

OUR BODY, OUR SOUL, AND OUR SPIRIT By Skip Elmore

1st Thessalonians 5:23 NIV - *May the God of peace sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of Jesus Christ.*

Science has spent millions of dollars accumulating knowledge and studying the physical attributes of the human body. Our body feeds our brain with information from what we see, hear, feel, taste and smell. With modern technology, the intellectual attributes and processes of the electro-chemical organ we call the brain are also being revealed with greater understanding. The brain is considered to incorporate our mind, our will and our emotions. These three components make up what is referred to as our “soul.”

Summarizing: Our “Mind” allows thinking and processing. Our “Will” permits choosing, making selections. “Emotions” allow experiencing and then expressing our environment.

So, if our body is physical and our mind is intellectual, where does our “spirit” fit in? We may become confused as we inadvertently observe the two terms, soul and spirit, being used interchangeably. This should never be!

Hebrews 4:12 NIV - *For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword; it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

If our soul and our spirit were one and the same, they could not be divided. Our spirit is considered to be eternal while the brain, of course, is a mortal creation, from dust to dust. So, what factor does the spirit provide in determining who we are, our motives, what we do?

Philippians 1:21 NIV - *To live is Christ and to die is gain.*

With this in mind we must realize our dormant spirit will only become teachable and trainable when the choice is made to allow God’s Word, His Holy Spirit, to merge with it.

2 Corinthians 4:16 NIV - *Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.*

In fact, our natural minds cannot partake of God’s Word in the same way our spirit will.

1st Corinthians 2:14 NIV - *The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

2 Peter 1:21 NIV *For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

As new creatures we possess a teachable spirit. 2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*

Now, it is vital to comprehend that both our human mind and spirit are in desperate need of renewal, restoration and restitution because we were born after the fall: Genesis 3:6, “*the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*” The term “Born Again” as observed in John 3:3 and 3:7 and again in 1 Peter 1:23 has left Christianity with a challenge we as mentors and disciplers sometimes need to confront. To many, the term implies that Christianity produces two kinds of Christians, those radical ones who are born again and those who believe they are Christians, perhaps because of an emotional experience or prayer at the altar, but without the transformation leading to “Lordship” which they might see as being too fanatic. Of course, if we are not born again, in possession of the Holy Spirit with its incredible wisdom and counsel, we are absent the grace required to be a Christian. A good question to ask is: Can Jesus be Savior without being Lord??? If He Can’t, our work is within the church!!!

Many times that which is most challenging to a mentor is the ability to convince the mentee that grace is the result of a new position, not a behavior analysis or a self worth challenge!

So, what about our soul? Remember, *mind, will and emotions*? If there is not adequate renewal of our soul, it will be in conflict with a renewed spirit. There can be no harmony, no peace. Behavior will be a continual struggle between a renewed conscience and old desires.

Romans 12:2 NKJ - *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

1 Corinthians 3:3 NIV - *You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?*

James reminds us to let our souls catch up with our spirits in verse 1:21.

Doers - Not Hearers Only:

James 1:21 NKJ - *Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.*

James is not mistaken when he refers to saving “our soul” and not just our Spirit.

Peace is not the absence of conflict as the world teaches. Peace is experiencing the awareness of our passions and purposes and the motivation to pursue them. When purpose becomes apparent and our soul and spirit commence yielding to the same sanctified discernment, we will find our Peace. We may experience peace in a war dodging bullets if our soul and spirit are in harmony. We may not have peace experiencing all things perfect without kinship between soul and spirit.

The most common resistance to experiencing renewed life is a subliminal perception of unworthiness, usually from childhood or early teens, preventing the manifestation of grace.

Simply put, grace provides us with two major attributes, ownership (possession) of Christ’s innocence and maturity followed by the spiritual authority to release deliverance power. Of course, Satan fans the flames of this emotional unworthiness and halts the follow-through after a choice is made to receive grace. In other words, negative feelings from the un-restored soul (our mind, will and emotions) invade the desire of the spirit. As we minister to a, hopefully, renewed spirit it may or may not take root with our Lord’s Holy Spirit, but if it does a major war may be initiated and continue until the soul is transformed to bring it up to speed with the newly implanted spiritual wisdom and discipline. Please note: The word “disciple” is a derivative from the word “discipline.”

Romans 7:15 NIV - *I don’t understand what I do. What I want to do I do not; what I hate I do.*

It’s essential, disciplers and mentors, to minister to the soul while we are so anxious to bring the Spirit into a new disciple. Guilt and anger from the scars of life, usually childhood, must be purged to stop the wars between Spirit and soul. We will only cause a slippery slope if we don’t. Always bring ownership of Christ’s innocence, His worthiness and spiritual authority (GRACE) into the born again life. We then become blameless, never totally faultless.

Prayers at the altar can be dangerous and launch destructive internal wars if there is no tangible follow-up explaining the personal ownership of grace.

Hebrews 12:9 NIV - *Moreover, we have had parents who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!*

Matthew 28:19 & 20 NIV - *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

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