

The Mystery of Life

by Charles S. Price

The sermon explores the mystery of life, emphasizing the importance of the human spirit and the role of the soul in the human being.

Scripture: Luke 9:23, Romans 8:6, Galatians 5:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 4:12

Topics: "Spirit Soul Body", "Tripartite Nature"

Description

Charles S. Price delves into the intricate dynamics of the spirit, soul, and body, emphasizing the importance of understanding their roles in the life of a believer. He highlights the need for the spirit to be in control, leading to a life of peace and communion with God, while cautioning against being driven by the soulish desires of the flesh. Price explores the impact of the Fall on man's tripartite nature, revealing how the soul, as the seat of personality, can be influenced by evil spirits, leading to division and separation. He challenges believers to seek a deeper union with God, allowing the Spirit to transform their soul and body, ultimately leading to a life governed by the Spirit and rooted in the truth of God's Word.

Transcript

The Mystery of Life Spirit, Soul and Body Life is a mystery and we have yet to find the man or woman who at one time or another has not pondered with wonderment over the fact of the spirit and soul dwelling together in the body of man. We so often say "body, soul and spirit" but the Bible records it in the proper order--"spirit, soul and body;" and true it is that that 1 which many of us know the least about is indeed the most important--the spirit of man. Often we have heard people say--and perhaps they thought they were quoting scripture--"My undying soul" but in the Book of the Beginnings--the book of Genesis--it is recorded "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."(Death in scripture means separation, not annihilation)It was for this soul of man that Christ was offered as a sacrifice for sin; and He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Looking upon the soul as sort of medium through which, and by which, the spirit finds expression and our world consciousness via the five senses expresses itself, we see in the main functioning of the soul of man. It is entirely up to us to choose for ourselves whether or not our soul will be used as a medium to glorify God, as it yields to the operation of the Spirit, or for the glorifying of self as it is permitted to be exclusively occupied with the things of time and sense for the satisfying of our appetites and lusts.

"To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." The choice is obviously of greatest importance. Man has been made a creature of volition. He can by his own choice occupy the

throne room of his soul and hinder the operation of the Spirit--for to whomsoever we yield our members servants to obey, his servants we are--or he can abdicate and allow the throne room of his soul to be gloriously given over to the King of Glory. In the sovereignty of Almighty God, we have been permitted to choose for ourselves--"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve"--but many there are who have given little concern to this marvelous prerogative God has permitted mankind between the cradle and the grave.

It must have startled Peter to hear Jesus declare in no uncertain tones "Ye know not what spirit ye are of;" and again when He said "Get thee behind me, Satan." Had any one of us been chosen by the Master Himself as a disciple, no doubt we would have felt that it was well with our souls. However, Peter found by experience that it necessitated the faithful and persistent work of the Holy Spirit to bring him into usefulness in the Master's service. In doing for us what we could not do for ourselves, the Lord made it possible for us to choose God's choice, and in so doing we can know a life that is freed from the bondage of soulish endeavors--a life that enjoys the fellowship of a Divine Father.

By willing obedience to Him, the soul can be emancipated from the thralldom of mundane trifles which otherwise render the man impotent. 2 Spirit, Soul and Body Dr. Andrew Murray's explanation of what the "soul" or psuche is, and its relation to the "spirit" pneuma is very clear. Man consists of (1)spirit, (2)soul, and (3) body. "The spirit is the seat of our God--consciousness; the soul, of our self-consciousness; and the body, of our world-consciousness. In the spirit (of the believer) God dwells; in the soul, self; in the body, sense . . ."

The soul stands between the spirit and the body, as "direct communication between spirit and flesh is impossible; their intercourse can be carried on only by means of a medium" according to Tertullian, one of the writers in the early centuries of the Christian era--the "soul" being that medium. Dr. Andrew Murray states that the "soul was the meeting place, the point of union between body and spirit. Through the body, man--the living soul (as set forth in Gen. 2:7)--stood related to the external world of sense; through the spirit he stood related to the spiritual world."

G. H. Pember gives added light by stating "The body we may term the sense-consciousness; the soul the self-consciousness; and the spirit the God-consciousness." He further states that the body "gives us the use of the five senses:" the soul, the "intellect which aids us in the present state of existence, and the emotions which proceed from the senses." The spirit, however, is that which makes us one with God and "by which alone we apprehend and worship Him," for God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Pember further enlightens us regarding the creation of man as a tripartite being with "god first moulded the senses frame, and then breathed into it the 'breath of lives' (Gen. 2:7, R.V.) (The original is in the plural)," and this "may refer to the fact that the inbreathing of God produced a two-fold life--sensual (in the meaning of, or pertaining to, the senses) and spiritual. . . ." In a footnote he explains that possibly the use of the plural in the "breath of lives," carried the thought that "the inbreathing of God became the spirit; and at the same time, by its action upon the body, produced the soul."

It would appear that these three writers thus define the "soul" as the seat of the personality--consisting of the will and the intellect or mind; a personal entity standing between the "spirit," with its access to the spiritual world, and the "body," open to the outer realm of nature and sense--having the power of choice as to which world or realm shall dominate and control the man by the determination of who shall rule--God through the Spirit or self through the senses. When Adam walked in the Garden of Eden, the human spirit

breathed 3 into him by God was in union with God and dominated, controlled, or ruled his "soul"--i.e., intellect, mind, and will through the vessel of the "soul"--and shone out through the earthly tabernacle of clay, the body, making it luminous with light and able to fulfill perfectly the object of its creation; But Man Fell.

The result of the fall of man--after a time-- was described by the Lord Himself in His words, "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Gen. 6:5, R.V.) It is quite apparent that the "fall" began in the intellectual factor of the soul, for it is recorded that Eve saw that "the tree was to be desired to make one wise," (Gen. 3:6, R.V.) even as the serpent had declared to her that "in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3:5.)

The appeal was not directed to the vessel of clay, or the outer man, for the body was then perfectly ruled by the spirit, but was directed to the intellect and understanding of man, and was based upon a lawful desire to advance in knowledge and power in the unseen realm of another world. The appeal was not "Ye shall be as the beast created by God" but "Ye shall be as God," according to the serpent in his beguilement. The temptation was to advance in knowledge--a worthy desire in itself--but desired and grasped not only out of due season, but out of God's will.

The Tempted Soul The tempter knew how to attract Eve--by offering to her something higher than she possessed; for though she was limited by a mortal body, she had a soul which was capable of appreciating knowledge and growth through the higher part of her tripartite being. The full effect of the "fall" we find is not seen until years afterward when the record of the condition of the race shows that the downward course from the Garden of Eden reached its ultimate in a complete sinking into "flesh," so that the part of man's tripartite nature which he had in common with the animal creation gained the upper hand.

Looking down upon the fallen race of man, it was then that God said "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh." (Gen. 6:3) And so it was, and is, that not only has "death reigned" over the fallen race of Adam, but every human being born in the likeness of the first Adam is of the "earth, earthy," and is dominated by the flesh instead of the spirit; 4 and the soul--the personality of the man "himself" (Luke 9:25)--is a slave of the flesh and the earthly life instead of being led of the human spirit divinely restored to union and communion with the spirit of God.

The unregenerate man, therefore, is not only "fallen" and alienated from God and His life (Eph. 4:18) but his human spirit--severed from God--is incapable of fellowship with Him, is "without God" and separate from Christ (Eph. 2:12). The soul--having refused the rule of the rightly-related human spirit--is capable of choosing the reign of the darkened human spirit, or the rule of the sense-conscious body--and thus, in its God-given prerogative, rule in its own right. However, whenever choosing the reign of the darkened human spirit in its state of alienation from the Spirit of God, the only relationship with the "spirit realm" of necessity is with the spirits of darkness, in accord with the fallen spirits of Satan, and governed by the prince of the power of the air--the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2, 3).

Spirit Versus Flesh Such men may be said to be "spiritual" in the sense of possessing more "spirit" than others who are mainly "fleshly". These are the ones who seek concourse with the spirit-world apart from the Holy Spirit of God, and who become "mediums" capable of exercising "occult powers," such as clairvoyants, etc., bestowed upon them by Satanic means; for, unless the human spirit of man is regenerated and in union with the Holy Spirit of God, of necessity its only fellowship is with the spirits of darkness.

In the unconverted, according to Pember, "the soul--manifested sometimes in intellectuality, sometimes in sensuality, often in both--reigns over them with undisputed sway. This is what Jude wishes to set forth in his 19th verse which should be rendered, 'These be they who separate, men governed by soul, no having Spirit . . . ' Fausset in his commentary on this passage writes, "In the three-fold division of man's being . . . the due state in God's design is that 'the spirit' . . . should be first, and should rule the soul, which stand intermediate between body and spirit; but in the . . . natural man, the spirit is sunk into subserviency to the animal-soul, which is earthly in its motives and aims.

The 'carnal' sink somewhat lower, for in these the flesh, the lowest element . . . reigns paramount." The Spirit Breatheth 5 The Lord's words clearly indicate how the new life from above reaches the fallen spirit of man: "The Spirit breatheth where (He) listeth . . . so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8, R.V.M.) John 3:14-17 reveals why the Spirit quickens the human spirit into new life, as the death of the Son of God upon the Cross in the place of the sinner provides for "whosoever believeth into (lit.

Greek) Him, should not perish, but have eternal life." Through this unspeakable provision of a loving Heavenly Father, the tripartite nature of man was and is given a way of escape from the bondage of soul and body into which it had fallen, and could be adjusted once again with the spirit--in union with the Holy Spirit--once more ruling over the soul, and the body once again acting merely as the outward or material vessel--the instrument of the spirit through the soul. While there are only two classes of men--saved and unsaved or regenerate or unregenerate--there are different classes of believers, described according to growth and knowledge, in the Life that is in God.

The converted man--one who has had his spirit quickened into Life through regeneration by the Spirit of God communicating life to his darkened or fallen spirit--is truly "in Christ"; vitally quickened with His life and planted into Him by His Spirit as set forth in John 3:16,--vitally in Him by a living faith; and yet can have failed to apprehend or appropriate all that the Cross delivers and severs him from being baptized into His death on the Cross and quickened into newness of life by His Resurrection.

The regeneration of the human spirit, which comes through the inbreathing of the Spirit of Life from God, concurrent with man's simple faith in the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God upon the Cross in his behalf, should be quickly followed by the apprehension of his death as the sinner with the Saviour (Rom. 6:1-13), which results in his deliverance from the life after the "flesh." Manifestly the Corinthian Christians had not yet known this according to I Cor. 3:1. The Apostle's description of these Corinthian believers as being "carnal" or fleshly and yet "babes in Christ," shows clearly that "babes in Christ" are generally under the domination of the flesh--or "in the flesh"--at the initial stage of the spiritual life.

It may be said that there are three classes of Christians who are clearly referred to in the Scriptures as (1) The Spiritual Man--ruled and directed by the Spirit of God indwelling and energizing his regenerated human spirit--(2) The Soulsh Man--dominated by the soul through he intellect or emotions--and (3) The Carnal Man--led and directed by the flesh in fleshly habits or desires, literally in "the power 6 of the flesh." Flesh or Soul In Romans 8:7 where it is recorded that the "carnal" (sarx) mind is enmity against God, it is important that we realize that it is not said that the "psuche" or soulsh life is enmity to God, but the fleshly mind.

It is true that the natural or "soulsh" man cannot receive or understand the things of the Spirit (I Cor. 2:14) but he is not said to be at enmity simply because he is soulsh! Paul wrote in effect to the Corinthians that he could not speak unto them the deep things of God, as he would to the spiritual; but was compelled to

speak to them as to the Corinthians that he could not speak unto them the deep things of god, as he would to the spiritual; but was compelled to speak to them as to men of flesh, for though truly regenerated and "in Christ"--yet they were so dominated by the flesh that he could describe them only as still "carnal" or fleshly.

This was evidenced by the manifestation of the works of the flesh in jealousy, strife, envyings, divisions, etc., as further set forth in Galatians 5:19-21. Any of these manifestations, seen in a believer, point to the workings in some degree of the "sarkikos" or fleshly life, expressed through the avenues of the soul, or personality. Such a one is not even a "soulish" man who is merely "natural," but is a man walking "after the flesh," even though his spirit may be revived and quickened into life by the spirit of God.

Anyone thus walking, "in the flesh," cannot please God. The marks of the carnal Christian--babes in Christ--the Apostle sketches very clearly. By these marks every believer of the present time can judge himself whether he, too, is "yet carnal." Babes in Christ "Babes in Christ" who are "yet carnal" need a fuller apprehension of the meaning of the Cross, for in the eternal purpose of God the death of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, included the crucifixion of our "old man" with Him, so that by appropriation "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh" with all its affections and desires.

The same Cross which was and is revealed to unregenerate man as the place where sin was atoned for, and his burden of sin removed by the Blood of the Lamb, is the place where the "carnal" Christian--who may be but a "babe" in Christ, even though regenerate for many years--must obtain deliverance from the domination of the 7 flesh, so that he may walk after the spirit and not "after the flesh" and thus in due season become "spiritual"--a full-grown man in Christ. It is only by an appropriation of death with Christ, encompassing the putting to death of the "doings" of the body, (Rom. 8:13, R.V.M.

Col. 3:5) that a believer can live, walk, and act in and by the Spirit--and thus become a spiritual man. "In the likeness of sinful flesh," (Rom. 8:3) the pure and holy Son of God hung upon the tree, an "offering for sin," and because He died for sin--and to sin in the place of the sinner--God thus condemned forever a life of "sin in the flesh" for all who are truly united to His Son. The believer lives "in the flesh" (2 Cor. 10:3) it is true, in that he is still in his physical body, but once he sees God's own Son "in the likeness of sinful flesh" hanging upon the tree, and knows that in Him he died to sin--he lives "in the flesh" only (Gal. 2:20) insofar as the physical body is concerned--and does not WALK any longer "after the flesh," according to the demands and desires of his body--but "after the spirit"--that is, according to his renewed spirit indwelt by the Spirit of God.

Upon the finished work of the Son of God on the Cross of Calvary--in which the sinner for whom He died was identified with the Substitute who died for him--the redeemed and regenerate believer is called to "reckon" or account himself "dead unto sin," because "our old man was crucified with Him." The Holy Spirit of God, dwelling in his human spirit, can then carry out to its ultimate the Divine purpose--that the "body of sin"--all of sin in the whole of man--may be "destroyed or abolished, as the man on his part steadily and faithfully refuses to "let sin reign" in his mortal body." (Rom. 6:6, 11-13).

The Babe in Christ Jessie Penn-Lewis writes, "The 'babe in Christ' who apprehends this now knows the fuller meaning of being 'Alive unto God'. Walking after the spirit, and by the Spirit, he ceases to fulfill the desires of the flesh but henceforth gives his spirit--indwelt by the Spirit of God--the domination of his entire being. It is as the 'babe in Christ' knows this that the 'flesh' ceases to dominate and have control, and he rises in spirit into real union with the Ascended Lord--alive unto God in Christ Jesus.

It does not mean that he may not again lapse into the walk 'after the flesh,' but as long as he gives his mind to the 'things of the Spirit,' and reckons himself continually 'dead indeed unto sin,' he 'by the Spirit,' steadfastly 'makes to die' the 'doings of the body' and 'walks in newness of life." (Rom. 8:13, R.V.M.) 8 When we realize that the natural or "soulish" man cannot receive or understand the things of the Spirit, (I Cor. 2:14) it is very important that we consider and seek enlightenment as to what so often cause or holds a born-again Christian in the realm of the "Soul" and hinders him from going on to the place where he "walks after the spirit," for "the 'natural' man ('man of soul') receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God . . . because they are spiritually discerned."

The believer who--in apprehending his death with Christ to sin--has been quickened in his spirit by the Spirit and has ceased to walk habitually "after the flesh," as the Spirit of God dwells in his spirit, faces the error of the generally prevailing conception that he has automatically become a "spiritual man" and one who is "entirely sanctified!" Though he has a miraculous revelation of the Cross--as the way to victory over the life after the flesh--and walks in newness of life, victorious over sin as manifested in the "works of the flesh," he is faced with the question "What about the 'soul'--the man himself in his personality, his intellectual and emotional activities?" and "Which power--that of the first Adam through the lower realm of his life, or the Life-giving Spirit of the Last Adam--animates the actions or activities of his soul?"

The Whole Man Renewed "Inordinate activity of the soul, with its power of mind and will," according to Andrew Murray, is the greatest danger the "Church or individual has to dread." Contrary to a superficial understanding of the matter, to be delivered from the domination of the flesh or carnal life as "babes in Christ" does not mean deliverance from "souliness," nor the end of our walk after the life of nature; for death to sin and crucifixion of the "flesh" is but one phase of the work of the Spirit of God to be accomplished in the redeemed man.

The unregenerate man not only has to be redeemed by the life-blood of the Son of Man, but he is admonished to be "transformed by the renewing of (his) mind," actually renewed in every part of his being, spirit, soul and body--translated out of the power of darkness into the Kingdom of God's own Son--by deliverance from not only the power of sin but also the bondage of the "animal-soul-life." "If the first creation was 'fearfully and wonderfully made,' then in truth the re-creation of the creature so utterly sunk into the animal-soul and the animal flesh, and lifted again into the realm of spirit to have spirit-dominion 9 over soul and body, is a wondrous work which only the Triune God could accomplish; the Father giving the Son, the Son giving His life, and the Divine Spirit giving Himself with patience and love to work out the will of the Trinity. ("Soul and Spirit" by Jessie Penn-Lewis.)

Let us consider what the possibilities and evidences are of the Christian being "soulish" when he has ceased to be "carnal" or to live "after the flesh." The believer may be entirely freed from the manifest "works of the flesh," as set forth in Galatians 5:19-21, and yet in his intellect and emotions still be influenced--if not governed--by his soul (psyche or animal-soul) life. That is, though his spirit has been quickened and born again of the Spirit of Life, his intellect and emotions may not yet have been "renewed" and animated by the Holy Spirit being allowed to fully work through the regenerated human spirit.

The "soulish Christian" therefore is one whose emotions and intellect are still governed by the Adamic life and not by the Spirit-controlled human spirit. Fruit of the Flesh or Spirit "Intellectual life" is clearly set forth--both heavenly and soulish--in the Epistle of James, where it is stated that the wisdom which is "not from above" is (1) earthly, (2) soulish (psychikos, "natural" or "animal," i.e., pertaining to the soul according to the marginal notes in the Revised Version) and (3) demoniacal; and produces jealousy, envying, strife

and bitterness.

However, the wisdom which is from above is from the Spirit of God and is characterized by purity, peaceableness, gentleness, mercy and good fruits and partakes of the Divine character to the extent that it is without partiality and without hypocrisy. (James 3:17) In the wisdom which comes from above the absolute absence of self-consciousness, self-opinions, and self-views--which by nature characterize the soulish life--brings peace instead of strife and envy. The intellect of man--unless it be guided and governed by the Spirit of God--cannot "receive" the things of the Spirit, because spiritually only can they be discerned.

For this reason, soulish wisdom in the handling of Divine truths not only fosters division among likewise soulish followers of Christ, but actually facilitates the work of demons in the bringing of disunion and separation, as these powers work upon the soulish element in believers by emphasizing and exaggerating differences "views of truth" instead of magnifying points of union. 10 In brief, the soul-life--influenced by evil, supernatural powers--is the main cause of division and separation among the professing as well as the so-called "true" children of God.

Men can be "governed by soul" through ignorance of spiritual laws, lack of understanding and consecration, even when they have sought and received the gift of the Holy Spirit; and these "soulish" ones always bring separations. In the plan and purpose of Almighty God, however, the law of Christ places love and the unity of the Spirit between believers as the condition of their growth into the "unity of the faith." (Eph. 4:3-13, 15). Knowledge of the Word The other phase of the soulish life is the emotions which proceed from the senses of the body; and though a Christian may be swayed by the emotions of the soul and think it all "spiritual," knowledge of the Bible truths eradicates the idea that any wholly spiritual influence can be created by appeals to the senses.

On this subject Pember graphically states "splendid buildings, gorgeous vestments and picturesque rites for the eye, with sweet odours for the scent and ravishing music for the ear--although they may bewitch one's consciousness with the most agreeable sensation--can penetrate only as far as the soul . . . (and) our spirit . . . does not receive its impressions from the senses, but only from the spirit . . . God's influence commences in the spirit, then lays hold of the emotions and intellect, and lastly begins to curb the body."

Satan's influence on the contrary enters through the senses; lays hold upon the soul; and--wherever possible--gains entrance to the human spirit. How sad it is to see churches filled with nominal worshippers of Christ; who, by their presence, show that within their spirits there is an unconscious cry after God which has never been satisfied; for their soul-life alone is met either in its intellectual phase through the intellectual, soulish presentation of the letter of the Truth, or in the gratification of their sense-life by the soothing music and calming influence of the hour of quiet--all, however, without their being led into real worship of God in spirit and in truth which alone is acceptable to Him.

While these gracious influences are not to be depreciated, they will not "save" the "soul!" There is no doubt but that these "outer" influences may and do draw people within reach of the truth which is read from the Scriptures--even if not preached from the pulpit--and for this purpose do have their value and place; but such influences penetrate only as far as the soul and--devoid of 11 regenerating power--do not reach the human spirit; but are deceptive for they give the person a "form of godliness without the power."

Ineffective Presentation The deception and consequent ineffectiveness of the presentation of the so-called "religion" of Jesus Christ, as thus set forth, places it only on a par with heathen philosophies and cults.

However, in the light of the true, spiritual interpretation of the plan and purpose of Almighty God, it is not a "religion" but a LIFE--the Life of the Son of God lived out by Him in and through those united to Him in Spirit and in Truth. "Religious" men, who are merely "men of soul," as a result of their soulish wisdom, evaluate and relegate the Son of God to a place of equality only with such religious leaders as Mohammed and Confucius; and lecture at length on Christianity as "one of the religions" of the world--instead of impelling men to see the Omnipotent power of God and faithfully bearing witness to the Name of the Son of God as the only Saviour for a lost and dying world.

The appeal to the senses and emotions of the soul only may account for a large percentage of so-called converts who do not "stand," as well as in many instances the exhaustion and eventual "breakdown" of the worker. In this regard it has been suggested that the inordinate exercise of the "soul" contributes to soulishness rather than to spiritual understanding. Would it not be better--and more effective--to walk and talk in the Spirit, to live and move and have our being in God, to the extent that the Spirit quickens the truth spiritually?

God's truth needs not human excitement to invoke His power upon the words that are spoken by Him through yielded lips of clay; but the entrance of such words into the lives of others will bring the desired enlightenment--spiritually discerned--for the Lord of Life has promised "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (John 6:63) Strong-Willed Intellectuals These "intellectual" men, dynamic and strong-willed, exercising dominant personalities and unbroken wills over the consciences and lives of others--the outgrowth of various types of "soul" in men with spirits yet unquickened--who desire to help others to an experience of "regeneration" but who--governed by soul--know nothing of the energizing power of the Spirit of God dwelling in their human spirit and rendering them available to God as His messengers in the salvation of men.

There is still another group of people who--though knowing the Spirit of God indwelling their human spirits--are still "soulish" in a marked degree. It is they who have a mixture in their religious experience of "soul and spirit" and who are satisfied only when they feel the presence of God continually with them in the realm of their self-consciousness. Consequently, due to the fact that they do not understand the life of the spirit and its function in cooperation with God--though the Holy Spirit dwells in them--they are apt to be more often in the realm of the soulish-life than in the realm of the Spirit.

The "soul," we realize, includes not only the intellect and the emotions but also it can be seen from a study of the Scriptures that the soul is the seat of personality in its affections--power of joy or grief, etc. "My soul doth magnify the Lord." (Luke 1:46) "In patience possess ye your souls." (Luke 11:19) "My soul is exceeding sorrowful . . ." (Matt. 26:58) "Beguiling unstable souls." (2 Peter 2:14) "Vexed his righteous soul." (2 Peter 2:8) The idiosyncrasies of the individual can thus be seen to exist in the soul as well as in the physical characteristics of the body.

What Is in the Vessel of Your Soul? The soul in its capacity for love, joy, patience, grief, etc., may be filled with spiritual joy from the Spirit-life of the Second Adam--poured as it were into the vessel of the soul; or it can be filled with a soulish--or sensuous--joy which seeps up into the vessel of the soul from the lower life of the First Adam. The believer, in the latter instance, though indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is "soulish" to the degree in which the animal-soul or sense-realm controls these many capacities of the soul.

If he clings to a soulish joy and lives in the realm of his feelings--in the seat of his self-consciousness--rather than in the spirit or God-consciousness, he will be found among those

believers who continually seek for "spiritual experiences" in the sense-consciousness rather than in the purity of God-conscious realm alone--the regenerated human spirit. It would no doubt be enlightening at this point to consider in what way the spirits of evil, influence or control the soulish life in all its phases.

"If in your hearts you have bitter feelings of envy and rivalry, do not speak boastingly and falsely in defiance of the truth. That is not the wisdom which comes down from above: "it belongs to earth, to the un-spiritual nature 13 (Greek, "psychical") and to evil spirits." (Weymouth's Translation of James 3:14, 15) The Revised Version runs: "This wisdom is not a wisdom that cometh down from above, but is earthly, sensual (i.e., natural--the literal Greek is 'pertaining to the soul'), devilish." ('demoniacal' according to the margin.)

This text, which does not in any way refer to the "works of the flesh," but to the intellectual department of man's being--the soul--rather clearly indicates that evil spirits influence the soulish part of the man just as definitely as the Scriptures state that they influence his fleshly nature. The fact that all bitter feelings of envy and rivalry in connection with the acquisition of wisdom or knowledge are instigated by evil spirit working upon the soulish life and have their inception or origin in hell is startling but little understood by many precious children of God who do not hesitate one moment to acknowledge Satanic influence on generally accepted "gross sin" or any manifestation of the works of the flesh."

However, in the realm of what they consider the highest development of civilization today, they stand aghast in their unwillingness to accept certain statements in the Word of God concerning the "Fall" and the utter sinking of the entire Adamic creation into corruption and death to the degree that even the "imagination" and "thoughts" of man's heart (mental conceptions) were declared by God to be "evil continually," together with the fact that behind this absolute corruption lies the poison of the serpent who obtained entrance through the avenue of the desire for wisdom.

In Union With Christ As the believer becomes more and more "spiritual," he is increasingly united in actual spirit-union with the Lord of Glory and consequently more and more rises above the power of evil spirits, as he becomes better equipped to recognize and resist them. It is necessary first, however, to recognize clearly that the "Fall" was the result of believing the lie of Satan, the fallen archangel, which gave him entrance with a poison which affects every element of man's being.

Through the "Fall" Satan acquired the power of access to every phase of man's tripartite nature--(1) to his fallen spirit which is dead to God and alive and receptive only to the hellish spirits of the world of darkness who are ruled over by the Prince of Darkness; (2) to the soul--including the intellect, imagination, thoughts, will, and affections--which is governed by the nature of the first Adam and is 14 also fallen and corrupt; and (3) to the body which is defenseless and open in every way to the onslaughts of the Evil One.

No wonder John conclusively declared that the "whole world lieth in the evil one." (I John 5:19) It is relatively easy to accept that Satan and his emissaries resist every step of man's deliverance from slavery and thralldom; and in view of the seriousness of the situation, it is helpful to recognize clearly the avenues in the fallen creation which are most open to his power. Ephesians 2:3 unmistakably reveals that the unregenerate man is under the control of Satanic influence, for it states that the "children of wrath" fulfill the desires of the flesh and of the mind, to which, we have been shown, he has access.

Too, it must be realized that though the spirit of the man be quickened into Life by the Spirit of God and his daily life have been delivered from the power of "sin," and the soul must be liberated from its soulishness by the transformation resulting from the continuous renewing of the mind to that desired state of being

where man is able to live experimentally according to the admonition of Paul the Apostle to "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Then and only then in the physical body "closed" to the onslaught of the powers of darkness.

Finding Life in Christ In connection with the "renewing of the mind" in the transformation of the man, Mathew admonishes: "He that findeth his life (psuche or soul-life) shall lose it; and he that loseth his life (psuche or soul-life) for My sake shall find it." (Matt. 10:39, R.V.M.) From the context of this verse, its setting in the verses which precede and follow, they necessity of death to the "soul life" in its emotions as well as intellect and will, is clearly shown--if one would know the life more abundant promised by our Lord.

The dividing asunder of soul and spirit, so far as the emotions are concerned, generally and almost inevitably comes in a clash between the known will of God and the will of loved ones. An instance recorded in the life of Jesus shows that even He had to choose His Father's direction above the desire and suggestion of Mary, His earthly mother, at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. His answer to her suggestion was "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." (John 2:4).

Choosing to be led by the Spirit of God--rather than family ties or affections--means to the natural or soul-affections such suffering and death that it is as a sword piercing the soul; so that in essence of 15 truth it can be said that the "soul" in its affections and will is "lost." When thus transformed by crucifixion in these factors, the liberated soul becomes open or receptive to the inflow of the love of God by and through the Spirit; and enables an individual, who has thus crucified the natural affections of his soul, to love his loved ones no longer for himself--at instigation of his sense-consciousness--but for God, in and through the Spirit.

The "soul" in its personality and capacity remains the same, but it is--to the extent of its natural death--no longer ruled over by the fleshly soul-life of the First Adam, for it is once again in its liberation, subject to the Spirit of God through the rule of the restored, rightly-related human spirit. Unto the Saving of the Soul The next step in the liberation of the soul is the crucifixion of self-love, self-pity, self-interest, and self-preservation--in fact any and all phases of self-centeredness.

"Remember Lot's wife," said Jesus, as He brought to the attention of His followers the natural tendency of the soul-life to not only save its own life, but its "goods" as well; "BUT whosoever shall seek to gain his life (soul) shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life (soul) shall save it alive." (Luke 17:32, 33, R.V.M.) The law of gain in the higher realm of spirit--even as in the realm of natural science--requires loss in order to gain. Any vessel while filled to overflowing with any substance can never contain or hold any other commodity--be it priceless or of no value whatsoever.

The renunciation and crucifixion of the natural soul-life with its clinging to the things of earth is the price required to "gain" the Spirit-life of Christ, not only in union with the human spirit, but extending its influence, rule and reign through the liberated soul to the controlling and liberating of the body. Strange but true, man's attitude to these earthly treasures or "possessions" is a truer indication of "where he lives," and a greater manifestation of the possession or lack of Divine grace, than the "willingness" to sacrifice his physical life.

The "pearl of great price" in the book of Matthew caused the merchant man to sell "all that he had" in order to buy it. (Matt. 13:45, 46). John 12:25 states "He that loveth his life (soul) shall lose it; and he that hateth his life (psuche--soul-life) in this world shall keep it unto life (zoe--the higher life) eternal." However, glorious truth and more glorious realization--the renunciation and crucifixion of the 16 natural, soulish-life

brings with it such an assurance of abundance in God overflowing the vessel of the soul from the seat of God-consciousness--the human spirit restored and rightly related--that the treasures of earth are held so lightly they are easily forsaken in the times of testing which come to all men.

The Knife-Work of the Spirit The Spirit of God, wielding the Word of God as a sharp, two-edged sword, thus penetrates to the innermost recesses of the entire being of man, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, as He ferrets out event he joints and marrow of the soul--mind, will and affections. The man too, however, has his part to do, since he was brought into being by God as a creature of volition, in cooperating and consenting to this "knife-work" of Divinity.

The believer who fully desires to be restored--spirit, soul and body--must first see the necessity of the dividing of the soul and spirit and actively consent to the work being done upon himself. At the same time the will of the believer must be steadily maintained on God's side in the experimental working out of the "dividing," as the "circumstances" of life afford. Even as he reckons himself "dead indeed unto sin" according to Romans 6:11, and consistently refuses to "let sin reign" in his mortal body; so now he further reckons himself dead indeed to the more subtle form of "sin" in his self-life--such as inordinate self-love, self-pity, self-aggrandizement, etc.

Faithfully fulfilling these conditions moment by moment, he constantly and consistently seeks to be faithful to the personal direction of the Spirit of God, within his spirit, and guards against any and all intrusion of the old soul-life, as he seeks to ever be more receptive to the higher life of Christ in his spirit. Not only does he seek to "walk after the spirit" in discerning what is spirit and what is soul, but to understand the laws of the spirit in order that he might in spirit and in truth abundantly live in the Spirit--a "spiritual" man.

In Union With God Fulfilling these conditions, as the Spirit of God leads him, he becomes in truth a new creation--more joyfully and easily walking according to the written Word, as he accepts all circumstances brought to bear upon him daily as being in the providence of God; 17 and apprehends with ever-clearer vision the reality of his death with Christ upon the Cross, in his union with the Risen Lord who is a Life-giving Spirit and with Whom he becomes "one spirit," as his human spirit become literally a channel for the Spirit of Christ to flow out to a needy world.

Be it true experimentally that "ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3) then self-pity, self-protection and self-grasping of the goods of earth--together with the bondage of "My family, My self and My goods"--will have been swallowed up in the victory of the Lord of Glory over the shackles of the First Adam, and your soul--redeemed once more--as an individual and as a "first fruits"--will rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of Glory in the pure Divine life of the Last Adam--the Lord from heaven. 18

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