

Do We Have a Triune Nature ?

The main purpose behind this booklet is to stimulate all who read it in to further Biblical study on the subject.

Also included is the practical application of what is shown to be true in God's Word to our day-to-day life and relationships with God and other people.

Some of the applications of what is true about us are subjective and you are invited to come to your own conclusions based on what is clearly shown in the scriptures.

I suggest also that what we see in scripture is true about ourselves, should become a premise from which we judge our thoughts and actions in the future.

We will find this knowledge dramatically transforming our lives and relationships with others. I can say this from personal experience of what has happened in my life during the time it has taken me to compile this booklet.

We cannot know ourselves unless we see ourselves in the mirror of God's Word

Genesis 1:26 [King James] *"And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness..."*

The scriptures clearly show God is a triune god and that He made us in His own image.

"Image" – Hebrew *"tselem"* – resemblance – hence a representative figure – a shadow.

This Hebrew word is used in modern times for all forms of photography, hence our word image.

"Likeness" – Hebrew *"demuwth"* – manner, similitude the inner likeness of God – character.

This is a twofold creation.

Genesis 2:7 [King James] *"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."*

Three elements are involved in this creation:

Body – formed from the dust of the ground.

Spirit – the breath of God – Hebrew *"neshâmâm"*.

Soul – the end result of joining the body created out of clay and the spirit from God.

The soul is something that had never before existed, a physical living creature in whom was the breath [spirit] of God.

Our nature is triune, three in one, the highest part of this nature is the spirit breathed into the lowest part, the clay from which man's body was formed.

The soul is the link between the earthy and the spiritual, part of our composition.

God's desire from the beginning was that we should relate to Him through the spirit He had given us.

Satan struck at the souls in Adam and Eve through his temptation of Eve and in so doing deflected their souls away from the upward relationship with their Creator by the resulting disobedience, rebellion and ignorance of spiritual things.

Ephesians 4:17-18 [NIV] *“So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.”*

Our battle with Satan has always been in the realm of the soul to sever us from connection with the Spirit of God.

Isaiah 59:2 [King James] *“... your iniquities [perverseness] have separated between you and your God, and your sins [habitual offences] have hid His face from you.”*

The result of this rebellion is that the spirit in Adam and Eve died and their souls became lost rebels and their bodies were subjected to corruption.

In choosing to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil Adam and Eve desired to decide for themselves what was good or evil instead of what was revealed by their Creator.

In choosing to decide for themselves what is right or wrong, good or evil, Adam and Eve rejected God's rule over them and in outright rebellion were cut off from the tree of life, so both Adam and Eve died spiritually.

In His mercy God did not leave the Adamic race spiritually dead but in due time provided a Man called the “*Last Adam*”, Jesus Christ, to reconcile us to Himself.

1 Corinthians 15:45 [NIV] *“So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.”*

Jesus Christ was not the last Adam in historical sequence but the last Adam in the sense that whole penalty of the evil inheritance of the entire Adamic race was borne by Him and at His death this whole evil inheritance was buried with Him.

Then with His resurrection Jesus Christ became the first born of a new race of people who could be called the Emanuel race where God is joined with human beings.

John 20:21-22 [NIV] *“Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”*

After His resurrection we see Jesus repeating what He did to Adam in the Garden of Eden.

This time it was to give new spiritual life to the new Adamic race.

This was a new kind of life that was being breathed by God into His created human beings. The kind of life that had triumphed over death, over sin, over hell, over the grave and over Satan.

The disciples were “*born again*” into this totally new kind of life.

This was New Testament salvation and every believer in Jesus Christ can receive this new spiritual life by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:15-17 [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept*

him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.”

We don't become a “*born again*” Christian by joining a church or by being baptised, but by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:9 [NIV] *“You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.”*

Without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit we are still spiritually dead and not part of the new Emanuel race.

We only receive the Holy Spirit by meeting with Christ and walking with Him.

John 14:6 [NIV] *“Jesus answered, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*

Christ is only way to God.

John 10:9 [NIV] *“I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.”*

Christ is the gateway to salvation.

With the indwelling of the Holy Spirit we receive a life that is undefeatable, divine, incorruptible and indestructible.

If this is what we are when we are a child of God, why then do we walk around looking so defeated, depressed, miserable or insecure?

Perhaps some of us need to notify our faces what we have within us!!

We will now examine the relationship between these three elements that make us what we are, the spirit, the soul and the body

Whichever of these three elements of our nature, body, soul or spirit is dominant in our lifestyle will determine our eternal future.

Hebrews 4:12 [NIV] *“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”*

Here is mentioned the three elements of our nature, soul, spirit and body [represented by “*joints and marrow*”].

God's Word is alive and full of power, eternal, ever relative to our lives.

Some writings are of interest to a limited circle of people but not everyone.

Some writings are only of academic or antiquarian interest.

Some writings are outdated and now of no use in the present society.

God's writings are living words for every person in any age and offer something that we are compelled to accept or reject for they cannot be ignored.

God's Word is something that has to be acted on, it demands response.

Hebrews 4:13 [NIV] *“Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”*

Every aspect of our life comes under the scrutiny of God's penetrating Words.

Everything is naked to God and is compelled to meet God's scrutiny.

All the outward trapping and disguises we put on for others to see, are stripped away by the penetration of God's Word.

We may avert our gaze from people we are ashamed to meet, but in the end we cannot do this with God, we are compelled to meet His gaze.

It is only through the Word of God that we can distinguish the difference between what is of the spirit and what is of the soul in our lives.

Job 32:8 [NIV] *“But it is the spirit in a man, the breath of the Almighty, that gives him understanding.”*

Secular psychology is mostly unaware of the presence of the spirit in us and its importance to understanding what makes us respond to situations in the way we do.

When we are “*born again*” through accepting and believing in what God has done for us through Jesus Christ, and our receiving of the Holy Spirit in our lives, certain things change in our triune nature.

- 1 The influence that Satan has had on our soul is cancelled.
- 2 The separation which was between us and God, caused by Satan and our sin, is taken away.

What then is the effect of this “new birth” in the three elements of our nature?

The Spirit

New life is imparted to our spirit.

We are no longer “*dead*” in trespasses and sin, but dead to sin, it no longer rules our life, the Holy Spirit does.

Romans 6:8-11 [NIV] *“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”*

Our spirit's contact with God's Spirit is restored.

Isaiah 59:2 [NIV] *“But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.”*

Our sins having been atoned for by the blood of Christ this separation is cancelled out.

The Soul

... is set free from Satan's control.

Romans 6:16-18 [NIV] *“Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey, whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.”*

Once we were slaves to Satan through unforgiven sins, but now set free by the atoning power of Christ's shed blood to serve the living God.

The Body

... is freed to serve God as directed by a “born again” soul and spirit.

Romans 6:19 [NIV] *“I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to an ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.”*

God wants to re-create us from the top down.

Romans 12:1-2 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

The renewed contact of our spirit with God's Spirit enables the Holy Spirit to re-make our soul [mind] then allowing our bodies to become a living sacrifice for God to use.

This renewed relationship is the pleasing and perfect Will of God.

God's Spirit, through influencing our spirit then directs our soul [mind] which activates our body to do God's Will.

This pattern of creation was spoiled by sin [cutting off the influence of God's Spirit] but restored by the atoning power of Christ's blood.

Now we are “born again”, God's Spirit joined to our spirit can begin this new creation.

Ephesians 2:10 [NIV] *“For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

The initiative is always with God, our part is to submit to His moulding as the Master Potter.

Isaiah 64:8 [NIV] *“Yet, O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.”*

The Holy Spirit through our spirit does not directly control our body, our soul [mind] has to choose to allow our body to perform God's Will. We can resist the moulding of the Master Potter.

Matthew 26:41 [NIV] *“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”*

The word used here for “*body*” is the Greek word “*sarx*” which can be used for the whole of our nature, spirit, soul [mind] and body.

Often the desire is there in the spirit but the soul [mind and will] blocks the body from doing the good work.

The more we understand our triune nature the more we can allow God’s Holy Spirit to do its work of re-creation.

What then are the separate functions of our triune nature?

The soul is self-conscious. When a person is wrapped up in their own self and their own needs and desires you know they are living in the realm of the soul.

The spirit is God conscious, which releases us from self-centredness and selfishness, and God’s Will becomes the centre of our life.

The body that is driven by the soul or will is world conscious. What is most important to this side of our nature is culture and changing fashions, being influenced by what others think or do.

The function of the spirit in us is to be God conscious and its supreme privilege is to have union and communion with God through the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:16-17 [NIV] *“Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.” But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.”*

In the sexual union of a man and a woman we have the physical example of the union that our spirit can have with God, we can be joined as one with Him.

It is **not** the soul that unites with God but the spirit in man.

This is the wonderful experience our spirit can have through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, a direct union with our Creator.

What is the spiritual activity by which we have this spiritual union with God?

Worship ! That is why I believe worship is the highest activity that a human being can ever experience.

If we don’t see worship in this light I wonder if we are worshipping God in spirit and truth.

John 4:23-24 [NIV] *“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”*

Never look on worship as routine or a form of entertainment.

Our worship services are where we meet and have union with our Creator.

Worship is the means of spiritual creation just as sexual union is a means of physical creation.

A church is not productive until it worships in spirit and in truth.

What is produced by this spiritual union?

We receive from God His attributes and His attitudes. In the same way a child who is the product of a physical union takes on the attributes and attitudes of their physical parents.

Galatians 5:22-23 [NIV] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”*

Jesus showed also by personal example the Father’s spiritual attitude towards certain situations.

Christ sighed in his spirit.

Mark 8:12 [King James] *“And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.”*

Matthew 16:1-4 [King James] *“The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.”*

When we read these two scriptures together we see that Christ sighed because of the insincerity of the Pharisees who in their demand for a sign were far more anxious to secure material for proving that Jesus was not the Messiah than to be convinced that He was. Insincerity in our relationship with God causes Him pain in the spirit.

Christ rejoiced in the spirit.

Luke 10:21 [King James] *“In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.”*

Jesus rejoiced in the spirit when He saw the joy of the disciples as their minds were being opened to the truth.

Christ groaned in the spirit.

John 11:33 [King James] *“When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,”*

Christ groaned in the spirit as He shared in the disciples’ moaning and weeping. But also in their lack of faith and belief in His ability to raise Lazarus from the dead as He had promised Martha.

Paul also purposed in the spirit.

Acts 19:21 [King James] *“After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.”*

God’s purpose for Paul was so much part of Him that it became Paul’s purpose.

We need to ask ourselves why we purpose to do certain things in our life, are we responding to our spirit [God’s purpose] or our soul [our selfish purpose] ?

Paul was bound in the spirit.

Acts 20:22 [King James] *“And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:”*

Paul was bound in the spirit before this event; his life was dedicated to serving God and submitting to God’s Will in his life.

Paul served God with his spirit.

Romans 1:9 [King James] *“For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;”*

It was through the union of Paul’s spirit with God’s Spirit that Paul was able to do all that he accomplished.

The functions of the soul

The soul is self-conscious. It gives us the sense of existing through our thoughts. We think therefore we exist.

The soul can be divided into three areas, all related to our ego [Latin for “I”]. The will, the intellect and the emotions.

The will

In this area of thought the soul says *“I want”*. This is one of the first things we learn to say as a child.

The intellect

In this area of the soul we make decisions. The soul says, *“I think”* or *“I reason”* or *“I imagine”*.

The emotions

In this area of the soul we feel we say *“I feel”* this in right.

Basically the lives of those without the influence of the spirit are controlled by these three areas of the soul.

“I want” – “I think” – “I feel”.

In different people one of these three areas may be dominant.

Some people are motivated by what they want; this takes priority over everything else.

Other people are more motivated by what they think, or consider should happen or what they do.

Other people are governed by their feelings. How they feel about something, is what should happen apart from logic or desire.

The functions of the body

The body is world conscious through the five senses: touch, taste, sight, hearing and smell.

The body acts out the decisions of the soul.

Psalm 103:1-2 [NIV] *“Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits...”*

David’s spirit motivated by God’s Spirit wanted to praise God, so David tells his soul to wake up, then the words of praise can come out of his mouth [body].

The spirit motivates the soul to instruct the body.

Hebrews 10:5-7 [King James] *“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.”*

Quoting from **Psalm 40** which is a prediction of the Messiah.

Why was a body prepared for the Messiah?

Verse seven tells us to do God’s Will.

Christ sacrificed his whole spirit, soul and body to God and made the perfect sacrifice of spirit, will and flesh.

Romans 12:1 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

Likewise we are urged to offer ourselves completely.

The word *“bodies”* is a figure of speech where part is given representing the whole.

God desires us to make a complete living sacrifice – spirit, soul and body.

We will now study what happens in the spirit, soul and body that correspond with each other

This will help us to distinguish between the three, and evaluate as to which area of our nature we are responding.

You may find these conclusions subjective, but the main purpose behind this part of the study is to stimulate you to think about the subject.

Worship

The Spirit

John 4:23-24 [NIV] *“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”*

Worship is a function of the spirit.

The Soul

The corresponding activity in the soul to worship in the spirit is praise and singing.

Luke 1:46-47 [NIV] *“And Mary said: My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,...”*

Mary glorified God in her soul and rejoiced in her spirit. The two are different and cannot be interchanged.

The Body

In worship the body kneels, bows or lifts up the hands.

Revelation

The Spirit

Ephesians 1:17 [NIV] *“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.”*

Revelation is a function of the spirit, it comes only directly from God’s Spirit to our spirit.

The Soul

The corresponding activity of the soul to revelation is teaching, doctrine theology. Revelation is in the realm of the spirit, theology is in the realm of the reasoning.

The Body

Romans 1:20 [NIV] *“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”*

Sense perception of the natural world about us, using the five senses, to come to a certain understanding of God.

Joy

The Spirit

Galatians 5:22-23 [NIV] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”*

Joy is in the realm of the spirit, it is a fruit of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and is **not** affected by physical circumstances.

Psalms 43:4 [King James] *“Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.”*

Joy is dependent only on God and God never changes.

The Soul

The corresponding activity of joy in the soul is happiness.

Happiness is dependent on circumstances and is affected by our health, well-being and human relationships.

We can have continual joy in our spirit without continual happiness in our soul.

The Body

The corresponding activity of joy in the body is pleasure, whatever may stimulate our physical senses.

Pleasure, unlike joy, can be short-lived, and is very dependent on what is around us or what we take into our bodies.

There is a very important condition that has to be considered in all we have been studying

Matthew 16:24-26 [NIV] *“Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?”*

The Greek word translated “*life*” is “*psuche*”; the same word translated in verse 26 “*soul*”.

Christ is telling us that if we are to save our soul [life] we must do three things.

Deny ourselves – which means to say no.

Take up our cross, then **follow Jesus Christ**.

We cannot follow Christ, become like Christ, until we have taken these first two steps denying ourselves and accepting our cross in life.

How do we say no to our soul?

We have to say no in the three areas of our soul.

The Will

The soul says “*I want*”. We have to say it is **not** what I want that matters, what matters is God’s Will.

The Intellect

The soul says “*I think*”. We have to say what matters is **not** what I think but what God’s Word tells me.

The Emotions

The soul says “*I feel*”. We have to say what matters is **not** what I feel but what the Holy Spirit impresses on my spirit.

To follow Christ we have to say no to what “*I want*”, “*I think*” and “*I feel*”.

Many of us trying to follow Christ do not or cannot say no in this way to our soul.

We continue to live by the soul’s dictates not denying our soul, and so not following Christ.

We cannot live for Christ and at the same time live for our soul.

This is the most critical point in the life of most Christians, denying our soul’s dictates, saying no to “*I want*”, “*I think*” and “*I feel*”.

What happens if we fail to say “no” to our soul?

What happens is due to unconfessed sins our spirit is once more dead to the motivation of God’s Holy Spirit?

We revert to a life that is directed by the soul ! !

2 Peter 2:20-22 [NIV] *“If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: “A dog returns to its vomit,” and, “A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.”*”

This is how God perceives such people who turn their backs on what Christ has done for them, who fail to continue to deny themselves, accept their “*cross*” in life and seek to follow Christ.

2 Peter 2:12 [NIV] *“But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish.”*

Such people eventually revert to natural instincts as if they did not have the spirit in man.

They are soul motivated.

Romans 1:28-32 [NIV] *“Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.”*

We step onto a slippery slope ending in death.

1 Corinthians 2:14 [King James] *“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”*

Darkness envelopes them once again.

The Greek word translated here “*natural*” is “*psuchikos*”, meaning of the soul, or motivated by the soul [“*psuche*”].

Jude 18-19 [NIV] *“They said to you, “In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires. These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.”*

These people are following their natural [“*psuchikos*”] instincts, the motivation of their soul un-influenced by a spirit that is in contact with God’s Holy Spirit.

James 3:15 [King James] *“This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.”*

The same word “*psuchikos*” is translated here “*sensual*” or “*unspiritual*” [NIV], “*animal*” [Amplified], “*lower nature*” [Phillips].

James 3:14 [NIV] *“But if you harbour bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.”*

Envy and selfish ambitions are motivations of the soul, “*I think*”, “*I feel*” and “*I want*”.

Notice the “*wisdom*” is not from God but is “*of the devil*”. Such people are being cut off from the influence of God’s Holy Spirit in the same way Adam was by doubting God’s Word.

Ezekiel 18:20-23 [NIV] *“The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him. But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die. None of the offenses he has committed will be remembered against him. Because of the righteous things he has done, he will live. Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?”*

Turn from “*our ways*”, the way of our soul and live.

1 Corinthians 15:42-49 [NIV] *“So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.”*

The life body we are promised at the resurrection will not be directed by our soul as our physical body is now but directly by our spirit, a spirit that is in union with the Spirit of Jesus Christ, at the marriage of the lamb to the resurrected saints.

Revelation 19:7-9 [NIV] *“Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.” (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) Then the angel said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’” And he added, “These are the true words of God.”*

To prepare us for this ultimate spiritual union with Jesus Christ our Creator I feel we need to understand what God’s Word tells us concerning the interface our spirit can have at this present time in our existence, with the Holy Spirit of God.

Romans 7:5-6 [NIV] *“For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.”*

Having been released from our old way of life, a life directed by the soul, we are called by God to live a new life, one directed by our spirit, in union with the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:17 [NIV] *“But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.”*

As we yield our will to the Holy Spirit our spirit and the Holy Spirit become as one.

Spirituality is living in the spirit/Spirit.

In the Old Testament the activity of the Holy Spirit on the leaders of Israel is emphasised. In the New Testament believers are described as being spiritual [*“pneumatikos”*], people who live in the spirit/Spirit rather than directed by the flesh.

1 Corinthians 2:14-15 [NIV] *“The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:”*

The reconciling blood of Jesus Christ opens up the intimate relationship between our spirit and Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 3:1 [NIV] *“Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly, mere infants in Christ.”*

The new relationship with the Holy Spirit opened up to us is one in which we have to grow, just as a physical baby grows into a youth, then a mature person.

Galatians 6:1 [NIV] *“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.”*

At any time we are all at different levels of spiritual growth.

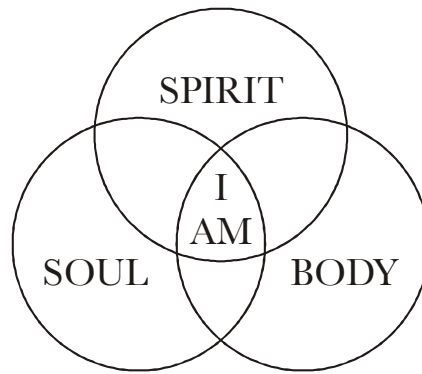
Romans 8:5-6 [NIV] *“Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;”*

The change from being controlled by the soul [our desires, our thoughts and our feelings] to being spirit controlled takes place in the spirit/soul area of our personality.

The gradual influence of the Holy Spirit as we yield to Him through our spirit will change the way we think.

We will begin to see situations from a completely new perspective, from God's viewpoint.

1 Corinthians 2:9-13 [NIV] *“However, as it is written: “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him”, but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.”*



We are not only rational beings [soul] or physical beings [body] but also spirit beings.

We are an intriguing and mystical blend of all three, one person in three modes, all of which influence us continually.

The spiritual person seeks to live influenced by the spiritual [divine] mode by allowing the spirit, soul and body to be under the anointing [control] of the Holy Spirit.

This is a decision we have to make as individuals.

Mark 12:30 [NIV] *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”*

“All our heart” our emotional nature, *“all our soul”* our willing nature, *“all our mind”* our intellectual nature, and *“all our strength”* our physical nature.

The *“strength”* may include the strength of all three, heart, soul and mind. The total person is to love our Creator God.

Some people love God with the strength of their minds and the weakness of their emotions: theirs is an intellectual relationship with God.

Some people love God with the strength of their emotions and the weakness of their mind: theirs is a sentimental relationship with God.

Some people love God with the strength of their will and the weakness of emotion; they and their idea of God is not very approachable; love does not feature very much in their relationship with God.

The person who loves God with the strength of mind, emotion and will is a truly balanced Christian of strong character.

Hebrews 4:12 [NIV] *“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”*

Even for descriptive purposes it is difficult and probably unnecessary to precisely divide body, soul and spirit.

The use of God’s Word, a very sharp sword, is the nearest we can get to making such a division.

In fact all indications are that each mode of our existence overlaps into the other two.

If we start with the spiritual, as we always should, to understand the physical we find that the triune God we worship cannot be precisely divided into three separate modes or persons, for He is One God, and acts as One, although presented for our benefit as Three Persons.

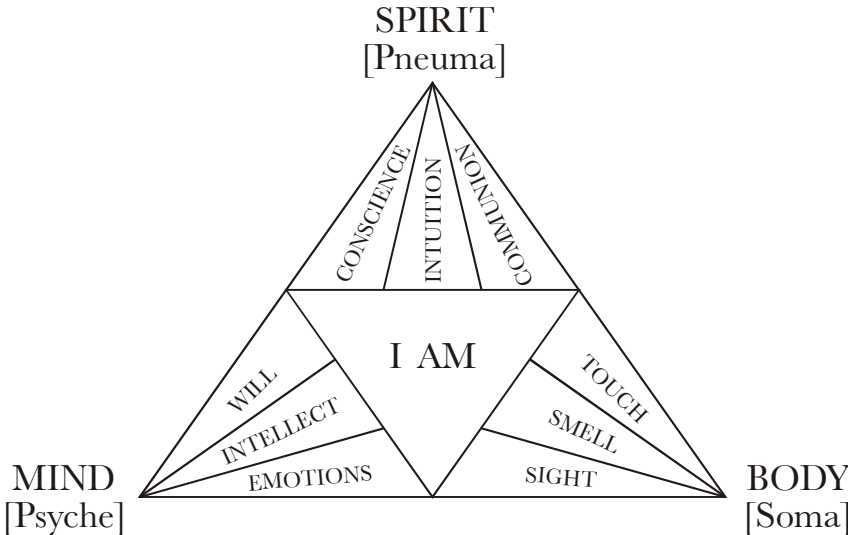
I feel the One Creator God has presented Himself as three persons only for us to understand His plan for redemption, and the relationship He desires to have with us His created children.

Romans 1:20 [NIV] *“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”*

God has provided us with a human body which provides us with some very helpful parallels as we try to understand the spiritual part of our nature.

Ephesians 2:4-5 [NIV] *“But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions, it is by grace you have been saved.”*

Before our conversion our spirit was “dead”. This does not mean it did not exist, but it was alienated from God, cut off from active life, darkened and in a coma.



Galatians 4:3 [NIV] *“So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world.”*

We were, before our conversion, ruled over by the appetites of the flesh, which are the basic principles that govern the society in which we live. To satisfy their physical desires is the driving force behind all that society does.

At the point in our lives when we were by God’s initiative brought to repentance and given our initial faith in Jesus Christ a new birth occurred.

John 16:8 [Living Bible] *“And when He [the Holy Spirit] has come He will convince the world of its sin, and the availability of God’s goodness, and the deliverance from judgement.”*

The regenerative work of the Holy Spirit began and our spirit was brought out of its coma and began to be used and developed as God intended.

This spirit in us, now brought out of the coma it was in until our initial conversion, appears to have capacities similar to the physical body in its ability to “hear”, “see”, “smell”, “taste” and “touch”.

Our spirit interacts with the spirit world in a similar way we interact with the physical world through our physical senses.

The Bible is full of accounts of those who *heard* the Word of God.

1 Kings 12:22 [NIV] *“But this word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God:”*

1 Chronicles 17:3 [NIV] *“That night the word of God came to Nathan, saying:”*

Luke 3:2 [NIV] *“during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert.”*

Acts 8:29 [NIV] *“The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”*

There is no evidence that these messages were audible to others. What was heard was then spoken by the person to others.

This message was given by the Holy Spirit through the spirit to the mind [soul] of the messengers.

John 15:26 [NIV] *“When the Counsellor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.”*

Most Christians can witness to such experiences from time to time; for some this is a daily reality.

Our spirit can also *see*, it has phenomenal visual capacity.

Acts 2:17 [NIV] *“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.”*

Since the advent of the Holy Spirit, seeing visions and dreaming dreams is part of our birthright.

We need to monitor our dreams as they can be an important window to our inner life.

Matthew 1:20 [NIV] *“But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”*

Matthew 27:19 [NIV] *“While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: “Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him.”*

The dreams from the Holy Spirit will be very distinctive in quality that will enable us to recognise them then pray for further understanding and application.

2 Corinthians 2:15 [Living Bible] *“As far as God is concerned there is a sweet, wholesome, fragrance in our lives. It is the fragrance of Christ within us, [the indwelling of the Holy Spirit] an aroma to both the saved and the unsaved around us.”*

This is not talking about the perfume or aftershave a person chooses to use but something that is only sensed by the spirit in us. The spiritual aroma is a result of the Holy Spirit dwelling in that person.

All of us have had this experience of a pleasant atmosphere when we are in the presence of a practising Christian. Our spirits can smell. We can discern what is spiritually fragrant and what is polluted.

Song of Songs 1:13 [Authorised Version] *“A bundle of myrrh is my well beloved to me...”*

True love has a spiritual fragrance that is only discerned by our spirit.

John Cassian, a fifth century monk wrote:-

“It frequently happens, in divine visits, that we are filled with perfumes, of a sweetness unknown to human skill. So the soul, overwhelmed with delight, is lifted into a rapture and forgets that it is living in the flesh.”

This man was in another league! Such mystical experiences are beyond most of us.

Many of us have felt that God has **touched** our lives. This is not in the physical sense but we experience an inner gentle pressure of the Holy Spirit.

We feel comforted in a time of trial just as when we were children the gentle touch of our parents would take away our fear.

Psalms 34:8 [NIV] *“Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.”*

Revelation 10:9 [NIV] *“So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, Take it and eat it. It will turn your stomach sour, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey.”*

As a Christian some experiences that God allows us to go through will be bitter to our spirit, for our spirit can taste.

We often speak of how a negative experience or a negative attitude of another person *“left a bad taste in our mouth”* or was an *“unsavoury”* incident.

Our spirit has the capacity to recognise bitterness in the spiritual realm.

In the same way our spirit can savour with delight the sweetness of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

I feel it is imperative that in our day we recover again an understanding of the capacities of the human spirit that were clearly understood by Christians in the past.

If just one or two of our physical senses are impaired, our contact and interaction with the physical environment is severely limited.

I observed this first-hand in the final few months of my own mother’s life when she became totally blind and very hard of hearing. Her very active and self-sufficient life even up to the great age of 102 years was reduced to one of total dependency on others for her last two years of life.

Tragically many of us suffer from a similar impediment of our spiritual senses. **Without all our spiritual senses fully active we will never be able to function to the full spiritual capacity that God desires for us to experience now.**

Proverbs 20:27 [NIV] *“The lamp of the LORD searches the spirit of a man; it searches out his inmost being.”*

Our spirit is the way God monitors and provides spiritual enlightenment and spiritual maturity.

Life on the spiritual level, our contact with God’s Spirit realm is a vital part of our life right now.

We all need to ignite and fan the flames of our spirit, to give us spiritual sight into our actions and decisions.

Acts 15:28 [NIV] *“It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements:”*

Here we see the perfect combination that results in a wise decision, both the Holy Spirit and the individual spirits of the disciples agreed.

After prayer, thought and discussion we embark on a decision. If our spiritual senses are active we will be made well aware by the active communion of our spirit and the Holy Spirit if the course of action is the wise one to take.

Our spirit will be at peace or it will be inhibited by what we are doing.

Romans 8:5, 12-16 [NIV] *“Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.” ... “Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation, but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.”*

Maturity is learning to live according to our spirit as it is in harmony with the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 5:12-14 [NIV] *“In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.”*

It is the Spirit/spirit lifestyles that causes us to grow from babes in Christ to sons of God, ready to enter the Kingdom [family] of God as His created children.