



revealed to us in Scripture. That is being “spiritually minded” (Romans 8:6). It is not enough to simply live by our feelings. That is allowing our inner focus to be “sensual” (or “soulish”) rather than “spiritual.”

When this distinction is understood, Paul’s prayer in First Thessalonians 5:23 becomes easi-

er to understand. It is a prayer that the saints in Thessalonica will submit all aspects of their being to the Lord. A life of obedience and self-control yields our body to the Lord’s preservation of it blameless at His coming. Directing our emotions and sensations towards wholesome blameless attitudes and desires yields the soul to the Lord’s preservation of it on the Day of Judgment. Finally, setting our minds on the things revealed by the Spirit of God (Romans 8:5) and aspiring towards things which are heavenly and “spiritual” in nature yields the spirit to the Lord’s preservation it blameless as well. When all parts of our makeup are in submission to God in Christ, the Lord’s coming with bring about the preservation of the inner man unto a new and glorious body blameless before Him in the age to come.



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We are so glad that you joined us today.
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● Let us know if you have any questions.

ISSUE

11.49

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

December 6
2009



Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Curtis Carwile

“Spirit, Soul, and Body”

by Kyle Pope

First Thessalonians 5:23 reads, “**Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**” In this text Paul, through the Holy Spirit, speaks of three parts of makeup of a human being: the spirit, soul, and body. What is the distinction is between these three parts of man?

The term “body” is simple enough to understand. It is the external, visible, and material part of a human being. This was fashioned by God from dust (Genesis 2:7a) and when a person dies this part of our being returns to dust (Genesis 3:19; Job 34:15; Psalm 104:29; Ecclesiastes 3:20; 12:7). What is more difficult for us to distinguish concerns those

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things which are internal, unseen, and non-material in nature.

When God created human beings He breathed into this body of dust an inner person which is the part of man which gives him life (Genesis 2:7b). Without this inner, unseen and non-material part of a human being a person is dead (James 2:26). The very defini-

tion of death is the separation of the spirit from the body (James 2:26; Ecclesiastes 12:7).

This inner part of a human being is called a number of different things in the Bible. In the Hebrew Old Testament it was called either the *nephesh* (usually translated “soul”) which refers to one’s life, breath, and seat of appetites, or the *ruach* (usually translated “spirit”) referring also to one’s life, breath, the wind, and even someone’s courage or disposition. In the New Testament these words are matched with Greek words of the same basic meaning, *psyche* is the “soul” and *pneuma* is the “spirit.”

As these words are used in Scripture, most often they are used to mean the same thing—the inner part of a person that gives them life and lives on after death. Both the soul and spirit are said to live on beyond this life (Matthew 10:28; Revelation 20:4; James 2:26; Ecclesiastes 12:7). Occasionally, Scripture makes a slight distinction between the soul and spirit, as seen in First Thessalonians 5:23 and Hebrews 4:12 which says, **“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”** This is not teaching that a person has two inner entities—one a soul and the other a spirit. Instead it is referring to different

aspects (or dispositions) of the same inner being. The “soul” is the aspect of the inner man which is inclined towards sensation and feeling, while the “spirit” is that aspect of the inner man which looks towards and accepts the things of God.

This distinction is seen in the way that two adjectives taken from the Greek words are used. One who is *pneumatikos*, usual translated “spiritual,” accepts the teachings of God and focuses on heaven (Romans 8:6; 1 Corinthians 3:1), while one who is *psychikos*, usually translated “sensual” or “natural” (literally “soulish”) focuses on earthly things involving feeling and sensation. The one who is “soulish” is said to be earthly (James 3:15), not having the spirit (Jude 19), because they refuse to receive the things of the spirit (1 Corinthians 2:14). This is similar to the description of the “fleshly” (or “carnal”) person (Romans 8:5-8), but a “soulish” individual may address aspects of their inner man, but more on the basis of what they “feel is right” rather than what God has revealed.

This distinction is seen also in the application of these words to the physical body itself. Our present physical body is described as a

“soulish” (NKJV “natural”) body. That is, it is alive and animated by the inner man. On the other hand, the resurrection body will be “spiritual” (1 Corinthians 15:44-46). That is not speaking of the disembodied spirit. Rather, the resurrection body will be animated by an inner man directed toward and fashioned after the **“Father of Spirits”**—God (Hebrews 12:9).

Again, Scripture does not always make a distinction between the “soul” and the “spirit,” but when it does it addresses the focus of a person’s disposition. The Christian must live his or her life focusing on the things of God as they are

