

# Who Am I?

To have a healthy spiritual relationship with God and a fruitful “discipleship,” we must study the Scriptures to find the true concept of ourselves. Such a study is called anthropology, from the Greek word ANTHROPOS, which means “man,” and “-ology,” which means “study of.” The word man is not to be taken in just a masculine sense, for it includes all humanity—men and women.

In Psalm 8:4, the psalmist asks, *What is man that thou art mindful of him?* He sensed there was something special that distinguished man from the rest of God’s creation. Because of who he was, what was the attitude of the psalmist toward himself and God (Psalm 139:14)?

Himself \_\_\_\_\_

God \_\_\_\_\_

And indeed, there is something wonderfully unique about us, for just as God is a trinity, He created man as a trinity. This is clearly stated in 1 Thessalonians 5:23. According to this verse, what three parts of man make him a trinity?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Many fine Christians prefer to think of man as a dichotomy; that is, two parts to his nature, the body as the physical part and the soul and spirit as the spiritual. There is nothing wrong with this approach to the nature of man; yet, the Bible goes a step further and speaks of the spirit and the soul as separate entities. The two apparently do not function independently of each other, but they can be differentiated (Heb. 4:12).

Man was created to operate in three spheres of this world—the physical, the psychological, and the spiritual. The nature of man was designed by God to relate to all three spheres through his body, soul, and spirit. First, let’s consider ...

## I. Man’s Body and the Physical World

Read the following scriptures, and explain why God wants us to have a physical body:

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 6:12–13 \_\_\_\_\_

Therefore, the body is not only the vehicle through which man functions in this world, but also the vehicle through which God desires to accomplish His will through the believer.

We are to use our hands, feet, tongue, and brain as instruments of righteousness. However, there is more to man than just a physical body, which leads us to ...

## II. Man's Soul and the Psychological World

The Greek word for soul is PSUCHĒ (soo-kay'). It is the same word from which we get our English words psychic and psychology. Therefore, we could say the soul is the psychological part of man and consists of intellect, emotions, and will. Examine the following scriptures, and match them to the words on the right:

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Proverbs 24:13–14 | EMOTIONS  |
| 1 Samuel 18:1     | WILL      |
| Job 6:7           | INTELLECT |

The soul, or mind, which is the psychological part of man, was created by God for a particular purpose. Read these verses and explain God's will for the mind (soul):

Hebrews 10:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:2 \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:5 \_\_\_\_\_

Another word used often in Scripture to refer to the soul of man is heart. More than 700 times the word heart is used to denote the psychological part of man. Most often it seems to refer to the seat of the emotions, though not always (Psalm 37:4, Rom. 9:2, and Eph. 3:17).

In only two places are the words heart, soul, and mind all used in the same verse—Matthew 22:37 and Mark 12:30. Here the heart seems to refer to the seat of the emotions, the soul to the intellect, and the mind to the volitional part of man. With that in mind, read Matthew 22:37, and explain what Jesus meant by the greatest commandment of all:

It is your soul (PSUCHĒ) that gives you personality, disposition, ego, and desire. Your soul is the “real you” inside your body. When you look in the mirror, you see only the house (body) in which you live.

Having considered man's body and man's soul, let's look at ...

### **III. Man's Spirit and the Spiritual World**

When we speak of the human spirit, we are speaking of a part of man that only the Bible addresses. There are scientific and medical books that deal with physical and psychological health, but only the Bible deals with spiritual health.

Without the Bible, one might think the soul and spirit are the same. There is no way to discern between the two except with the sharp, cutting edge of the Word of God (Heb. 4:12).

We are unique from the rest of God's living creatures. Life can be divided into three parts—plant, animal, and human. Plants have a body but no soul or spirit. They have no intellect, emotion, or will. However, animals have a soul (PSUCHĒ). They demonstrate intellect in that they can be taught, like a dog to retrieve a bone. They have emotion in that they can be angered. And many animals have a will that cannot be broken, such as a tiger. However, there is something that makes man distinctively different from a tree or a dog, and that something is his spirit.

Man's spirit is what makes him seek God. What do Luke 1:47 & John 4:23 tell us about the spirit of man?

Because animals do not have a spirit, they will never pray or go to church. The desire to seek God simply does not exist in their being. It is man's spirit that makes him aware of God (Prov. 20:27).

Of what relationship does our spirit make us aware (Romans 8:16)?

According to 1 Thessalonians 5:23, what is God's desire for our spirit, soul, and body?

Since we have discovered we are a composite of body, soul, and spirit, we must ask the question, "Am I good or evil?" Again, only the Bible can answer that. As we have already discovered, God created man with a spirit to have communion with Him. However, God also gave man the capacity of free will, which is the ability to decide whether or not to obey Him. God warned the first man and woman that in the day they disobeyed Him, they would surely die (Gen. 2:17). When they sinned, that penalty was imposed in two forms: (1) spiritual death, which is separation of the soul and spirit from God—Adam and Eve died immediately in their souls and spirits; and (2) physical death—they died progressively in their bodies, for the process of disintegration and eventual separation of the soul and spirit from the body began when they sinned.

When Adam and Eve sinned, the human race became degenerate and depraved. Their nature became contrary to God and prone to evil. Adam and Eve are the only humans who became sinners by sinning. All others are born sinners. We do not merely sin; we are sinners by nature. By a sinful act Adam and Eve acquired a sinful nature, and all the members of their race are born with that nature. Something in man's nature was spoiled by sin. It is a spiritual disease with which we are all born.

Man is not only a sinner, guilty in the sight of God, but he has also lost the relationship that he originally had with God. However, God's nature (which we studied in the last lesson) will not permit Him to simply consider the creation of man as an unsuccessful experiment. He wants to regain the relationship for which we were originally designed. Even though He is under no obligation to do so, God decided to give man another chance, as we will see in a later lesson.

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 139:14