience, the strivings of the Spirit (**capitol S**), produce in the heart genuine love for Christ, who gave Himself a whole sacrifice to redeem the whole person, body, soul, and spirit."

Also in **Selected Messages, book 1, page 251** it says, "The Holy Spirit, which proceeds from the only-begotten Son of God, binds the human agent, body, soul, and spirit, to the perfect, divine-human nature of Christ." That's what happens when we are born again. Our nature is bonded to the nature of Christ, and when that takes place, He can then live out His life within us. That's the only way we will ever have victory over sin and develop a character like His.

I read the following quote someplace some time ago that says, "it takes more courage to live for Christ than to die for Him, because to die for Christ requires the courage of a moment, but to live for Him requires the daily sacrifice of self." Now I'm not saying it's easy to be a martyr, and it's doubtful one would die for Christ unless they've been dyeing to self all along, but it is true that living for Christ requires the daily sacrifice of self. It's not easy to say no to the craving of our fallen nature, physically, emotionally, or intellectually, but if our soul and body is not controlled by our spirit when connected to the Holy Spirit, then we are not going to develop a character that Jesus can take to heaven when He comes.

**Steps to Christ, page 43** says, "The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever



fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God, requires a struggle;” and if you’ve been a Christian for any length of time, you know that that is a true statement. We all have a sinful nature to deal with and we won’t be rid of it until this mortal puts on immortality.

I don’t know if you’ve ever thought about this before, but the true gospel lies somewhere between what Catholics teach about it and what the Evangelical churches teaches about it, because both present a false gospel. The Catholic church presents a salvation by works religion and the Evangelicals present an only believe religion, but the truth is, both faith and works are involved in the salvation process of justification and sanctification, and both require a struggle. I remember when I accepted Christ, that there was a struggle in giving my heart to Him, because I knew changes would have to be made, and that I would be ridiculed if I did so, and afterward when I learned more about what those changes were, it was still a struggle to make those changes. It’s true that justification is by faith alone, and in Christ alone, but it’s sanctification, or living a holy life by obedience to the law of God that keeps us justified. It’s not once justified always justified, it’s justified as long as I don’t commit sin. The Evangelicals like to quote Scriptures like **Ephesians 2:8, 9** where it says, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” And that’s true, but they forget to read **verse 10** that helps balance things out. Paul goes on to say, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” No, we are not saved by works of obedience, but if one has truly been justified, the works will follow. That’s why Jesus said, “by their fruits you shall know them.”

In ***Selected Messages, book 2, page 32*** it says, “The Scriptures teach us to seek for the sanctification to God of body, soul, and spirit. In this work we are to be laborers together with God. Much may be done to restore the moral image of God in man, to improve the physical, mental, and moral capabilities. Great changes can be made in the physical system by obeying the laws of God and bringing into the body nothing that defiles. And while we cannot claim perfection of the flesh, we may have Christian perfection of the soul (**which has to do with our conduct**). Through the sacrifice made in our behalf, sins may be perfectly forgiven. Our dependence is not in what man can do; it is in what God can do for man through Christ. When we surrender ourselves wholly to God, and fully believe, the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. The conscience can be freed from condemnation. Through faith in His blood, all may be made perfect in Christ Jesus. Thank God that we are not dealing with impossibilities. We may claim sanctification. We may enjoy the favor of God. We are not to be anxious about what Christ and God think of us, but about what God thinks of Christ, our Substitute. Ye are accepted in the Beloved. The Lord shows, to the repenting, believing one, that Christ accepts the surrender of the soul, to be molded and fashioned after His own likeness.” In other words, our soul, which makes up our moral character can become like God’s character, and when He has a people like Himself, guess

what? He will come to claim them as His own.

And before we close, just one more quote from *Manuscript Releases, volume 20, August 4, 1893*, and I find this quite interesting, having to do with our associations. “There is a peculiar atmosphere surrounding every man’s soul (**notice, the context here is talking about the soul**), and those with whom they are associated are affected with this exhalation. There is a breathing in unconsciously this atmosphere which is often charged with poisonous miasma of habits and practices which are demoralizing. (**Here we see once again that “demoralizing” has to do with the soul**) The greatest danger is when this poisonous atmosphere is not sensed and is unconsciously inhaled. The ideas that are expressed are deleterious to the mind (**that would be the spirit**) and to the morals (**or the soul**). These influences are in the world and abound.” Friends, if there was ever a time when evil abounds, it’s today, and we need to be careful that we don’t inhale the poisonous atmosphere of wrong associations.

So, I hope something you’ve heard this morning has given you pause to think about what is required to form a well-rounded and symmetrical character. It takes all three parts of our being, spirit, soul, and body in order to be prepared for what lies ahead in the next few days and months. We are truly living in the last remnants of time and we don’t have a moment to lose in allowing wrong traits of character to gain the ascendancy. We are one day closer to the close of human probation than we were yesterday, and we must be willing to go where Jesus leads. He was sanctified spirit, soul, and body, was He not? and He is our example. So let us imitate Him as best we can, because He is the three-fold way, the truth, and the life.