**Lesson: The Psyche and the Soul**

Your life is found in your spirit (JOB 33:4; JOH 3:6; JOH 6:63). Through God’s Holy Spirit everyone is likewise created with a spirit and a soul. The soul becomes you, a person unique in every way from everyone else; well, except for the fact that people are alike in two distinct ways: everybody is created in God’s own image and are loved unconditionally by Him. You see, God also possesses a spirit and a soul, and He became a carnal man named Jesus Christ: therefore, God exists in physical (human) form, as well as spiritually and mentally. Actually, humans have three parts, and one is the soul which humans alone possess among creatures native to planet Earth. The soul enables observation, learning, analysis, ethical processing and associated selection, and is generally associated with the mind. The three persons of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are indivisible (unlike humans who can lose their soul and their body, and consequently give up their ghost or spirit upon death). Though we were created in the image of God and are more like Him than other creatures, it is irresponsible to ascribe attributes of humans to God.

Our three components, body, soul, and spirit, need nurturing and exercise in order to maintain holistic health. That is, to be completely whole you need to be strengthened in all three areas. We each are given a body to live in this world and a mind to understand it, and a spirit which is our life force. Upon death, your spirit returns to God (ECC 12:7). Thus, we have physical, mental, and spiritual means by which we can worship and serve the Lord. The body is our natural, carnal component; and in it resides a sinful nature, also unlike other creatures indigenous to Earth. The mind can receive inputs from desires of the flesh as well as desires of the spirit. God wants us to follow the spirit within us, which is our connection to Him, else we find ourselves entangled in the depravity of the world and its iniquity.

* GEN 2:7 ~ God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.
* JOB 32:8 ~ There is a spirit in every person through which the inspiration of the Almighty enables each one of us to understand.
* ROM 7:21–25 ~ I am aware of a law within me compelling me to do good, while evil is also present in my mind. I delight in the Law of God placed there for my edification, but I see another law in my body waging war against God’s Law and making me a captive to the law of sin. What a wretched person I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord! Although in my mind I serve the Law of God, in my flesh I am a slave to sin.

Thus, within our minds is the knowledge of God, His will, and His Word. This is the soul wherein resides the conscience, the moral compass, the knowledge of right and wrong, and God’s command to value all life, especially humankind. Unfortunately, our defiled flesh will compel us to follow it into sin, and succumb to the temptations of evil spirits, wicked people, and a corrupt world. But if we are guided by the Holy Spirit, we will be inclined do the right thing and love others as we love ourselves. Hence, it is necessary for us to remain mindful of the circumstances, our instructions from God delineated in the Bible, and the thoughts we are thinking; then we can proceed in accordance with what our higher power is telling us. Yes, we know in advance what to do and what not to do, and we know that the consequences of our decisions, words, and actions likely will be positive or negative, respectively. It merely requires that we think carefully before deciding.

* ROM 8:3–7 ~ For what the Law could not do because of the weakness of human flesh, God accomplished by sending his own Son in the likeness of human flesh to be a sin offering. Thus, He condemned the sin of the flesh so that the righteous requirements of the Law could be found in those who do not live according to the flesh but according to the spirit. For those who follow their flesh are mindful of the things of the flesh; but those who follow their spirit are mindful of the things of the Spirit. To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. The carnal mind is adverse towards God; it will not subject itself to the laws of God, indeed it cannot.
* PHP 2:3–11 ~ Do not do anything through strife or vanity; instead, be humble, and regard others as better than yourselves. Do not focus on yourself, focus on others like Christ did, who although He was equal with God, took on the form of a man. Instead of exalting Himself He became the servant of all. He humbled Himself before others and was obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted His Son, giving Him a name above every other name, so at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, whether in heaven, on earth, or under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.
* GAL 5:22–23 ~ Fruits of the Spirit include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things.
* PHP 4:6–8 ~ Do not worry about anything, but pray for everything with thanksgiving, humbleness, and eagerness. Focus your mind on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, admirable, virtuous, and praiseworthy.
* HEB 8:10; HEB 10:16 ~ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds and write them upon their hearts. And I will be their God, and they will be my people.
* 1 PE 2:11 ~ Dearly beloved, I implore that while you are strangers and pilgrims on this earth, you abstain from lusts of the flesh which war against your soul.

In order to remain mindful of God’s desire for our lives, we need to remain connected to His Holy Spirit, which is the same Spirit that breathed into us our life’s energy and existence. God always keeps humankind in mind. In fact, everything He created, to include the entire universe and all its inhabitants, was initiated with us in mind. If God is always mindful of us, we should reciprocate by being continuously mindful of Him. It is necessary to know Him, to study His Word, to remember His promises, and to worship Him in spirit and in truth (JOH 4:24; JOH 16:13).

* 1 CH 16:14–15 ~ God is Lord, and His judgments are found in all the earth. He remains mindful of His covenant and the promises He decreed to a thousand generations.
* PSA 8:3–6 ~ When I ponder the heavens and the works of your hands, the moon and stars and all that you have set into motion, I wonder: who are we humans that you (God) would keep us in your thoughts, and that you would visit our offspring as well? For you made humans a little lower than angels, and have crowned us with glory and honor. You gave humans dominion over all of your creation. (See also HEB 2:6–8).
* PSA 144:3 ~ Oh Lord, what are humans that you are mindful of us! Or our children that you also would think of them?
* EPH 2:1–6 ~ You were dead in trespasses and sins, when in times past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience; among whom we also engaged in such lusts, fulfilling carnal desires of flesh and mind, by nature the children of wrath along with many others. But God, rich in mercy and abundant in love, though we were dead in sins, revived us together with Christ (for by His grace we have been saved). He has raised us up together, and we will sit together in heavenly places with Jesus.

Clearly, being steadfast in the faith and staying attentive to God is difficult. Fortunately, the Holy Spirit is there at all times, ready to lead us and renew us in the righteousness of Christ. He intercedes for you, strengthens you, protects you, and sustains you. All you need to do is invite Him into your heart in the name of Jesus, and He will never leave you or forsake you (DEU 31:6).

* ROM 8:25–28 ~ If we hope for what we cannot see, we must be patient. The Holy Spirit helps us with our problems. We really don’t know what we should pray for, so the Spirit intercedes for us in ways that words could never express. God, who searches the hearts of everyone, knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people according to God’s will. We can be sure that God will provide good things to those who love Him, and are called according to His purpose.
* ROM 12:2 ~ Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so you may prove what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.
* 1 CO 2:16 ~ Who has known the mind of God that they can instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.
* EPH 4:22–24 ~ Get rid of the old self, which is polluted with deceitful lusts. Become renewed by the spirit of your mind, putting on the new self which is like God, created in righteousness and true holiness.

You cannot be spiritually minded and carnally minded at the same time (LUK 16:1–15). You must choose whom you will serve. That is, you must put God first and others second, including yourself. If your focus is on the world or yourself, you will not be mindful of God but distracted from His presence during your daily activities.

* DEU 6:5 ~ You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and might.
* MAT 22:37–40; MAR 12:30–31~ Jesus said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul: this is the first and greatest commandment. The second is like unto the first: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the laws and the prophets depend on these two commandments.”
* ROM 1:28 ~ Since they did not retain the knowledge of God, God allowed them to develop a reprobate mind, and do those things which should not be done.
* 2 CO 4:3–6 ~ If the Gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are lost. The prince of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers, preventing the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the picture of God, from shining down upon them. What we preach is not about ourselves but Jesus Christ our Lord. We are your servants for His sake. God commanded the light to shine out of darkness and that light has shined in our hearts. We shine the light of the knowledge of the glory of God whose face is Jesus Christ. We have the spirit of faith. As it is written: I believed, and therefore I have spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.
* JAM 1:8; JAM 4:8 ~ A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands you sinners; and purify your hearts, those of you who are double minded.

What happens if you do not choose God? You will lose your soul and be destroyed. If you have chosen God, you have believed in His Son who took your place in death; otherwise you will pay for your sin because you did not receive the atonement of Christ. For those going their own way, death is permanent; for those following Jesus Christ, life is permanent.

* LEV 17:11 ~ The life of all flesh resides in the blood, and I (God) have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is blood that makes atonement for the soul.
* NUM 15:30–31 ~ Anyone who sins defiantly, whether a resident or a stranger, blasphemes the Lord; for that person has despised the word of the Lord, and broken His commandments. Those souls will be cut off completely; their iniquity will be upon them.
* MAT 10:26–28 ~ Jesus said, “Do not fear those who hate you, for everything that is hidden now will be revealed later; everything that is unknown will become known. What I tell you in darkness you will speak in the light. What you hear in private will be proclaimed from the rooftops. Do not fear anyone who can kill your body but not your soul; fear the One who can destroy both your body and your soul in hell.
* LUK 12:16–21 ~ Jesus spoke a parable to them: The land of a certain rich man produced plentifully, and the man thought to himself, “What should I do? I haven’t enough room for all the fruits of my labor. I know what I’ll do. I’ll tear down the barns and build bigger ones.” And the man decided, “Since I have so much wealth, I’ll just take it easy and eat, drink, and be merry.” But God said to him, “You fool, tonight your soul will be required. And who will possess all those things for which you have worked so hard?” Jesus concluded: Those who accumulate treasures for themselves are not rich towards God.

So, consider the value of your soul. It is the most precious possession you have in this life; it is your essence of distinction and excellence, your identity and individuality, made in the image of God to love and be loved. The soul is a marvelous gift which He bestowed the moment His Spirit infused into your soul the breath of life, which will last for eternity if you accept His invitation to freedom.

* ISA 65:17 ~ God will create a new heaven and a new earth; the former heaven and earth will never be remembered or recalled.
* MAT 16:25–26; MAR 8:35–38 ~ Jesus said, “Whoever seeks to save his or her life will lose it; but whoever would lose his or her life for my sake will find it. What does it profit a person who gains the world but loses their soul? What can a person give in return for their soul?”
* LUK 21:19 ~ In your patience you will possess your soul.

My career involved extensive study in psychology, counseling, and mental health. I was a research psychologist, psychotherapist, and professor of psychology, counseling, and religion. Did you know, the word “psychology” originates from the Greek word *psyche*, meaning soul? Thus, psychology is the study of the mind, or soul. This has been my life’s work. Of course, you cannot study the mind and understand it sufficiently without studying the Holy Bible, which helps one to understand our need to be whole: body, soul and spirit. In my experience as a clinician, the spiritual component seems the part most neglected. This is why I integrated spirituality with psychotherapy, as well as appropriate medical follow up; those who agreed to this approach attained holistic health more completely and quickly than those focused exclusively on their mental health or worldly issues. But many deny they have a spirit and a soul, or they misunderstand what these represent, unaware that they are integral to wholeness, life, and overall health.

* 1 TH 5:23 ~ May the God of peace sanctify you wholly, so that your entire spirit, soul, and body can be preserved blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
* 2 TI 1:7 ~ God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind.
* HEB 4:12 ~ God’s Word is swift, sharp, and powerful. Like a double-edged sword it can pierce and divide the very soul and spirit, and it can discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

If your body and soul are destroyed in hell, you will cease to exist. And your spirit, well it always belonged to God and He will keep it, since you will have forfeited it through death. However, if you place your trust in Jesus Christ and remain steadfast in your faith, you will keep your soul forever and receive a new incorruptible body that will never die, into which God will again breathe His life-giving Spirit. Once your body, mind, and spirit are reunited in heaven, the potential and possibilities will be endless, and your holistic health will be certain and everlasting. But there will be no hope beyond the grave for those people experiencing the second death (ECC 9:10; 1 CO 15:12–20; 1 TH 4:13–14; REV 20:14–15).

It is imperative that every living soul consider what is at stake here. It is not just your life it is your chance at eternal life. It can be over in a flash of time, or a blink of the eye. This is emphasized in the last words of Jesus to the apostle John who quoted, Him “Behold, I come quickly.” John replied, “Amen, come Lord Jesus” (REV 22:20). What is your response? Are you ready for Christ’s return which could take place any second now?

* EXO 33:5 ~ The Lord had said to Moses, “Tell the children of Israel they are a stiff-necked people. If I came into the midst of them for just a moment, I could destroy them.”
* JOB 20:4–5 ~ You have known from days of old, ever since man was placed upon the earth, that the triumph of the wicked is short and the joy of the hypocrite lasts only a moment.
* JOB 21:13 ~ They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.
* PSA 73:19 ~ How they are brought to desolation, as in a moment, utterly consumed with terror.
* LUK 4:5 ~ The devil took Jesus to a high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a single moment of time. The devil said, “All of this power and glory I will give you, including the power that is delivered to me and to whom I will give it. If you will worship me it all will be yours.” Jesus answered, “Get behind me, Satan; for it is written that you must worship the Lord your God and serve only Him.”
* 1 CO 15:51–54 ~ Here is a mystery of God: We will not all sleep (die) but we will be changed. In the twinkling of an eye when the last trumpet sounds, Christ’s own, whether dead or alive, will arise without corruption and be changed. Hence, the corruptible will have become incorruptible and the mortal will have become immortal. Then the statement “death is swallowed up in victory” will be true.
* 2 CO 4:17–18 ~ Our manageable afflictions, which are for a moment, work for us an exceedingly greater glory. So we focus, not on things which are seen, but on things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but things not seen are eternal.

By Andrew V. Barber (Posted 10/01/2021)