

# The Nature of Man - Trichotomy Stated and Refuted Part 1

by John Murray

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*The sermon explores the trichotomy of man, emphasizing the distinctions between soul and spirit while reflecting on suffering and devotion in the Christian life.*

**Duration:** 51:07

**Scripture:** Philippians 1:27, Philippians 2:2, Philippians 2:19

**Topics:** "Nature Of Man"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the different aspects of the human personality, specifically the soul and the spirit. They emphasize the importance of wholehearted devotion in serving God and how it can be expressed through the soul or the spirit. The speaker also explores the contrast between the heart and the nomadic heart, and how this distinction is used by socialists to argue for the separation of soul and human. They reference several Bible verses, including Philippians 1:27 and 2:2, to support their points. Overall, the sermon delves into the nature of godly devotion and the role of the soul and spirit in expressing it.

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## Transcript

O Lord our God, we must always rejoice in Thee, that Thou art not as we are, that Thou art holy, Thou art just, Thou art good. We are unholy, unjust, and we bless Thy great and holy name, that the riches of Thy glory, the riches of Thy perfection, Thou hast brought to bear with such efficacy, and for our need, Thou dost raise us from the dungeon on a rock. Thou dost establish our glory, and dost put a new song, and praise and glory be unto Thy name.

Now, in relation to the psychotomic hypothesis, and I mentioned first of all sorrow, for example, in terms of our Lord's undertaking in the days of His breath, nothing had deeper significance for Him than His suffering, not in His human spirit, with greater intensity and effect, and the grief climaxed in the agony of Gethsemane and Calvary. But it was in Gethsemane that our Lord said, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.

And on the eve of death, now is my faith. These are Matthew 26, 38, and John 12, 27. Now the impact would not have the same relevance, if it were not the case, that on another occasion, this kind of grief is referred to His spirit.

John 12, 31, 21, He was troubled in the spirit, and He sighed deeply in His spirit. Mark 8, 12. And obviously, on these two occasions, where the spirit is mentioned, did not have the intensity of His grief in Gethsemane, and in the prospect of Calvary.

Why is grief, which the Lord suggests, of intensity and meaning, in Gethsemane, and upon Calvary? Now, I do feel, is still cautious, even if, in these passages, like John 12, 28, 38, the word soul is used for the personal pronoun, even if it is there used according to His rage for the personal pronoun. Because even then, it would mean that the word soul would be used to denote His personality. When the deepest exercises, the deepest exercises of His spirit are in view, and I don't believe it would comport with the tricotomic view of soul as distinct from spirit.

In tricotomic view of soul as distinct from spirit. To identify His personality with Gethsemane, by the word soul, is, according to the tricotomic view of spirit, the most powerful. And not only do you have this in connection with our Lord, in connection with mere men, you have the same kind of variation in connection with men.

Sometimes the deepest religious grief is referred to the spirit, and other times it is referred to the soul. Acts 17, 16, 2 Peter 2, 8. There are numerous other passages, particularly in the Old Testament, which bear out that contention. Well, under this thing, joy, joy is an imposter.

And to be evident, it simply provides us to suppose that the highest spiritual joy belongs to the human spirit, distinct from it. Take the word of Mary. Soul does magnify.

There you have parallels. Soul does magnify. So, after the pattern of Old Testament usage, you find that very same kind of variation, frequently in the Old Testament, exercises of joy, reserve, indiscriminate, to the soul and to the spirit.

Like Isaiah 26, 9, for the same type of alternative expression. Numerous other things, but we are not going to wait to another aspect, devotion. Christian devotion, dedicated of the soul, as much as we are of the soul.

Now, don't forget our Lord's own definition for hearty devotion. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. Mark 12, 13.

Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. You are familiar with the term for these words, kardia, duke, dian, aulia. Now, we shall more define the sum of the godly devotion in these terms.

The sum of godly devotion, and if the spirit is the present chamber of God, the organ of God's consciousness, then it is that the spirit is not mentioned, not mentioned here or in the parallel text. If the Christ has come, the Christ of the spirit must be, must be enlisted in the highest expression of godly devotion. As a matter of fact, it is not.

Well, I'll just write down a few passages. Hebrews 6, 18 and 19, 4, 32, 14, 2 and 20. Ephesians 6, 6. Philippians 1, 27.

Philippians 2, verses 2, 19 and 20. Now, when you examine these instances, you will find that community of feeling of interest and of purpose, community of feeling interest and purpose in the highest demands of the Christian vocation can be in terms of one spirit or one soul. One spirit or one soul.

And therefore should you do anything wholeheartedly of God's feet, and so it is impossible to escape the conclusion that the temper of devotion, the feet of the most characteristic exercises of the regenerate man, the soul as well as the spirit, the actual evidence cannot be adjusted to the high point. The soul has only a presentative knowledge, a representative knowledge. The soul, that the spirit rather than the soul.

Now, verse 7. The whole personality deals with this. And now, 4. I'm going to deal with the contrast between truth and cause. I'm going to deal with that contrast.

Because this is the main source of truth. The main source of truth is fact. So, there are two cases.

And human. You can see very well that truth is cause. And human is cause.

I don't think there is any datum in superficially or plausibility of the contrast between them. And as you remember, the psychotomic view is antropositively cause. Antropositively cause.

The man is indwelt and controlled by his soul. Cause with the man indwelt and controlled. Equivalent.

The natural man, one hand, because he's only indwelt by his soul. The ritual, on the other hand, because now we need to examine this very carefully. Not simply because there is an erroneous conception of the human nature.

But for various reasons, understand what the meaning of this word pneumatic cause is. Biblical teaching arise from a misunderstanding of this word split. Built in the usage of the New Testament.

This term, you know, is the instance of pneumatic cause. But this word pneumatic cause is frequently in the New Testament. And therefore, if we want to discover what the meaning is, we are caught in that term.

When we examine all the evidence, all the evidence, we shall discover that pneumatic cause, when we characterize a thing, means derived from the Holy Spirit. Or more broadly, derived from God. Supernatural.

When characterizing man, it means indwelt, directed and controlled by the body. So let me give you the evidence. There is one exception.

This is an exception. Pneumatic cause, the neutral tool, refers to the demonic realm, the spiritualities of wickedness. Really, the only instance in the New Testament where it derives its meaning from creative spirit.

Now, of course, the noun pneuma frequently refers to creative spirit of man or angelic spirit. But this is the only instance, I say, that in the New Testament denotations and arguments prove it. Now let us examine some of these instances in the New Testament where the meaning of pneuma demonstrates that to go to Rome, he is very anxious to go to Rome, in order that he might impart some spiritual gift of spiritual charisma pneumatica.

But the thing is that you could not, on the basis of Romans 1 and 11, conclusively determine what the meaning is. 11. You could, of course, 11.

That is a gift. 11. Not on the basis of Romans 1 and 11.

You could, of course, demonstrate from Romans 1 and 11 that it is a gift directed to the edification of the Church. But you couldn't determine precisely what is the derivation of pneumatic charm, qualifying charisma. So you have to go elsewhere in the following instance.

And I just appeal to 1 Corinthians 12, 1 through 12. It's 12, 1 through 12. And here you have an instance in the same kind of context.

The use of this term pneumatic charm. 1 Corinthians 12, 1 begins, But concerning the spiritual things, peri-pneumatikon. Agree.

Pneumatikon. And you are no substantive, so pneumatikon is used there simply. What is the noun that gives Paul's meaning? What is the noun? Well, you just go down to verse 4. And you find there this very term he uses in Romans 1 and 11, namely charisma.

Charismato. And it's perfectly apparent that the noun to be supplied with pneumatikon in verse 1 is charismato. It's about spiritual gifts.

What does he mean by spiritual gifts? Well, the context demonstrates on nine occasions in these twelve verses, he's talking about the Holy Spirit. He refers to the Holy Spirit. Unquestionably the Holy Spirit.

And consequently when he uses pneumatikon in verse 1, which must be construed with charismato in verse 4, very clear. He's talking about gifts. Which are derived from, derived from, he's talking about endowment.

Or the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Romans 1 and 11. Romans 1 and 11.

And you find Paul speaking about spiritual gifts. Charisma pneumatikon. The arrogance.

Oh, a gift bestowed by the Holy Spirit. Both great and feeble. Spell word fee and meal.

We call it fee or pie. And a capital S. That illustrates just the way in which you have to deal with, in the usage of scripture. Well, we're still in Romans.

Take Romans 7.14. Romans 7.14. Romans 7.14. Paul speaks about the law being spiritual. The law is spiritual. Pneumatikon, the same term.

What does it mean? According to trichotomy it would have to mean that the law has particular relation to the human spirit. The law of God derives peculiar relevance to the human spirit. But according to trichotomy itself, it isn't the human spirit that sustains direct relationship to the law of God at all.

The soul, according to trichotomy, is the sphere of moral decision of the soul. The sphere of moral decision and judgment and therefore even on its own family. This passage does not fit.

The meaning of Paul is to take into account which Paul gives of the law of God. The law is holy and just. The law is holy when he says the law is spiritual.

He means that by the, because it is divine, spiritual. It is divine. It is derived from the spirit of God.

The law is just. Well, let us take another. 1 Corinthians 2.13. This is such a peculiar and significant passage because it is in this context, in 1 Corinthians 2.13, that you have the contrary and the spiritual man, the most pertinent and holy trichotomic argument.

Now anything that can be derived from this passage is surely conclusive in connection with our power. Now here Paul uses the expression, combined with the most amazing expression here, pneumatikoist, pneumatikosynchronata. You have the word pneumatikos what? Pneumatikoist, pneumatikosynchronata.

And the meaning is combining spiritual things with spiritual. Combining, there is a difference or a combination. Now what does Paul mean? The meaning is to be derived from the very preceding expression in verse 13 and also from verse 14.

Paul, in verse 13, he speaks of words taught of the spirit. Words and didactois, pneumatists, in contrast with the words of human wisdom. We speak la lumen, notice, vocem didactois antropines sophias trogai, alem didactois pneumatai.

For words taught rather than words derived from human wisdom. See there are the genitives here, antropines sophias, that's the source on the one hand, and pneumatists, that's the source on the other. It is not from that source of human wisdom taught, but from the other source, sophias.

The spirit there is the Holy Spirit. Words taught of the Holy Spirit. And then you go down to verse 14, and you read, this man, sophias antropos, the natural man, does not receive the things of the Spirit of God.

The denotation of pneumatists in verse 13. Because here you have two pneumatists, two theoses. The Spirit of God.

So you see, both before and after, this use of pneumaticus, you have the Holy Spirit conclusively defining the meaning of pneumaticus. Pneumaticus. Conclusively defining the meaning of pneumaticus.

Pneumaticus. Pneumaticus again here. It's clear again.

And therefore it's an adjective derived from the Holy Spirit. The human system. Although I don't need to argue the question.

Absurd interpretation at that particular point. Or is applied at that particular point to pneumaticus. Consequently, when you come to verse 15, and read, he that is spiritual judges all things by the Holy Spirit.

And here pneumaticus, referring to the Holy Spirit, is predicated of a man. It's a variant. It is predicated of words.

And here, of course, is the instance where you have suficat. And it must have an entirely different meaning from that presupposed by psychotomy. But we'll pass on.

The next instance of just trying to look at the first Corinthians, same Ephesians 44 and 46. First Corinthians 15, 44 and 46. Here again you have the contrast.

Between psuchikon and pneumaticon. Referring to death and the resurrection. It is soul, natural body, soma, psuchikon.

It is waste, soma, pneumaticon. Spiritual body. If there is a natural body, soma, psuchikon, there is also a spiritual.

It is soma, pneumaticon. And then you have later down in verse 46, but not first the spiritual, but the natural. So, not first of pneumaticon, but also of psuchikon.

So you have the sustained contrast here between psuchikos, appearing every time in the neutral, of course, psuchikos and pneumaticos. So you have a very interesting passage. That will surely demonstrate the meaning if the evidence here is pertinent.

Why? In connection with this passage, first of all, it should be noted that Paul is dealing with the death of a righteous man and with his resurrection. The wicked, but with the resurrection of the believer. So, when he speaks of his being soul, a natural body, he is referring to the back body of the believer in respect of the believer.

Now, if that is the case, obviously, apparently, in the trichotomic argument, more than one fallacy, of course, this rather patent fallacy in the trichotomic argument, because a believer, a believer is a spiritual person. He is a person indwelt in the spirit. Therefore, on trichotomic premises, it would be very strange, indeed, that a believer should be characterized as psuchikon.

O Lord, our God, Thou art great, and may we have the apprehension of Thy greatness and of Thy majesty at all times, so that our lives may be constantly lived in the apprehension of Thine all-pervasive presence, that we cannot escape from Thy presence nor from Thy spirit. And as we are the participants of that reconciliation which is in Christ Jesus, should Thou grant that the apprehension of Thy presence may be our constant joy, that in Thee we live and move and have our being, that Thou dost direct our paths, that Thou dost hold up our Lord, and in the joy of the reconciliation which Christ has accomplished, may we rejoice that Thou dost overcome our iniquities and that Thou dost accomplish in us the good pleasure of Thy will, all in Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen.

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