

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **1Thessalonians 5:15-28**.
- B. The question submitted reads: **What are the differences, if any, between man's soul and man's spirit? What happens to each at death?**
- C. Although it is characteristic of most people today to use the terms "soul" and "spirit" interchangeably, the Scriptures say they are different (Heb. 4:12).  
**For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**

## I. WORD USAGE IN THE BIBLE.

### A. **SOUL.**

- 1. The Hebrew word *nephesh* is translated "soul" occurs about 754 times in the OT.  
It is translated as:
  - a. soul (471 times).
  - b. life (119 times).
  - c. person (30 times).
  - d. heart (15 times).
  - e. mind (14 times).
  - f. creature (10 times).
  - g. "other" (27 times).
- 2. The Greek word *psyche* is translated "soul" and occurs about 105 times in the NT.  
It is translated as:
  - a. soul (58 times).
  - b. life (40 times).
  - c. mind (3 times).
  - d. heart (1 time).
  - e. you (1 time).
  - f. heartily (1 time).
  - g. us (1 time).

### B. **SPIRIT.**

- 1. The Hebrew word *ruach* is translated "spirit" and occurs 374 times in the OT.  
It is translated as:
  - a. breath (28 times).
  - b. spirit (232 times).
  - c. wind (90 times).
  - d. "other" (24 times).
- 2. The Greek word *pneuma* is translated "spirit" and occurs 378 times in the NT.  
It is translated as:
  - a. spirit (151 times).
  - b. wind (1 time).
  - c. ghost or spirit/with holy (226 times).

## II. DEFINITIONS.

### A. **SPIRIT.**

The word "spirit" is from the Greek *pneuma* and is a specific term that designates that part of us which is not susceptible of death and which survives the dissolution of the body (Ac. 7:59). It is infused in us directly by from God and is not a product of human generation (Heb. 12:9).

**(Ac 7:59)** And they went on stoning Stephen as he called upon the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

**(Heb 12:9)** Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

### B. **SOUL.**

The word "soul" is from the Greek *psuche* and is a generic term whose meaning must be determined from the context in which it is found. It is used in four different ways:

- 1. Meaning the whole person (Ac. 2:41; 1Pet. 3:20).

**(Ac 2:41)** So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

- (1Pet 3:20) ...who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.
2. Physical life (Psa. 78:50; Mt. 20:28).  
(Psa 78:50) He leveled a path for His anger; He did not spare their soul from death, But gave over their life to the plague,...  
(Mt 20:28) ...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."
  3. Intellectual nature (1Cor. 2:14).  
But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.
  4. Synonymously for the never-dying spirit (Ac. 2:27).  
...BECAUSE THOU WILT NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW THY HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.

### III. DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN THE TWO.

- A. Notice the chart. See 1Th. 5:23.  
Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. **The body.**
  1. This is the physical part of man which acts and is acted upon through the senses (hearing, sight, taste, smell, touch).
  2. It is subject to growth, injury, disease, decay, and death.
  3. The body will not live forever it is perishable and mortal (1Cor. 15:50,53).  
Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. **53** For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.
  4. The body is affected by the soul (mind, will, emotions).
- C. **The soul.**
  1. This is the meta-physical part of man which consists of:
    - a. The natural life of the body (Mt. 2:20; Lk. 12:22; Ac 20:10).  
(Mt 2:20) "Arise and take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child's life are dead."  
(Lk 12:22) And He said to His disciples, "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on.  
(Ac 20:10) But Paul went down and fell upon him and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is in him."
    - b. The intellect or mind (1Cor. 2:14; see 1Cor. 1:18-28; 2:6-16).  
But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.
    - c. The will or ego (Mt. 22:37; Ac. 4:32; Eph. 6:6; Phil. 1:27; Heb. 12:3).  
(Mt 22:37) And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'  
(Ac 4:32) And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own; but all things were common property to them.  
(Eph 6:6) not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.  
(Phil 1:27) Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;  
(Heb 12:3) For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.
    - d. The emotions or heart (Mt. 11:29; 26:38; Lk. 1:46; 2:35; Ac. 14:2,22).  
(Mt 11:29) "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS."

(Mt 26:38) Then He said<sup>a</sup> to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me."

(Lk 1:46) And Mary said: "My soul exalts the Lord,

(Lk 2:35) "...and a sword will pierce even your own soul-- to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

(Ac 14:2, 22) But the Jews who disbelieved stirred up the minds of the Gentiles, and embittered them against the brethren. 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

- e. The seat of the personality (Lk. 9:24-25; Heb. 6:19; 10:39).

(Lk 9:24-25) "For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. 25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?"

(Heb 6:19) This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,...

(Heb 10:39) But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

2. The soul is affected by both the spirit and the body.

- a. Soul and body.

- 1) Man was originally made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27). However, after the fall man was then born of woman after the image of man (Gen. 5:1-3).

(Gen 5:1-3) This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created. 3 When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.

- 2) When we talk of genetic traits being passed on from generation to generation we speak of the interaction of body and soul.

- b. Soul and spirit.

- 1) This is the spiritual battle is an effort to save the spirit by controlling the actions of the body, and soul.

- 2) Jesus spoke of not losing one's soul (Mt. 10:28).

"And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

- 3) This is the "inner man" (Lk. 21:19; Mt. 10:39; 2Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16; 1Pet. 2:11; 3Jn. 2).

(Lk 21:19) "By your endurance you will gain your lives."

(Mt 10:39) "He who has found his life shall lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake shall find it."

(2Cor 4:16) Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

(Eph 3:16) ...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man;...

(1Pet 2:11) Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul.

(3Jn v2) Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.

#### D. **The spirit.**

1. This is the eternal, immortal nature given by God Himself (Ac. 7:59; 1Cor. 5:5; Jas. 2:26).

(Ac 7:59) And they went on stoning Stephen as he called upon the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

(1Cor 5:5) I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

(Jas 2:26) For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

2. It is what I call "the real you."

3. The spirit is affect by the soul (mind, will, emotions, personality).

4. Jesus gave his soul in death (Mt. 20:28), and His spirit returned to God (Lk. 23:46).

(Mt 20:28) "...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a

ransom for many."

**(Lk 23:46)** And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO THY HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT." And having said this, He breathed His last.

#### IV. WHAT HAPPENS AT DEATH.

- A. The immortal spirit that God gave returns to Him (Eccl. 12:7). Probably in the Hadean realm.

...then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.

- B. The soul goes to the Hadean realm where it will live until the resurrection (Ac. 2:27; Rev. 6:9-11; 20:13).

**(Ac 2:27)** ...BECAUSE THOU WILT NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW THY HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.

**(Rev 6:9-11)** And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; **10** and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" **11** And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also.

**(Rev 20:13)** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.

- C. On the final day, the body is raised imperishable and immortal (1Cor. 15:50-54). The soul joins the body as the soul comes from Hades. The faithful are caught up in the air to be with the Lord (1Th. 4:14, 16-17).

**(1Cor 15:50-54)** Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. **51** Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, **52** in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. **53** For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. **54** But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory.

**(1Th 4:14, 16-17)** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. **16** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

#### CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Whether you are ever able to distinguish between soul and spirit is not as important as knowing that you have both, and they can be eternally lost in hell!
- B. Jesus came to save you--body, soul, and spirit. Obey Him today.
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.

# A Biblical Picture of Man

*Man — A Three-Part Whole*

(I Thessalonians 5:23)

