

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
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The Make-up of "Man"—An Excursus **Selected Passages**

Keywords: Spiritual Gifts, Tongues, Anthropology, Spirit, Soul, Body

PowerPoint Presentation included: NONE

SermonAudio Blurb: In this excursus Pastor Henry tries to clarify how God made man. This is done through examining the various ways the bible describes aspects of man such as a soul, spirit, body and such. The goal is to see that the bible does not separate man into parts but sees him as a whole. This is to prepare the congregation to understand Paul's point in 1 Corinthians 14 about the value of tongues without an interpreter.

I. Introduction.

- A. The need for this sermon.
 - 1. Theology helps our interpretation when it is done well.
 - 2. But poor theology hinders it.
- B. This sermon is simply to set up the next sermon.
- C. Today I want to try to give a basic, sound theology of how we, as human are made. What makes us "human."
- D. The way I will do this is try to give you a broad summary of the various terms the bible uses related to us and then deal with how the bible views us. Specifically, are we a body and soul or a body, soul and spirit? And how should we understand that?
- E. The material is taken from my Systematic Theology I developed several years ago.
 - 1. As a result this will come across differently and even the notes will be different.
 - 2. I warn you that there is Hebrew and Greek in this message as well. Do not let it distract you, I use it more for myself than for you, though some may find it helpful. The reason is that we have different translations and they will translate terms differently.
 - 3. I hope in a small way you will come away with an appreciation on how theology should be developed and studied.

II. Biblical Aspects of Man.

Preached on February 16, 2014

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- A. The term "aspect" is used on purpose. It is not speaking of parts, which can be separated, but of a different perspective, or way of looking at something. An example would be the viewing of a statue from various aspects, or positions to get a fuller sense of what it is and looks like.
- B. "Whether it be an ancient Greek dualism, or a modern behavioristic monism, we need to be on our guard against reading a non-biblical into our understanding of Scripture" (Erickson, p. 520)
1. This Greek dualism comes from Plato who argued that there are two realities the material and immaterial.
 2. In addition there becomes an emphasis that the immaterial, or spiritual, is better. This is simply false and contrary to the bible but it permeates the Church.
- C. בָּשָׂר (basar)
1. 'Flesh' in the sense of meaning 'meat.' Or 'Body' in a more extended sense, referring to the physical aspect of humans.
 2. It can be used to refer to a blood or marital relationship.
 3. It refers indirectly to another aspect of humanity. This is the key one for our purposes.
 - a. It can refer to the inner attitude of the person.
 - (1) Psalm 63:1 A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, Thou art my God; I shall seek Thee earnestly; My soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee, In a dry and weary land where there is no water.
 - (2) Note the parallelism.
 - b. It also refers to the innate frailty and impotence of humanity.
 - (1) 2 Chronicles 32:8 "With him is *only* an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles." And the people relied on the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.
 - (2) Psalm 56:4 In God, whose word I praise, In God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. What can *mere man* do to me?

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4. The significance of this term with regards to anthropology (biblical doctrine of man) is how it is consistently used to describe man in a state of weakness and inability.
5. The issue here is what is nothing more than Greek dualism that is often found in many theologies and explanations regarding the presence of sin in man.
 - a. This was very, very prominent in the early church and gave rise to the Monastic movement. Paul dealt with early aspects of this thought in Colossians 2:20-23.
 - b. The book of 1 John is filled with indications that it was a problem with those to whom he was writing (the whole idea that you can be doing one thing physically, such as hating your brother, but 'spiritually' you are fine).
 - c. Christians often fall into this error when they try to simply deny their physical bodies something in an effort to root out sin, missing the whole point, the "flesh" that is sinful and fallen is not resident in the cells and flesh of the body.

D. *σάρξ (sarx)*.

1. As the muscular part that covers the bones of a human or animal body flesh. Or by synecdoche, the physical body as a whole body, flesh. Rarely it means a body. (adapted from Friberg's Lexicon)
2. As a connotation of creaturely weakness. Here it is related to *basar* in the Old Testament.
 - a. John 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.
 - b. 1 Peter 1:24 For, "All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off,
3. Then there are key places in the New Testament where it is used in relation to sin.
 - a. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin. (Rom 7:25)
 - b. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the

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Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another,
so that you may not do the things that you please. (Gal 5:16-17)

- c. When used in this manner (which is very common) it is not talking about the body. Rather the idea is the person being apart from God in sin.
- d. “The self-reliant attitude of the man who puts his trust in his own strength, and in that which is controllable by him.” (Bultmann, *Theology of the NT* 1:240)
- e. "The outlook of the flesh is the outlook oriented towards the self, that which pursues its own ends in self-sufficient independence of God." (From Thiselton's contribution to *NIDNTT*, s.v. "Flesh," by Seebass and Thiselton, 1:678-80)
- f. Though when one trusts in Jesus Christ for salvation from God's wrath and for forgiveness the power of sin is broken we are not yet delivered from the presence of sin. That what remains is called "the flesh." It is a hangover from our enslavement to sin.
- g. Therefore, when we say that a believer is “walking in the flesh” we are saying that he is conducting himself without reliance upon God and is not concerning himself to live in such a way that honors God. Rather, at the center of his thoughts, motives and actions is self for the purpose of pleasing self.

E. נֶפֶשׁ (*nephesh*).

- 1. “A living being, a being that possesses life, as distinguished from an inanimate object.”
- 2. "Soul, the seat of appetite, emotion, and the like, with no implication of a separate entity, or of the possibility of separate existence:"
 - a. Job 33:20 So that his life loathes bread, And his soul favorite food. [note the parallel structure making life and soul synonymous.]
 - b. Psalm 86:4 Make glad the soul of Thy servant, For to Thee, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
- 3. "The seat of will and moral action, especially when joined with [heart]."

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- a. Deuteronomy 6:5 "And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
 - b. Deuteronomy 30:6 "Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.
4. When you read the word "soul" you should understand that it is not a part of a person. It is what makes us human. Think of it this way. The bible does not teach that we have a *nephesh* but that man is a *nephesh*, he lives as a *nephesh*.
 5. Meanings (adapted from Burton, *Spirit, Soul, and Flesh* and Friberg's Lexicon).
- F. ψυχή (*psuche*).
1. It is a many-sided word whose meaning is derived from the context.
 2. It is often thought of as "soul" but that is too simplistic. Frankly it can be a pain to translate.
 3. It can refer to simply being alive, that quality that means "life." But it also can refer to life on the earth as opposed eternal, supernatural life.
 - a. Matthew 6:25 "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?"
 4. "As distinguished from the physical body of man and able to exist separately from it"
 - a. Matthew 10:28 "And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.
 5. "As a constituent element of man's nature, the seat of vitality, thought, emotion, will; the human mind in the larger sense of the word; most frequently with special reference to its religious capacities and experiences."

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- a. Matthew 22:37 And He said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'
 - b. Hebrews 12:3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.
6. However, its most common meaning is to denote a human being.
 7. Here is the challenge though. It is closed connected with the term *nephesh* in the Old Testament but with a difference. *nephesh* speaks of the person in totality, it doesn't exist separately from the body; whereas *psuche* is also that aspect that makes a person alive but it continues on after death.
- G. רוּחַ (*ruah*).
1. Can mean air in motion or of breath, signifying life. Often translated as "spirit."
 2. More importantly it is used to refer to the most important aspect of being human, the mental rather than the physical.
 - a. Disposition of mind or attitude.
 - (1) **Proverbs 16:32** He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.
 - b. Something that is divinely caused.
 - (1) **Job 10:12** 'Thou hast granted me life and lovingkindness; And Thy care has preserved my spirit.
 - (2) **Ezekiel 11:19** "And I shall give them one heart, and shall put a new spirit within them. And I shall take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,
 3. When the Bible uses this term in relation to man it is often used of our relationship with God.
- H. πνεῦμα (*pneuma*).
1. Also can mean air or wind. Usually translated as "spirit."
 2. But it also can refer to that aspect of a person that makes him alive.

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- a. Matthew 27:50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.
 - b. James 2:26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.
3. “As the seat of emotion and will, especially of the moral and religious life, including thought as concerned with religion.”
- a. John 11:33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her, also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit, and was troubled,
 - b. Romans 12:11 not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;
4. “The spirit of man separated from the body after death.”
5. It is difficult to make a separation between "soul" and "spirit" and really there should not be one. The key to this term is that it explains man in his relation and connection to the spiritual realm.
6. "From a superficial point of view flesh and spirit are antithetical. In Greek thought, they represented the tangible and the intangible, the base and the lofty, the contaminated and the pure, the bound and the free. . . . Paul's contrast was between man as a human being seeking to live a godless life, and man as a child of God seeking fellowship with Him. 'The contrast between "flesh" and "Spirit," therefore, is not the contrast between matter and spirit; it is a contrast between human nature, of which sin has taken possession, and the Spirit of God.' . . . Spirit stands for the divine life and power as manifested to men. . . . The flesh stands for the weakness and frailty of man which entertains evil and so separates from God and leads to death. . . . Paul . . . is . . . being practical and ethical, in the true Hebrew tradition" (Stacy, *The Pauline View of Man*, pp. 174-78).
- I. To complicate this all a bit more we also have the term "heart".
1. In the Old Testament it can mean emotions, but only rarely. The heart is where our emotions, decisions, judgments, desires, hopes, dreams, religious and moral conduct all flow.
 2. In the New Testament the meaning is the same. The New Testament uses *kardia* to refer to the whole inner essence of man. It is the mission control

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center and out of the heart flows all thoughts, intentions, dreams, desires, expressions of the will, emotions, etc.

3. This is what makes verses such as Jeremiah 17:9-10 so devastating.
4. "The most significant instances of *kardia* in the New Testament occur in those passage which speak of man's standing before God. . . . It is the seat of doubt and hardness as well as of faith and obedience." (*NIDNTT*, s.v. "Heart," by T. Sorg, 2:182-83)

J. νοῦς (*nous*).

1. Usually translated as mind.
2. In the New Testament this term is often closely connected to *kardia* (heart).
3. As the faculty of intelligence understanding, mind, intellect.
 - a. Luke 24:45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,
4. As the faculty of moral perception (practical) reason, insight, awareness.
 - a. Romans 7:25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.
5. As the total inner orientation or moral attitude way of thinking, mind (set), disposition.
 - a. Romans 1:28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,
 - b. Ephesians 4:22-23 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,
 - c. Titus 1:15 To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.

K. There are other terms as well I won't take you through.

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III. Conclusion.

- A. This is only part one. But I want to try to help you see where I am taking you.
- B. How do you understand how you are made? Do you think of yourself as a body and a soul and a spirit? Are these distinct and separate? Or are they something else.
- C. Add to this what do you do with passages that refer to the "outer man" and the "inner man?"
- D. More importantly how does the bible view you?
- E. My hope is that you are beginning to appreciate first the abundance of ways God describes us. But also the subtlety in it all. And when you consider what it means to be human and how, as a human we interact with each other and God, you should be careful how you use your terms.
- F. To sum up what we learned today is that the bible does not look at us, as people, in some vague or abstract manner. It views us in light of God as our Creator.
 - 1. It reveals our uniqueness in this creation but also our weakness and our dependence upon our Maker.
 - 2. We are examined under His gaze and with that comes awareness of our sin and His judgment. We learn of wrath and how we are worthy of that wrath for we do not worship or delight in Him, our Maker and Sustainer.
 - 3. But we are also revealed in light of His mercy. How He made a way that we could be truly whole again through His Son.
- G. Man is to ever and always be viewed in relation to God. As Berkouwer rightly states,

“We see man . . . described in a striking manner in Psalm 139, where the permanence of this relation [man in relation to God’s wrath and mercy] is expressed quite clearly. The writer’s attention is directed to man’s life, but this does not lead him to see all sorts of human relations Man’s conception and birth are viewed in a special light. The actualities of man’s humanness are not described neutrally and objectively, but always in their unbreakable relationship with the divine ‘Thou.’ ‘Thou didst form my inward parts: thou didst cover me in my mother’s womb. I will give thanks unto thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:

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wonderful are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well. My frame was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see mine unformed substance, and in thy book they were all written' (Ps. 139:13-16 cf. Job 10:8-12).

This passage is completely concerned with man, but in this relation; concerned with man's 'horizontal' life, but only in and through this 'vertical' dimension: God's miracle, His eyes, His book, His nearness, His knowledge and searching" (G. C. Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God*, pp. 196-97).

Small Group Questions

- What challenges are raised in this sermon for you personally?
- I really don't have any other questions due to the topic. Do try to discuss it and work through the large amount of information given.