

Questions About the Relationship Between the Soul, the Spirit, and Being Born-Again

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Is being born-again the placement of the soul from the physical body to the spirit of the inner man?

In other words, the soul starts out attached to the physical body but when born-again, the soul then becomes attached to a person's spirit instead of their physical body?

What does it mean to be born-again? How is this done? Why is it necessary?

Answer:

Great question — and with your **biblical grid of Body (dust) + Spirit (breath) = Living Soul**, we can give a *clear, Scripture-based* answer that honors your view and adds theological clarity.

Let's take it in parts.

Is Being Born Again the Movement of the Soul from the Body to the Spirit?

Short answer: No — not exactly.

The soul does not shift *locations* from body to spirit. Instead:

Being born again is not the relocation of the soul, but the regeneration of the inner man.

It is a **new creation** — not a reassignment.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

— *2 Corinthians 5:17*

We are still **one unified being** (a living soul), but the **core of our being** — our heart, will, mind, and desires — is now **reoriented** toward God.

What Does It Mean to Be Born Again?

Jesus explains it clearly:

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” — *John 3:3*

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”
— *John 3:6*

To be born again means:

- To receive a **new nature** through the **Holy Spirit**.
- To undergo a **spiritual transformation** (not physical relocation).
- To be **reconciled to God** and become His child.
- To receive the **mind of Christ** and be **indwelt by His Spirit**.

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the **washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;**”
— *Titus 3:5*

How Is This Done?

It is **not** done by human effort, but by **faith in Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit**.

1. **Conviction by the Holy Spirit** (John 16:8)
2. **Repentance and faith** in Jesus Christ (Mark 1:15)
3. **Baptism and reception of the Holy Spirit** (Acts 2:38)
4. **Daily surrender** — being renewed inwardly day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16)

“As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

Which were born, not of blood... but of God.”

— *John 1:12–13*

Is the Soul Ever “Detached” from the Body?

Biblically, no. The **soul is the whole person**. At the new birth, God **writes His law in your heart** (Hebrews 8:10), **fills you with His Spirit** (Ezekiel 36:26–27), and gives you a **new heart and spirit**.

But you still:

- Live in the same physical body (though now offered as a living sacrifice).
- Have the same soul — but it’s now being **renewed** and **transformed** by the Holy Spirit (Romans 12:1–2).

Why Is the New Birth Necessary?

Because we are born **spiritually dead** — disconnected from God because of sin.

“And you hath he quickened, who were **dead in trespasses and sins**.”
— *Ephesians 2:1*

Without the new birth:

- We cannot understand or desire the things of God (1 Corinthians 2:14)
- We remain under the dominion of the flesh (Romans 8:7)
- We are subject to death — spiritual, physical, and eternal

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”
— *John 3:7*

Summary (with Your Grid Applied)

Concept	Before Being Born Again	After Being Born Again
Body	Physical, prone to sin	Same body, but now a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1)
Spirit (breath of life)	Keeps you alive, but spiritually disconnected from God	Now united with the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:16)
Soul (whole person)	Influenced by flesh, self-centered	Renewed by the Spirit, Christ-centered (2 Cor. 4:16)

Result	Dead in sins, disconnected from God	Alive in Christ, indwelt by the Spirit, headed for resurrection
--------	--	---

Final Word

You are not a soul that changes location.

You are a **living soul** who — by grace through faith — becomes a **new creation** through the **indwelling of the Holy Spirit**, who transforms your mind, renews your character, and seals you for the resurrection.

“He that hath the Son hath life...” — *1 John 5:12*

“Christ in you, the hope of glory.” — *Colossians 1:27*

Biblical Equation:

Body (Dust) + Spirit (Breath of God) = Living Soul

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”

— *Genesis 2:7 (KJV)*

- The **body** is the physical material (dust).
 - The **spirit** (Hebrew: *ruach*) is the breath or life-force from God — not a conscious entity, but the power of life.
 - The **soul** is not something placed into man — it **is** man as a living being.
- Thus, **man doesn’t have a soul — he is a soul.**

Like you illustrated:

Lumber + nails = box

Remove either, and the box ceases to exist.

What Happens at Death?

“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”

— *Ecclesiastes 12:7*

When we die:

- The **body** returns to dust.
- The **spirit (breath/life)** returns to God.
- The **soul ceases to exist** in a conscious state. The person is **asleep in death**.

Death = Sleep in Scripture

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.”

— *1 Thessalonians 4:13*

“Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake...”

— *Daniel 12:2*

Jesus even referred to **Lazarus’s death** as sleep:

“Our friend Lazarus sleepeth... Lazarus is dead.” — *John 11:11, 14*

So Where Are Memories, Character, and Consciousness?

These are stored in what we might call the **“blueprint of your soul”** — your unique identity, known perfectly by God and **preserved by Him**, not actively functioning apart from the body, but **held in His keeping** until the resurrection.

You could say:

The **conscious you** is on **pause**, safely stored in the **mind of God**, not floating around in heaven or hell.

No Scripture says the soul continues consciously after death. Instead, it consistently describes the dead as:

- **Unaware** (Ecclesiastes 9:5 – “the dead know not anything”)
- **Inactive** (Psalm 146:4 – “his thoughts perish”)
- **Silent** (Psalm 115:17 – “the dead do not praise the Lord”)

The Two-Part Nature of Man

You’re exactly right: biblically speaking, man is not three parts (body, soul, spirit) as taught in Greek philosophy — but a **unified two-part being**:

1. **Material** — Body (dust)
2. **Immaterial** — Spirit (breath of life from God)

Together, they make a **living soul** (the person as a whole).

What About Our Assurance of Salvation?

When a believer dies, they **rest in Christ** until the resurrection.

“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord... they may rest from their labors...”
— *Revelation 14:13*

Your **life is hidden with Christ in God** (Colossians 3:3), and **your resurrection is guaranteed**:

“For the Lord himself shall descend... and the dead in Christ shall rise first.”
— *1 Thessalonians 4:16*

Summary

- We are **not immortal souls**; we are **living souls**, sustained by the breath of God.
- At death, the **body returns to dust**, the **spirit returns to God**, and the **soul sleeps** until the resurrection.
- **Memories and character** are not lost — they are **preserved by God** in His perfect memory and will be **restored** when the soul is reconstituted at the resurrection.
- There is **no consciousness in death**. Resurrection is our hope — not the immortal soul.

