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This is an Excerpt from the Book, “Understanding the 3 Levels of Salvation: Spirit, Soul and Body, available at: ThreeLevelsOfSalvation.com

Unless otherwise noted all scripture quotations are taken from The King James Bible

Scriptures marked BBE are taken from the Bible in Basic English Translation

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Chapter 1

Man: A Tri-Partite Being

There is so much misunderstanding about the difference between the spirit and the soul. Both in and out of the church, many people are confused.

Hollywood has its own idea and makes movies consistent with that idea.

The average person has their own belief and behaves accordingly.

In the Body of Christ, preachers and teachers also minister according to their own understanding of the concept.

But there can be only one real authority on the matter, and that is the bible, the word of God as interpreted by the Holy Spirit.

So, let's check it out and shed some light on this area.

To differentiate between the spirit and the soul, we first need to understand that man, made in the image and likeness of God, is a tri-partite being just like his Father.

God is: The Father, The Word and The Holy Spirit.

Man is: the spirit, the soul and the body.

Like Father, like son.

First Thessalonians 5:23 says, "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It's easy to distinguish the body from the other two components, it is the outermost layer and the obvious part we see when we look at each other with physical eyes.

The problem comes when trying to distinguish between what is our spirit and what is our soul, because neither has physical properties and cannot be discerned by the five senses.

They both belong to another dimension.

All is not lost however, the bible says in Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living and full of power... making a division even of the soul and the spirit."

This means that the spirit and soul *can* be distinguished by using the word of God, so let's do that.

First, let's acknowledge that the bible was not written in English, but in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

So, in searching for truth, I think we should consult these original languages and allow the Holy Spirit to shed light and bring us into a deeper, clearer understanding of what the scripture actually says.

In Genesis chapter two, verse seven, the bible says that God breathed the breath of life into man and man became a living soul.

In this verse, the word "**soul**" translated from the Hebrew is "**Nephesh**" (pronounced `neh-fesh') and is translated "**mind or mental creature.**"

Suggesting that the soul and the mind are essentially the same.

The word "**living**" from the Hebrew is the word "**Chay**" (pronounced `khah-ee') and means "**alive or strong.**" To be strong means to be "greatly able."

So, the phrase "became a living soul" can be translated "became a living creature of great mental ability."

We know that Adam had great mental ability because he named and remembered the names of every animal on the planet. Genesis 2:19, 20

The word "**breathed**" is the Hebrew word "**Naphach**" (pronounced `naw-fakh') meaning "**to kindle.**" And "to kindle," means, "to light up or become animated."

Finally, the word "**Breath**" from the Hebrew is "**N@shamah**" (pronounced `nesh-aw-maw') meaning "**vital breath, intellect, spirit.**"

Therefore, the phrase, "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" can be interpreted "lit up and animated him with a vital, intelligent spirit."

Putting all together, this is what we have, "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul" *or* "**He animated him with a vital, intelligent spirit and man became a living creature of great mental ability.**"

Chapter 2

Man: A Limitless Revelation

Man is multi-faceted, he is spirit, he is soul and he is body!

*Man **is** a spirit.*

*Man **is** a soul.*

*Man **is** a body.*

Anything less and he would not be man. He would be something else.

Let me explain:

The scriptures declare, "And God said, let us create man in our own image after our likeness." Genesis 1:26

The word "likeness" in the Hebrew is "d@muwth" (pronounced dem-ooth) and means "resemblance or similitude."

From the meaning of these two words in the **World Book Dictionary** we have, "to look like and to have the same essential qualities of."

So, to be created in the likeness of God is to be created to look like Him and to have His essential qualities.

Since God is a Spirit (John 4:24) to look like Him and to have His essential qualities means to look like a spirit and to have the essential qualities of a spirit.

So, what does that make man?

Ten points if you said... a spirit.

Man is a spirit.

"And man became a living soul," Genesis 2:7. *The bible did **NOT** say, he **had** a soul, or he **took possession** of a soul. It clearly said that **he became** a living soul.*

The word "soul" translated from the Hebrew is "Nephesh" (pronounced neh-fesh) and is translated "mind or mental creature."

He was first made a spiritual creature (a spirit) now he took on a mental aspect (a soul). He became a mental creature and additionally began operating on the mental or psychic level.

The Greek word for 'soul' is 'psuche' from which we get the word psychic which refers to the mind.

Again, suggesting that the soul and the mind are one and the same thing.

So, he became dual faceted in make-up, he was both spiritual and mental in make-up.

He became both a spiritual being and a mental being.

When the bible says, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers", Romans 13:1, does it mean, **only your soul** must be subject to the higher powers, or is it saying, the **total you** must be subject.

Of course, it is referring to the **total you**. Because **you and your soul are one and the same**.

The totality of you is represented by the phrase "**your soul**." You **are** a soul!

Man is a soul.

"And God made man from the dust of the ground. "Genesis 2:7

Again, the bible did **not** say "*man's body*" was made from the dust of the ground, it said... "**Man**" was made from the dust of the ground.

The word "man" in Hebrew is "Adam" (pronounced aw-dawm) and means "**person**."

God made "**a person**" from the dust of the ground.

Not just his body... **him**.

Your body is *more* than what you live in; it forms an integral part of **who you are**.

Your psychological condition is significantly influenced by your physical structure.

When a woman's body goes through menopause, is it just **her body** or does **she** go through menopause?

If you castrate a man and make him a eunuch, will he be the **same person** that he was before? No, his psychological outlook will be entirely different.

If you were born with a different color skin, would your perspective on life be the same? Of course not! You'd be a different **person**.

*Your body is a vital part of **who you are**.*

If right now, you are a black person reading this book, stop and consider: If you were born with white skin, blue eyes and blond hair would you be the *same person* that you are right now?

No... you... wouldn't.

You wouldn't just be a person with white skin... **You would be a WHITE PERSON!**

The sum of all your experiences as a person with white skin is what would make you into the person you became... **the person that you are**.

The color of your skin and **ALL** other physical attributes contribute significantly to the person that you grow up to be. Whether you are tall, short, fat, skinny, etc.

An adult person of average height, say 5' 10" would have a totally different outlook on life if they were a little person of 2' 9" instead.

What if you were born deaf or blind would you be the same person that you are today? *Of course not!*

So, don't let anyone tell you that your body is just something you live in.

The condition of your physical self is a vital part of your psychology and immensely impacts the corporate you.

The bible says that man is a physical being just as much as he is a spiritual and mental one.

'**Man**' was made from the dust of the ground not just his body.

Man is a body.

Paul, the Apostle said, "We shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption." 1st Corinthians 15:52, 53

God, through the apostle Paul is saying, "**we shall be changed**" referring to **our bodies**. Clearly showing, that we and our bodies are one and the same.

Obviously, **the Bible** is saying a change in your body is a change in **you**.

Therefore, the structural composition of man is fundamentally threefold.

He is a tri-partite being, made exactly like his Father, three in one and one in three.

You are more than just a spiritual being, you are equally a mental being and equally a physical being.

I know I'm going against the traditional grain here, but my job is to teach the truth according to the revealed word of God, and after studying the Bible for 30 years I have come to the conclusion that any other doctrine is not consistent with the word of God and must be considered inaccurate.

Man is a spirit - Man is a soul - Man is a body.

He is each one and all three together.

I know you have heard it preached and taught that man **is** a spirit, **has** a soul and **lives** in a body.

This is only ***partial revelation***.

I'm not saying that I've got the last revelation on the matter either.

No one has the last revelation on anything while we're still here on this planet.

The only time we'll get the full revelation is when we all get to Heaven.

While we're here, we know in part, we see in part, we understand in part, but then shall we know even as we are known.

If God is a limitless revelation and He made us just like Himself, in His image, in His likeness then guess what?

Man also, is a limitless revelation and all we know about ourselves, is just a little of all there is to know. I find this very intriguing.

There is so much to discover about ourselves, that we're only just skimming the surface of the wealth of the knowledge of who we are as Children of God.

So, according to Genesis, man comprises three aspects:

1. The breath of life
2. The living soul
3. The dust of the ground

1. The spiritual man

2. The mental man
3. The physical man

1. The Spirit
2. The Soul
3. The Body

A perfect tri-partite Being, just like his Creator.

From the explanations given above, I trust that we now have a more comprehensive grasp of the make-up of man.

Our next step is to conclusively differentiate between what is spirit and what is soul.

Chapter 3

Dividing Asunder

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two - edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.” Hebrews 4:12.

Reading this passage very carefully, we see that the writer, in trying to show just how powerful the word of God is, uses the dividing of the spirit and soul as an illustration of its power.

This suggests that the spirit and soul are so closely identified with each other that it takes nothing less than the power of God’s word to distinguish between the two.

Just how close are the spirit and the soul?

In the verse above, the word **“soul”** is the Greek word “psuche” (pronounced psoo-khay) and means **“breath”**.

The word **“spirit”** in the Greek is “pneuma” (pronounced pnyoo-mah) and means **“a current of air.”**

How’s that for similarity? One is a breath and the other is a current of air.

At first glance these two words seem to mean the very same thing, and in a sense, they do.

Is there any real difference between a breath and a current of air?

On the surface, no. But let’s look more closely, shall we?

From the **World Book Dictionary**, a breath is a vapor and a vapor is "something without substance."

So, the soul is something without substance.

What can we deduce from this statement?

We can see that the human soul is real, it has *presence* but no *physical properties or substance*, which simply means that it is not tangible, it can't be experienced by the five senses. And in this regard, it is the same as the spirit... Intangible.

The human spirit is called "a current of air."

What is a current of air?

Air is synonymous with life and a current is defined as a flow or stream.

Therefore, in this context "a current of air" can be described as "a stream of life."

What is the human spirit? A stream of life.

Remember, in Book One of this Trilogy we saw that regeneration was the recreating of a human spirit and the reconnecting of that spirit with God, so that the life of God could flow into the man.

God designed the human spirit to be a conduit for Him to flow through.

It is the interface that connects God to man and vice-versa. Not only this, but it also allows communication to take place.

It's the mechanism in man that allows him to communicate with God.

This is his spirit.

A device created by God from a portion of His Own Spirit, which allows man to harmonize, synchronize and communicate with God.

It is through this harmony and synchronization that we can communicate with each other (God and Man).

God is a Spirit and can only harmonize with another spirit therefore the human spirit is that aspect of man that can relate to God.

It is that component which can feel what God feels, understand what God means and will to act in agreement with Him.

The human spirit then, is the seat of emotions, intellect and will as they relate to God and the spirit realm.

The following scriptures support this:

Luke 1:47 says, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior and 1st Samuel 1:15 states, "I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit."

Therefore, the human spirit is capable of emotion.

The spirit has emotions.

First Corinthians 2:14 says, "Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (understood)" and from Job 32:8 we get, "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

These verses show that the spirit is intellectually capable.

The spirit has intelligence.

Finally, Romans 1:9 declares, "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit" and Isaiah 26:9 says, "With my spirit within me will I seek thee early."

These verses show that within the human spirit there is volition, the capacity to choose or decide.

The spirit has a will.

What about the soul?

We just saw that it is intangible, made up of the same ethereal material that the spirit is made up of.

But how does it differ from the spirit? Let's see:

Psalms 35:9 says, "My soul shall be joyful in the LORD" and Matthew 26:38 says, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful" showing us that the soul can feel emotion.

The soul has emotions.

Psalms 139:14 says, "Marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well and Proverbs 19:2 says, "That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good" showing us that the soul is capable of intelligence.

The soul has intellect.

And Psalms 62:1 says, "Truly my soul waiteth upon God" and Romans 13:1 declares, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers."

Now, "to wait or be subject," indicates the capacity to choose or decide which leads us to acknowledge that the soul is capable of volition or the capacity to choose.

Therefore, the soul has a will.

What does all this mean?

It means that the human soul is also the seat of emotions, intellect and will, but only as it relates to this natural realm and other human beings.

In summary here's what we have:

Definition, Function and Purpose of the Human Spirit:

The spirit is the God-conscious mechanism in man.

It is the seat of the emotions, the intellect and the will as they relate to God and the spirit realm.

The human spirit is synonymous with the nature of man.

The condition of man's spirit is the condition of his nature and his nature determines his eternal destiny.

God designed the spirit to make humans conscious of God, to make us aware of the One who created us and to provide a means of communication with Him.

The human spirit harmonizes with the spirit realm and receives and transmits impulses of a spiritual nature.

It allows man to talk to God and hear from God.

It is a stream of life, a conduit for God to flow into and inhabit us.

That's the purpose of the human spirit... to be an interface between God and man, allowing God to indwell and empower us and to provide an efficient, accurate means of relating to Him.

Definition, Function and Purpose of the Human Soul:

The soul is the self-conscious mechanism in man.

It provides the connection between his spirit and his body.

God designed the soul to make him aware of his spirit on one end and his body on the other.

The soul is a perfect interface!

It communicates with the spirit on one side and with the brain on the other.

It harmonizes with the intellectual/emotional realm and receives and transmits impulses of an intellectual and emotional nature.

For instance, it allows human beings to communicate with each other by putting thoughts and feelings into words and then communicating those words verbally or otherwise.

That's part of the purpose of the soul... to allow effective communication between human beings.

But it goes further than this.

In the next chapter we'll look further into this.

Chapter 4

The Perfect Interface

Not only does the soul allow communication between human beings, but it soul also communicates with the human spirit.

This is the very reason they are so closely aligned. They were designed to interface with each other.

For instance, when God speaks to you He doesn't speak Japanese, English or French; He speaks ***the language of God (the original language)***.

Your spirit understands the language of God perfectly so when God speaks to you, your spirit understands exactly what God said in His own language.

But, your soul needs to interpret the information into your native language so that it makes sense to you mentally.

Therefore, because of the interface between your spirit and soul your brain can become fruitful with the knowledge that's in your spirit.

You would then proclaim, "God said such and such to me."

Not realizing that an extremely delicate and technical transfer of information from the spirit realm to the natural realm just occurred, all because of the function of your soul.

So, the purpose of the soul, apart from human to human communication is also to interface with the spirit, interpreting communications from God and making intellectual sense of it so you can take effective action.

God inhabits the spirit realm and we inhabit the physical, so, for communications that originate in the spirit realm to be received and acted on in the physical, there must be some mechanism linking both realms and providing a conduit for such communications to travel through.

Such is the purpose of the human soul... to interface between the spiritual and the natural realms.

Linking your spirit with your body. The spiritual universe with the natural universe.

Furthermore, we need to understand that there are two levels to the soul, the conscious and the sub-conscious.

The word "sub" means under so the sub-conscious mind is that which lies beneath, in other words it forms the foundation for the conscious mind.

It is the root of our thoughts, emotions and will.

Paul the apostle said, "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind." Ephesians 4:23.

In this verse the word "mind" means the thoughts, emotions and will.

The word for "spirit" is translated "stream of life," and the dictionary also says that the "spirit" of something is "the vital principle that gives life."

So, "the spirit of your mind" can be interpreted as "the vital principle that gives life to your thoughts, emotions and will."

Thus, I believe that the 'spirit of your mind' and your 'sub-conscious mind' are one and the same thing.

This is what Paul is telling us to renew, not just our conscious thoughts but also what gives life to them.

The underlying principle upon which our thoughts and emotions are based. The essential principle that defines how and why we think the way we do.

What is this essential principle?

It is our ***Philosophy of Life.***

This is the thing that's hidden but potent, which feeds our thoughts and emotions and animates our will to action and it needs to be renewed.

The deep part of us that most of us aren't even aware of, yet is so powerful, that ***it***, more than anything else determines how we act in any given situation.

Our philosophy of life controls us.

It is the essence of our sub-conscious mind.

It's not strange then that the "mind" in certain passages of scripture is translated as "heart" from the Greek word "kardia."

For instance, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Matthew 12:34

In this passage the word "heart" doesn't refer to the spirit as it usually does but rather to the sub-conscious mind, showing again how intimately close these two components really are.

We need also understand that under normal circumstances, when your spirit wants to communicate with God, your soul interprets the information into your own language and your brain initiates speech.

Of course, God being who He is really listens to your spirit (heart), so He knows exactly what you mean, regardless of the words you use.

The only time this operation is suspended, is when you pray in tongues.

The manifestation of praying in tongues is simply your born-again spirit, speaking directly to God in His own language.

That's why the bible says, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." 1st Corinthians 14:14.

When you are praying in tongues, it is the operation of one intelligent spirit, communicating directly with another intelligent Spirit, without the need for any mental interpretation... That's all.

You *pray* in tongues to God - You *speak* in tongues to men.

One needs an interpretation, the other does not.

(More on this in a subsequent book - **Understanding the Manifestation of Tongues**)

So, there you have it... the difference between the spirit and soul.

I hope this clarifies the issue and may God bless you and give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ as you serve Him in spirit and in truth.



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Prayer to Receive Salvation

Lord Jesus, you said in [Revelation 3:20](#) that you're standing outside the door of my heart, my life, and knocking for me to let you in.

I now decide to open the door of my heart, my life and let you in. I am sorry for all my sins.

Please come in Lord Jesus, forgive and cleanse me from all my sins and make me a child of God!

I believe in you and accept you alone as my Lord and Savior! Amen!

The Author

Everest John Alexander



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Understanding How to Pray Effectively

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