

ECCLESIASTES: Spirit, Soul, and Body**INTRODUCTION.**

- A. One of the more confusing and challenging subjects of Scripture is how to differentiate between the body, soul, and spirit.
- B. Solomon in Eccl. 12:7, says that the body will return to the dust of the earth, and the spirit of man will return to God who gave it.
- C. Therefore, is man a two-part (body & soul), or a three part (body, soul & spirit) creature?

I. THREE POSSIBILITIES.

- A. The materialist says that man is wholly mortal with no immortal spirit that can be distinguished from the body. They deny that man has an immortal spirit that survives death.
- B. The Xian's reply is that throughout Scripture, the Bible speaks of the immaterial, spiritual nature of man (Eccl. 12:7; 2Cor. 4:16; 5:8).
- C. The dichotomist says that man only has a soul and body. See Mt. 10:28.
- D. The trichotomist says that man is made up of spirit, soul, and body. The proof text is 1Th. 5:23. The Hebrews writer says the word can separate between the soul and spirit (Heb. 4:12).

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS.

- A. The body. It comes from the Greek. word "soma."
 - 1. A temple (1Cor. 6:19).
 - 2. A home (2Cor. 5:6-9).
 - 3. The outward man (2Cor. 4:16).
 - 4. It is weak (Mt. 26:41).
 - 5. Comes from a human father (Heb. 12:9).
 - 6. It decays (2Cor. 4:16).
 - 7. It dies (Jas. 2:26).
 - 8. It returns to the earth (Eccl. 12:7).
 - 9. It will be raised in the resurrection (1Cor. 15:42,43,54).
- B. The spirit. It comes from the Greek word, "pneuma."
 - 1. Has no flesh or bones (Lk. 24:39).
 - 2. It is eternal (2Cor. 4:16,26; 5:12; 2Pet. 2:9).
 - 3. It is invisible (Jn. 3:8).
 - 4. Made in God's image (Gen. 1:26-27).
 - 5. Resides within the body (Dan. 7:15).
 - 6. God is the father of the spirit (Heb. 12:9).
 - 7. God forms the spirit in man (Zech. 12:1).
 - 8. At death the spirit returns to God (Eccl. 12:7).
 - 9. In death, the spirit retains consciousness (Lk. 16:23,24).
- C. The soul. It comes from the Greek word, "psuche."
 - 1. The natural life of the body (Mt. 2:20).
 - 2. The immaterial, invisible part of man (Mt. 10:28).
 - 3. The disembodied man (Rev. 6:9).
 - 4. The seat of personality (Lk. 9:24,25).
 - 5. The element of man in which he perceives, reflects, feels, and desires (Mt. 11:29; Lk. 1:46).
 - 6. The seat of will and purpose (Mt. 22:37).
 - 7. The seat of appetite (Rev. 18:14).
 - 8. Persons or individuals (Ac. 2:41,43).
 - 9. An inanimate creature, human or other (1Cor. 15:45; Rev. 16:3).

III. DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN SOUL AND SPIRIT.

- A. P.J. Gloag in *The Pulpit Commentary* says:
"Each of the two words is sometimes used for our whole invisible nature, but, when distinguished from the spirit, the soul is the lower part of our immaterial being, which belongs in common to the whole animal creation, the seat of the appetites, desires, affections."
- B. W.E. Vine observes:
"The spirit may be recognized as the life principle bestowed on man by God, the soul as the resulting life constituted in the individual."
- C. According to Jas. 2:26:
"The body apart from the spirit is dead."
Conversely, the spirit's presence in the body equals life. This is demonstrated in Gen. 2:7; when Jehovah breathed into the lifeless body of Adam the breath (spirit) of life, he became a living soul, or became alive.
- D. T.P. Brown illustrates this with an analogy of an electrical light.
The bulb represents our body; the electrical energy represents the human spirit. When the spirit enters the body, the resulting light and heat represent our soul. Applying the analogy to Gen. 2:7, God formed a light bulb of the elements of the earth and channeled into it electricity, and became a shining light.
- E. In death, the spirit leaves the body (Jas. 2:26) and returns to God (Eccl. 12:7). It goes to the Hadean world and awaits the resurrection (Lk. 16:22-26). This results in death, the end-of physical life (soul), and disintegration of the physical body.
- F. Vincent says:
"The soul is the principle of individuality, the seat of personal impressions, having a side in contact with the MATERIAL ELEMENT of humanity as well as with the SPIRITUAL ELEMENT. It is thus the mediating organ between the spirit and the body, receiving from within and without."
- G. Lenski comments:
"The spirit of man ought to rule supreme, wholly controlled by God's spirit, man out to be "pneumatikos." Sin enabled the "psuche" to control so that man became "psuchikos" (sensual), his bodily appetites having sway." A Christian's 'soul is thus controlled by the spirit and is not like the soul of pagans which runs away with the spirit and gives reign to the body."