



III. THE NATURE OF MAN

A. Understanding the Nature of God

1. God is three persons in one Godhead.
 - a. God, the Father
 - b. God, the Son
 - c. God, the Holy Ghost
2. Each of these persons is identifiable as God.

B. Understanding the Nature of Man

1. Simply put, man is three parts, but one being (1 Thessalonians 5:23).
 - a. Spirit
 - b. Soul
 - c. Body
2. Each part of man is associative with a person of the Godhead.
 - a. Man's spirit is the most obvious and associates with the Spirit of God. **Both are the unseen communicators.**
 - b. Man's soul is more closely connected to the Father. **Both are the unseen decision makers and originators of plans, thoughts, and ideas.**
 - c. Man's body is most closely associated with the Son of God. **Both serve as that part or person which can be seen and which performs the action.**
3. In *God's Answers to Man's Questions*, Alban Douglas described the triune nature of man as follows (see page 104):
 - a. The spirit of man gives man God-consciousness—the ability to communicate with God.
 - b. The soul of man gives man self-consciousness—the ability to be a person or have personality.
 - c. The body of man gives man world-consciousness—the ability through the senses to understand.

C. The Spirit of Man

1. The source of man's spirit
 - a. At the creation of man, God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life (Genesis 2:7).
 - b. Job described it when he said, "All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils" (Job 27:3).
 - c. Elihu said, "there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8). He later ascribed the spirit to God when he said, "if he [God] gather unto himself his spirit and his breath" (Job 34:14).
 - d. Zechariah said of God that He "formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zechariah 12:1).



2. The purpose of man's spirit
 - a. Enlightenment—God put a spirit in man to act as a candle to give light upon the inward parts of man (Proverbs 20:27). This truth, albeit, in different terms is also taught in Psalm 18:28. See also Psalm 77:6.
 - b. Communication
 - (1) In man communing with and seeking after God (Isaiah 26:9)
 - (2) In God communing with man (Romans 8:16)
3. The problem with man's spirit
 - a. This is where we typically affirm two truths concerning the fall of man that may not be as provable as we assume them to be.
 - (1) The sin of Adam and Eve caused their spirits to die.
 - (2) From that point forward, man is born with a dead spirit.
 - b. Perhaps a reconsideration of these truths is in order.
 - (1) It is true that something in man died at the entrance of sin.
 - a) God promised that it would happen (Genesis 2:17).
 - b) The scripture clearly sets forth that prior to salvation, we “were dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1; see also Ephesians 2:5; Ephesians 5:14; Colossians 2:13).
 - c) The initial death brought by sin is spiritual, but set forth in motion the physical death to follow (Romans 5:12, 21; Romans 6:16, 23; Romans 7:13; 1 Corinthians 15:56; James 1:15).
 - (2) It is true that something passed to all men through Adam's sin.
 - a) Sin entered into the world by one man and death by sin. Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Romans 5:12).
 - b) Through the offence of one many are dead (Romans 5:15).
 - c) In Adam, all die (1 Corinthians 15:22).
 - (3) It is not quite as clear whether it was the soul or the spirit that died in man at the entrance of sin.
 - (4) Furthermore, the testimony of the apostle Paul seems to cast some uncertainty upon our understanding of when man's spirit or soul dies (Romans 7:9).
 - a) He was alive without the law once.
 - b) When the commandment came, sin revived, and he died.
4. The future of man's spirit
 - a. Its departure at death
 - (1) The word *ghost* is another word for the *spirit* of man, and the Bible often identifies the departure of the ghost as the death of man (Genesis 25:8, 17; Genesis 35:29; Job 3:11).
 - (2) The day of death is associated with man's inability to retain the spirit (Ecclesiastes 8:8).
 - (3) The body without the spirit is dead (James 2:26).
 - b. Its abode with the Lord—saved or lost, when a man dies, his spirit
 - a) Goes upward (Ecclesiastes 3:21)
 - b) Returns unto God who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7)



D. The Soul of Man

1. The source of man's soul—At creation, there was an empty body that lay lifeless until the spirit entered through God's breath and, at that point, man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7).
2. The purpose of man's soul
 - a. As far as eternity, the soul of man is that part of man which most closely identifies who he is. In fact, all throughout scripture, the word *soul* is used to depict the entire being.
 - b. At times, it seems as though the words soul and spirit bear some overlap, but they should not be mistaken as being one and the same (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12).
 - c. One telling association in scripture is the connection between the soul and the belly (Psalm 31:9; Psalm 44:25; Proverbs 13:25).
 - d. Apparently, the soul is the innermost part of man's being and as such is the seat of various thoughts and ideas, such as:
 - (1) Abhorring (Leviticus 26:15)
 - (2) Discouragement (Numbers 21:4)
 - (3) Seeking (Deuteronomy 4:29)
 - (4) Love (Deuteronomy 6:5)
 - (5) Lust (Deuteronomy 12:15)
 - (6) Longing (Deuteronomy 12:20)
 - (7) Bitterness (1 Samuel 1:10)
 - (8) Grief (1 Samuel 30:6)
 - (9) Choosing (Job 7:15)
 - (10) Weariness (Job 10:1)
 - (11) Waiting (Psalm 33:20)
 - (12) Joy (Psalm 35:9)
 - (13) Humility (Psalm 35:13)
 - (14) Trust (Psalm 57:1)
 - (15) Knowledge (Psalm 139:14; Proverbs 19:2)
 - (16) Etc.
 - e. Note: While not connected to the purpose of the soul, it should be considered that the Bible teaches some unique truths concerning the appearance or features of the soul (see Luke 16).
 - (1) The soul has eyes (Luke 16:23).
 - (2) The soul has a voice (Luke 16:24).
 - (3) The soul has consciousness and memory (Luke 16:24-25, 27-28).
 - (4) The soul has a finger (Luke 16:24).
 - (5) The soul has a tongue (Luke 16:24).
3. The problem with man's soul
 - a. *See notes above about the effects of sin upon the spirit.*
 - b. Understanding the truth about the emphasis of a man's soul in relation to his identity sheds light on other statements concerning man's need for redemption (1 Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 2:5, 8-9; Hebrews 10:39; James 1:21; 1 Peter 1:18; Revelation 1:5; Revelation 5:9).



4. The future of man's soul
 - a. Its departure at death—The soul is directly associated to man's life (Genesis 2:7) and the departure of the soul is said to happen at death (Genesis 35:18; see also 1 Kings 17:21-22).
 - b. Its eternal abode
 - (1) The soul of man is the part of man that will dwell in one of two places at death. It is the part of man that makes a decision either to trust Christ as Saviour or to reject Him.
 - (2) For the saved
 - a) The apostle Paul said of his soul, "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8).
 - b) After all, the Bible declares that it is the soul of man that is saved (1 Peter 1:9).
 - (3) For the lost
 - a) The soul of a lost person will spend an eternity in hell and the lake of fire.
 - b) This truth can be plainly seen in the story of the rich man and Lazarus.
 - c) The Bible tells us that the rich man died, and was buried, and "in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments" (Luke 16:23).

E. The Body of Man

1. The source of man's body
 - a. At the initial creation, the Lord formed man's body from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7; see Genesis 3:19; Genesis 18:27; Job 34:15; Psalm 103:14; Psalm 104:29; Ecclesiastes 3:20; Ecclesiastes 12:7) and the woman's from man's rib (Genesis 2:22).
 - b. Thereafter, the Lord formed the body in the womb of the mother (Job 31:15; Psalm 71:6; Psalm 139:13-14; Ecclesiastes 11:5).
2. The purpose of man's body
 - a. The body serves as man's earthly house (2 Corinthians 5:1) and is identified as an earthen vessel (2 Corinthians 4:7).
 - b. Once saved, the body also serves as the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19).
3. The problem with man's body—As referenced in some of the above verses, man's body is corruptible and the process of death has already begun. Solomon explained the decline of the body as "the evil days" and offered a vivid description of its degradation (Ecclesiastes 12:1-7).
4. The future of man's body
 - a. Saved or lost, man's body is corruptible (Romans 1:23) and gives way to corruption (John 11:39).
 - b. The saved are promised that this body will be raised or changed to be fashioned like unto the Lord's glorious and incorruptible body (1 Corinthians 15:35-58; Philippians 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).