

## LESSON 13

### THE 3-FOLD NATURE OF MAN PART 1

#### Required Bible Reading:

Thessalonians 5:23	Hebrews 4:12	John chapters 1 & 3
Romans 2:28-29	1 Corinthians 14	John 4:24
Luke 16:19-31	Ezekiel 36:26-27	2 Corinthians 4:16
Ecclesiastes 12:7	1 Corinthians 2:11; 6:20	
Genesis 1:26-28		

This lesson is an introduction into the make-up of man in all his three parts. This subject is vitally important to a proper understanding of God's Word and our relationship with Him. The subject of man's 3-fold nature has been misrepresented by many well meaning Bible teachers and by many not so well meaning people in the world. The Bible is very clear, though on the subject.

Man was created in the likeness and image of God, **Genesis 1:26-28**, and just as God is a 3-part being, so are we. The three parts that makeup man are **spirit, soul, and body**.

In **1 Thessalonians 5:23**, Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit wrote "...I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." If man was not made up of a 3 part nature, Paul would not have said what he did. In **Hebrews 4:12** it says, "*For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul, and spirit and of the joints and marrow, ...*" (the body). If these can be divided, then they are not all one in the same. Man is spirit, soul and body. You will find as we go further in this study and as you develop and mature in your own life, that the Word of God is the only thing that can separate the spirit and the soul of man.

Let's define man's 3-fold nature and begin to look at it a little further. We can understand easily and without argument that it is with our body that we contact the physical material world around us. The body deals in the physical realm. It is the spirit of man that contacts God, for God is a Spirit. Only a spirit could contact a spirit. We see that with the body we contact the physical realm and with the spirit we contact the spiritual realm; what then is left? The mental realm – so with our soul we contact the intellectual realm as well as the emotional. Let us lay it out a little clearer.

1. **Spirit** – The part of man which deals with the spiritual realm, the part of man that knows God, the real you on the inside.
2. **Soul** – The part of man which deals with the mental and emotional realm. Man's mind, will and emotions, the part of man that reasons and thinks.
3. **Body** – The part of man that deals with the physical realm. The house or earth suit that we live in.

I want you to begin thinking in a new light. Don't just think of yourself as a physical being. Think of yourself as a spirit who possesses a soul and lives in a body.

Paul listed them in an order of some importance for a reason. Because we live in a physical material world our concept is of everything physical and tangible. **2 Corinthians 4:18** says “...*the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*” The spiritual realm is just as real as the natural, but far more important. The spirit and soul of man are eternal and will live forever either in Heaven or Hell. Man, at physical death, leaves his body. Yet he is no less man than he was when he had his body. Study the account of the rich man and Lazarus in **Luke chapter 16**. Immediately after death, we find both men still existing, one in Heaven and one in Hell. Notice also, that man’s soul is eternal, not the physical brain in your head, but your ability to think and recognize each other. The rich man expressed remorse and a desire for his brothers to not have to come to the terrible place where he was.

We also get so caught up with thoughts, emotions and the like, that we forget about what the Word of God says. So we must train ourselves to put things in proper perspective. “I am a spirit, I have a soul and I live in a body.” With these priorities of our make-up in line, we can more easily begin to understand the Word of God. We can develop our relationship with Him, develop ourselves in His likeness. We can gain the victory over bad habits and anything in our lives that is not Christ like and hear the voice of the Holy Spirit more clearly.

The new birth, or salvation experience, is a rebirth of the human spirit. In **John 3**, Jesus told Nicodemus “...*Ye must be born again*” Nicodemus, being natural, could not understand, he asked, “*How can a man be born again when he is old?*” Jesus said, “*That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*” Jesus was saying the real you, on the inside, is re-created brand new in God’s image again.

The words “heart” and “spirit” are used interchangeably in the Bible. When the Bible speaks of the heart, it is not talking about the physical muscle that pumps blood. It is speaking of the core of man’s being, much like when we speak of the heart of a tree, we are talking about the core or innermost part. Ezekiel prophesied concerning the new birth in **Ezekiel 36:26-27**. The words heart and spirit are used in the same verse, speaking of the same thing. Peter, in **1 Peter 3:4**, referred to man’s spirit as the hidden man of the heart. Paul referred to this “hidden man of the heart” as the inward man, **2 Corinthians 4:16**. This is the real man.

In this lesson we have only introduced the subject of man’s 3-fold nature and began to explore man’s three parts. In the next lesson or two, we will look more in depth at each part of man’s make-up and what the Bible says to do with them.

### **PRACTICAL APPLICATION**

Study carefully the scripture reading for this lesson as these verses will give you further light on this subject. Begin to confess, “I am a spirit, I have a soul, I live in a body”. Allow the Word of God to separate your thoughts and emotions from your spirit and allow you to better commune with God.

Print Your Name Here: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**TEST 13**

**THE 3-FOLD NATURE OF MAN**

1. God is (A.) Spirit (B.) Mind (C.) Great Orb
  
2. According to **Hebrews 4:12**, what will divide man's nature? \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What part of man is the center of his emotions? \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. With what part of your being do you contact or communicate with God? \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. **In 1 Corinthians 14**, to what part of man does Paul refer to as being the same as I?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
6. According to **2 Corinthians 4:16**, what part of man is growing older and decaying?  
\_\_\_\_\_

True or False

7. The words "heart" and "spirit" are interchangeable in the Bible.     \_\_\_T \_\_\_F
  
8. Man's body is eternal and will last forever?                     \_\_\_T \_\_\_F
  
9. Man is made up of three parts?                                     \_\_\_T \_\_\_F
  
10. The word heart in the Bible always refers to the organ in your chest.     \_\_\_T \_\_\_F