

# What is Jesus Doing?

## RIGHTLY DIVIDING SOUL AND SPIRIT

I have found that many believers, both those that are new in Christ and some who have walked with Him for some time, are confused about the nature of the soul and often think and speak of it as interchangeable with their spirit. Hopefully the following will help clear up this crucial misunderstanding.

*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 2:7

*For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

- Hebrews 4:12

There are three aspects of man as God created him. These are body, soul, and spirit.

**Body: soma (Greek):** the lowest part of man, the physical man, the fleshly or natural man.

**Soul: nephesh (Hebrew), psykhe (Greek):** inner nature or man, the person or one's self. Includes the mental, emotional, sensual, and creative. Soul also refers to the life one has as a person. The soul or life is in the blood. The soul of a person is also capable of exercising free will.

**Spirit: ruahh (Hebrew), pneuma (Greek):** wind, force or breath. Also breath: neshamah' (Hebrew).

## What is Jesus Doing?

The spirit is the life force in all living creatures or souls. This would include both animals and humans. At death, the spirit leaves the body and goes back to the true God who gave it. Upon that moment, all conscious thoughts, purposes, and plans cease and the body goes back to dust. Only God can restore or give back one's spirit.

When the Lord released the great flood, which destroyed all life on earth except Noah, his family, and those animals that entered the ark, He said...

*For behold, I, even I, will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy and make putrid all flesh under the heavens in which are the breath and spirit of life; everything that is on the land shall die.*

- Genesis 6:17

*So also, it is written, "The first man Adam became a living soul; The last Adam (Christ) became a life-giving Spirit."*

- 1 Corinthians 15:45

There are hundreds of scriptures that support the inter-relational nature of soul and spirit. In this blog, however, I want to make a point about the importance of KNOWING the difference between soul and spirit, how they interact, and most importantly, being sure that our spirit is aligned with the Holy Spirit and our soul (our mind, our emotions and our will), is placed in its proper position, under the AUTHORITY of the Holy Spirit's leading. This can only be done by prayer and most of all, through supplication, or submission to the Will of God.

Although I generally don't include outside sources, other than scripture, in this blog, I wanted to include the best description of the nature and the interaction between body, soul and spirit that I have read. This has impacted me greatly in my walk and the ministry the Lord has given me and so I felt the need to share it with my readers. It explains eloquently, the reason to rightly divide soul and spirit.

# What is Jesus Doing?

## THE FUNCTIONS OF THE SPIRIT, THE SOUL, AND THE BODY

Man is composed of two independent kinds of material: spirit and body. When the spirit entered the body of dust, the soul was produced. It is impossible for the spirit to control the body directly. Hence, it requires a medium. This medium is the soul, which was produced when the spirit touched the body.

The spirit mingled with the body and brought forth the soul. As such, man became a living soul. Hence, the soul is the result of the union between the spirit and the body; it is the personality of a man.

The body is the outer shell of the soul, and the soul is the outer shell of the spirit. Before man fell, it was the spirit that controlled his entire being. When the spirit wants to do something, it communicates this to the soul, and the soul motivates the body to obey the command of the spirit. This is the meaning of the soul as the medium.

*My soul magnifies [present tense] the Lord, and my spirit has exulted  
[perfect tense] in God my Savior.*

- Luke 1:46-47

The spirit must first exult, before the soul can magnify the Lord. The spirit first communicates the exultation to the soul, then the soul communicates to the body.

The body is the “world-consciousness,” the soul is the “self-consciousness,” and the spirit is the “God-consciousness.” There are five organs in the body, which afford man the five senses. This physical body enables man to communicate with the physical world. This is why it is called the “world- consciousness.” The soul includes that part known as man’s intellect, which helps to make man’s existence possible. The part of love generates affections toward other human beings or objects. The part that can be aroused is the part that originates from the consciousness. All these are parts of the man himself; they form the personality of man. Hence, they are called the “self-consciousness.”

## What is Jesus Doing?

The spirit is the part with which man communicates with God. With this part, man worships God, serves Him, and understands his relationship with God. Hence, it is called the “God-consciousness.”

The spirit has knowledge, but this knowledge is different from the knowledge of the mind. Because the spirit is different from the mind, only a spiritual man can know himself.

*For who among men knows the things of man, except the spirit of man which is in him?*

- 1 Corinthians 2:11

Although man knows things through the mind, unless his mind is RIGHTLY DIVIDING SOUL AND SPIRIT, it is actually not trustworthy and cannot know “the things of man.” The mind may have knowledge, but only by man’s spirit can he know the things of man and know himself. Hence, God’s Word states the fact: “For who knows the things of man, except the spirit.” This spirit is the part with which man fellowships with God. “But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty gives them understanding” (Job 32:8). “The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly” (Proverbs 20:27). The spirit of man is the part with which man fellowships with God.

The soul can be stimulated, and it can be disquieted (Psalm 42:5). It can feel sorrowful (Matthew 26:38). In short, the soul is everything that the personality entails. Hence, we can say that the soul is the personality. Many portions in the Bible do not call man a man, but a soul. For example, when the house of Jacob went down to Egypt, there were seventy people (Genesis 46:27). But the Bible says, “All the souls...were threescore and six” (Genesis 46:26).

The body is like a servant; it is under man’s control.

## What is Jesus Doing?

The soul is the meeting point; here the spirit and the body join. Man communicates with the spiritual realm through the spirit. He communicates with the world of senses through the body. The soul is in between. On the one hand, it communicates with the spiritual realm through the spirit, and on the other hand, it communicates with the physical world through the body.

The soul is in between the spirit and the body; it binds the spirit and the body together as one. The spirit rules over the body through the soul and subjects it under God's power. The body can induce the spirit to love the world through the soul.

In conclusion, the soul is the source of the personality; man's judgment, intellect, and love all are of the soul. The spirit is the part with which man communicates with the spiritual realm. The body is the part with which man communicates with the physical realm. The soul is in the middle of these two parts. It exercises its judgment to determine if the spiritual realm is to rule or if the physical realm is to rule. Sometimes the soul rules through its intellect and stimulations; this becomes the rule of the psychological world. Unless the soul yields its rule to the spirit, the spirit cannot rule. Hence, the soul has to authorize the spirit to rule before the latter can rule over the soul and the body. The reason for this is that the soul is the origin of the personality.

*(Collected Works of Watchman Nee, The (Set 1)*

*Vol. 01: The Christian Life and Warfare, Chapter 5, by Watchman Nee)*

"Unless the soul yields its rule to the spirit, the spirit cannot rule." This to me has been a true revelation and I have applied it to my life as completely as I have been, and continue to be able, to do.

## What is Jesus Doing?

As the whole man consists of body, soul and spirit, and we have now seen that the soul consists of a person's mind, emotions and will, it stands to reason that, in order for us to achieve this, we must use our WILL to truly yield the soul to the authority of the spirit and the spirit under the authority of His Holy Spirit!

As David (a man after God's own heart) said:

*Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.*

- Psalm 103:1

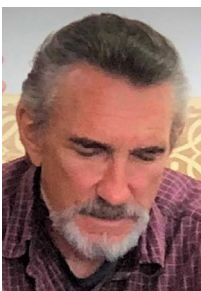
The apostle Paul reminds us in his first letter to the church at Corinth, that we are to: "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ".

Finally, Jesus Himself tells us:

*Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.*

- Matthew 7:7-8

So... let's use our will, the will that God gave us, to ask in prayer and supplication, that our soul be put in its proper place of perspective, under the authority of our spirit, and our spirit under the authority of Almighty God, in Christ Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, to the glory of the Father.



*With blessings, and in accordance with His everlasting Love and Truth,*

- John Henry Raskin, Roadhouse Rabbi