

# BODY, SOUL AND SPIRIT

by James P. Dawson

One question that has intrigued man is "What differences exist between the body, soul and spirit. The body is obviously what one sees, the physical biological body, but what is the soul and the spirit. Are they different or just two names for the same thing? **I Thessalonians (505)** states:

**"May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I Thessalonians 5:23.**

This implies that the three, body, soul and spirit, are separate distinct entities. However, many people believe that the body and the soul are the same, and they use the following verse in **Isaiah (506)** as proof text.

**"But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over. Isaiah 51:23.**

In contrast, both **Isaiah (507)** and **Matthew (508)** say that they are separate entities.

**"And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day; And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standard bearer fainteth." Isaiah 10:17-18.**

**"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matthew 10:28.**

My opinion is that the body is the physical biological housing for the soul and the spirit. The soul, our personality and intellect, reflects our emotions and actions.

## Body - Soul

The body is considered as the temple of God and contains the soul and spirit, **(509)** like the Jewish temple housed the Holy of Hollies where God was. Like the temple, the body can be destroyed, **(510)** but one should treat the body as a holy thing, a gift from God.

The question of what happens to the body after death is also debated. The fact that the body decays is well known and the Scripture states **(511)** that He made us from the earth and to the earth we will return. If the body returns to dust or ashes, then it could be scattered. How, then, can the graves open and the bodies arise, or the sea give up it's dead? The body is composed of molecules that have come from the meat and vegetables that you have ingested. The earth recycles the waste material and the molecules reenter the food chain. Then in reality the body is composed of many molecules that may have once been in other animals or humans. In other words your physical body is not a unique set of molecules. Then how can the body be resurrected? The resurrected body must be the glorious body promised by the Lord. **(512)**

**"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." I Corinthians 15:52-52.**

If the body is not a unique entity, then what about the soul? It would appear that the soul is a totally unique and ageless entity. Ageless meaning this life, the emotions, the personality. At my age I can look back on my youth, my middle years and these later years. I do not feel that I am aging in my mind like my body is aging. My thoughts are still as they were in my youth, but the body will not perform as it once did. Mentally I still feel young. This is what I mean by ageless. Then what happens to ones soul upon death? When Jesus was on the cross, he told one thief that "this day you will be with me in Paradise. **(513)** The thief's body certainly would not be in paradise. Christ must have meant the soul, which is the unique individual. The word for paradise is not the same word that is translated heaven. The Scriptures imply that we will not be in heaven immediately upon death, but we will be in paradise. Revelation **(514)** says that God gave the Tribulation Saints the robes of saints, but they were under the throne. Paul looked into the third heaven **(515)** and implied that this is paradise. Then are there many levels in heaven? The Catholic church considers one to be purgatory, but Scripture does not verify this. Purgatory certainly would not be paradise, if it were, why would one want prayers to leave it? Based on sevens being the number for perfection (see **Sevens**) I like to think there are seven levels to heaven with God being in the seventh heaven. It should not be too long before I will know for sure. In any event, your soul, which is uniquely you, will live for eternity. You can make the choice about where your soul will reside for eternity, heaven or hell.

## Body - Spirit

Daniel [\(516\)](#) indicates that the body and the spirit are separate entities, the spirit residing in the body in the same way as the soul resides in the body.

**"I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me." [Daniel 7:15](#).**

Christ further defines the spirit [\(517\)](#) and indicates the separation of the body and spirit is based on the righteousness given us by Christ.

**"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." [Romans 8:10](#).**

**"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." [Romans 8:23](#).**

**"For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed," [I Corinthians 5:3](#).**

**There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. [I Corinthians 7:34](#).**

**For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. [I Corinthians 12:13](#).**

**There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; [Ephesians 4:4](#).**

**For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. [James 2:26](#).**

If one accepts the gift of salvation [\(518\)](#) then Christ has paid the price of your sins and His Spirit has joined your spirit. [\(519\)](#)

**"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." [I Corinthians 6:20](#).**

## Soul - Spirit

There is also a distinct difference between the soul and the spirit. [\(520\)](#)

**"With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." [Isaiah 26:9](#).**

**"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." [I Corinthians 15:45](#).**

**"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." [Hebrews 4:12](#).**

It appears that the difference is the spirit of God that dwells within the believer. [\(521\)](#)

Ones personality reflects the soul while the conscience reflects the spirit. The spirit strives for the good things of the Lord, while the soul is greatly influenced by the world. [\(522\)](#)

**"Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles." [Matthew 12:18](#).**

**"And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." [1 Corinthians 15:45](#).**

**And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. [1 Samuel 1:15](#).**

**Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. [Job 7:11](#).**

**Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. [Isaiah 42:1](#).**

**Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. [Matthew 12:18](#).**

While on this earth one is all three, a body, a soul and a spirit. The body is not unique and is mortal, the soul is totally unique and a spirit, and the spirit is from God, righteous. The body and the spirit are not separable except by God. The spirit is placed in us by God and only God can remove it. [\(523\)](#)

**And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. [Matthew 10:28](#).**

Upon death "we give up this mortal body and put on the immortal." Our soul and spirit enter paradise with Christ. If we are believers the soul and the spirit becomes one, probably at the wedding feast when the Bride, the church, and the Bridegroom, Christ are joined. We will have truly become the "sons of God." I think this is why God puts such a high value on marriage.

**For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. [1 Corinthians 15:53-54](#)**

## **Body - Soul - Spirit**

The Scriptures indicate that the body, soul and spirit are separate entities. The body is entirely composed of this world. The soul is spiritual, but greatly influenced and can be dominated by this world. The Spirit is of God only. The following Scripture applies.

**And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. [1 Thessalonians. 5:23](#).**

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(505) **I Thessalonians 5:23.** And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. [Return](#)

(506) **Isaiah 51:23.** "But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over." [Return](#)

(507) **Isaiah 10:17-18.** "And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day; And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standard bearer fainteth." [Return](#)

(508) **Matthew 10:28.** "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." [Return](#)

(509) **I Corinthians 6:19** What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? [Return](#)

(510) **Matthew 10:28.** And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. [Return](#)

(511) **Ecclesiastes 12:7** Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. [Return](#)

(512) **I Corinthians 15:52-54.** In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. [Return](#)

(513) **Luke 23:43.** And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. [Return](#)

(514) **Revelation 7:13-14.** And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. [Return](#)

(515) **II Corinthians 12:2-4.** I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.

And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. [Return](#)

(516) **Daniel 7:15.** "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me." [Return](#)

(517) **Romans 8:10.** "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." [Return](#)

(518) **Ephesians 2:8-9.** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. [Return](#)

(519) **I Corinthians 6:20.** For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. [Return](#)

(520) **Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

**Isaiah 26:9** With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

**I Corinthians 15:45.** And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. [Return](#)

(521) **Isaiah 42:1.** Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. [Return](#)

(522) **Matthew 12:18** Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

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