



The Spirit, Soul and Body

Here are three entities, which are often misunderstood or simply not understood at all.

In these few pages, we will try to understand these three aspects of our being much more clearly. Indeed as human beings, the Bible says we are made of three parts: our spirit, our soul and our body.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray to God that your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

When God created humans, He created them in the image of the Trinity. **John 1:1** tells us: *In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.*

He is talking about Jesus, who is the Word. And this verse tells us that the Word was there with God at the beginning of creation.

The Bible also says in **Genesis 1:2** *And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

So we know now that the three persons of the Trinity were united together when human beings were created.

And when God said in **Genesis 1:26** (NIV) *"Let us make man in our image, in our likeness,..."*

Our whole being, consisting of spirit, soul and body was designed in the image of the Trinity.

Indeed, God our Father has plans and a destiny for our lives. Jesus Himself announced those plans and the Holy Spirit is in charge of helping us in a practical way to fulfill His destiny for our lives (see my study on the Holy Spirit).

And in the same way, our spirit, soul and body are connected with each other. Unlike us, the Father, the Son and Spirit are in perfect agreement, in a perfect relationship.

But since the fall, our three-parts, spirit, soul and body are not in perfect agreement, let alone perfect correlation. And this is the challenge for our lives in Jesus Christ, to restore the balance between our spirit, our soul and our body.

We are now absolutely clear about the fact that, even after being born again, we have a problem, mainly with our spirit and our flesh. This is a constant battle that will last our whole lives on earth.

Jesus says in **Matthew 26:41** *Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

We will try now, to better understand ourselves, by studying the three parts that compose our being.

For this we must look a little deeper.

When a person is not born again, his spirit is united with his soul. It is as if his spirit and soul were one. The Bible says that the Word of God is able to separate the soul and the spirit.

Hebrews 4:12 *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.*

So I can conclude that when I had not heard the Word of God, it was like my soul was welded to my spirit. It is therefore essential that my spirit is separated from my soul.

But why? For that, let's look in detail, and one by one, at the spirit, soul and body.

MY SPIRIT

What is my spirit?

This is difficult to comprehend since cannot see it. I cannot touch it either. But I have no doubt that my spirit is inside of me.

***John 19:30** tells us: So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

As shown in this passage, since Jesus gave up His spirit to death on a Cross, the spirit is therefore that part of me that keeps me alive. It is only when I die, that my spirit will leave my body.

In this passage there is no question of the soul of Jesus departing, but only His spirit. This is why the Bible says that the Word of God that produces faith will isolate my spirit so that it is will become free the sins that bind me.

This process occurs when I hear the good news of Jesus Christ and pay attention to it. The words that I hear or the ones that I read will act as a sword that will cut each tie between my spirit and my soul.

Now my spirit separated from my soul, can be regenerated by God. Why does my spirit therefore need to be regenerated?

Simply because being tied to my soul since birth, it has been contaminated by sin. And to be transformed by God, it must be separated from the ties with my soul.

At the new birth, my spirit will be saved, not my body.

***1 Corinthians 5:5** Deliver such a one to satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

For those who are not born again, it is their soul and the body that go to hell:

***Matthew 10:28** says: And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

So my spirit is the part of my being which has received eternal life with God in advance.

Since I am born again, my spirit is justified or made righteous; it means that, God considers that my spirit has been purified of sin. If we are righteous before God we are approved by God. Then we will live honestly, have healthy thoughts and do good deeds.

Let's look at **Romans 8:10** *And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is alive because of righteousness.*

Other translations say in the end of the verse: "You have been made righteous"

So I can conclude that my spirit who was impure when I was not born again, became pure at my new birth, and will remain so for eternity. It is only my spirit that is justified before God.

Please note I must not confuse my spirit that is regenerated and justified in Jesus Christ with the Spirit of God or the Holy Spirit. These are two different entities.

I have met Christians who believe that their regenerated spirit and the Holy Spirit of God is one and the same person. And when I am born again, God replaces my spirit with His. It is a mistake that will cause misunderstanding in my whole perception of my how my spirit is made righteous.

Romans 8:16 says: *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,*

Here there are two spirits, mine and the Holy Spirit. It is very important to make the difference between the two.

For more details on the Holy Spirit, see my study called "Holy Spirit".

MY SOUL

We have seen together, that since the new birth, the soul is now separated from the spirit.

The soul is the center of our emotions, it incorporates a human perspective, what we like or do not like, our character and what we commonly call our personality.

In **Luke 2:35**, Simeon said to Mary, speaking of the crucifixion of her son Jesus. *(yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."*

It is in her mind that Mary felt all the pain that had pierced her.

Our souls are like a buffer between our spirits and bodies. It has information that the body and spirit send to it.

When Simeon spoke to Mary that day, it was her ears that passed this information to her soul. By listening to the words of Simeon, Mary felt the pain in her soul. Then, the day she experienced the crucifixion of Jesus, it was her eyes that had given her the information, and that created a pain piercing her soul.

When we sin, our bodies or our souls are contaminated and only our bodies or souls. Let us remember, our spirit remains pure, for in the new birth, they are justified by God.

For more details see my study on "New Birth".

My soul knows feelings, like joy, peace, pain, sadness.

Matthew 26:38 *Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me."*

Psalms 16:9 *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope.*

Psalms 41:4 *say: I said, "LORD, be merciful to me; Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You."*

My soul is my personality that makes me who I am. At certain times in the Bible, the soul is described as a living being, like as a physical person.

You cannot really say that the soul is exactly this or that. It is in fact all that describes a living being who has thoughts and makes decisions.

However, a clear distinction must be made between the soul in the Old Testament and the New.

Let us remember in **Hebrews 4:12**, which says that when I hear the Word of God (hence the good news of Jesus Christ, who Himself is the Word), my soul is separated from my spirit. This was not the case in the Old Testament. At that time the soul was fully linked to the human spirit. They were one, just like a person today who has not heard the Word of God, or who has heard but refused to obey. I do not mean that humans in the Old Testament were similar to those who are not in Christ today, not at all. But just that their soul and spirit are one and the same entity.

But the spiritual situation is totally different, because in the Old Testament, God's people obeyed mostly by following His commands, which is not the case for people today who are not born again.

Now that this point has been clarified, we will go back to the definition of our soul.

In Hebrew, the soul is "nephesh". Literally, it can mean:

- A Creature
- Everything that breathes
- The man himself
- The seat of the emotions and passions
- A living being
- Everything that has life by the blood

We can therefore say that every living being that lives and breathes and has a blood system, has a soul. This includes both humans and animals.

Every time I have to make a choice, make a decision, act in one way or another, it is my soul that gives the order to my body.

I must realize one important thing, my soul can be transformed.

I am not to think that I have a certain type of personality that can disappoint me at times. I am not to be pessimistic and tell myself that I will never change.

Not at all.

Or that I am satisfied with who I am and do not really need to change.

Well let me tell you that our soul needs to be transformed and we must grow spiritually and become more Christ like.

Look at what John says in his third letter.

3 John 1:2 *Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.*

THE BODY

I would say that the Body is the easiest part of us to understand. However, at the same time it is the most difficult to subdue.

Of course, because I can see my body and can touch it, I have a picture of this body of mine.

It also, just like my soul, can change and be drawn toward good or evil.

Paul told the Romans:

Romans 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

It is easy to identify the ways in which my body communicates. These are simply our five senses.

- Touch
- Smell
- Hearing
- Sight
- Taste

With the five senses my body will speak to my soul.

One might think that our body is not really spiritual, because often it is through it that sin enters in us.

The Bible tells us that our body is weak, it does not have a will that can make it see reason.

Mark 14:38. *Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

When I started studying the spirit, soul and body, I began to realize that often my body was lying when it spoke to me. For example it was saying: "I'm hungry", or "I'm tired," but it was not the case.

And then I fell into an error, by beginning to dislike my body. I thought it was a liar. Most of my problems come from my body. It is weak. It is not spiritual. I am a born again Christian, I want to improve and change for the better.

But my body is just the opposite. Then why continue with it? And when I read passages like:

Romans 7:24 *O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*

This thinking is only reinforced.

I said, I will concentrate fully on my spirit and my soul, so my body will not continue to slow my progress towards growth in God.

After a few weeks, I realized that with a theory like this, I had made my body my enemy.

And one morning when I prayed, the Holy Spirit took me back and said: "Yes, of course your body is weak, it is often the part of your being which causes some sin in your life. But look, right now you pray to Me, and how do you do it? With your soul, with your spirit. But also with your mouth. When you worship me in music, you do it also with your body. "

How did I not see the obvious? I was blinded, it was now obvious.

I was a victim of my own stupidity. It was a good lesson for me.

From this time, I understood that if God created us spirit, soul and body, it is because He knew what He was doing. And although my body causes me problem at times, my Father in heaven has given me in Jesus Christ, all I need to eliminate the problem with the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

I will use my body to communicate with others. We are not naturally able to read the thoughts of others. So it is with my bodily senses that I talk with others. The words that I say and hear, when I touch someone, all these examples are the different information that my soul will have to analyze.

Sometimes I react without thinking. **Proverbs 20:25** says: *It is a snare to the man who devoured that which is holy, and after vows to make enquiry.*

Now that we know a little more about the different functions of the spirit, soul and body, we will be able to address the relationship between the three.

How do they communicate?

How they live together?

Who should prevail?

How do we strike a balance between the three?

I remember that if I am born again, these are three parties that make up my being and only if I am born again.

I say this because I often see people who were clearly not born again trying to adopt behaviors and attitudes of people with renewed spirits who are justified by God. It is impossible. This is the case of some people who attend Christian gatherings and try to act like a born again person without being themselves born again. You can find people who do so out of sheer hypocrisy, or simply by ignorance. These are attitudes that, unfortunately, have always existed.

Jesus himself pointed out in **Matthew 23:28**. *Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.*

Paul also said to Titus in Timothy,

1 Timothy 1:13 *Although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.*

It is therefore essential before all else, to make sure that one is born again, because it is not enough to have been baptized by immersion to be born again. (For more details see my study on the “New Birth”)

So I must be sure that my whole being composed of my regenerated spirit and then my soul and my body is justified by God.

1Cor 15:45 *And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.*

My spirit is perfect, it never sins. It is already very encouraging to know that a part of me is already perfect. I can count on my spirit. I can lean on him.

Whenever God, through His Holy Spirit talks to me, He will do it through my spirit. It is a very important thing to realize, because it is not by my soul nor by my body that I'm drawing closer to God, but by my spirit.

Luke 24:45 *And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.*

The challenge is not to confuse my soul and my spirit. I can see neither the one nor the other. But they have a different function now that I am born again. It's my spirit that must permeate my soul regularly with the knowledge of God and not the opposite. It's like a one way street, my spirit is there like a tank that is ready at any moment to permeate my soul with all its contents.

This is exactly what Paul teaches in Ephesians when he told them:

Ephesians 4:23 *and be renewed in the spirit of your mind.*

The NIV translation says you must also be renewed by the spirit of your mind

Our intelligence is our soul, that which we use to think.

Paul says here that we have to regularly allow our souls to be influenced by our spirits.

When I taught this to my three children, I used an image that I'm going to describe here.

One evening I met everyone in our living room. They sat on the couch and I was in front of them, before our little coffee table. I had prepared a bowl of water and a sponge that I had dried in the sun so it was hard and rough. And finally I took a small figurine from the toy box belonging to my little boy.

I started by saying: "You see this bowl filled with water, it is like our spirits that God made when we were born again. And the Holy Spirit takes care to fill it regularly every time I spend time with Him in His fullness. Every time He teaches me something new, my bowl (my spirit) is filled with water.

And you see the sponge. It is quite hard and dry. "(I put it on the face of our little son knowing that he would say: it hurts!).

I continue by saying, "now by hearing your brother, you know that it's not very nice to put the sponge on his face. This sponge is like our soul. If I do not dip in regularly in the water bowl, it is not pleasant, and of course I will not be able to wash this figurine. Look, if I try to wash it, it's not working. I cannot remove the dirt that is lodged in the recesses. Now look, when I let the sponge float on the surface of the bowl, after a few seconds, it becomes quite soft and absorbs the liquid. Look how useful it is now, especially as it cleans the figurine well. But what will happen if after I wash the figurine, I leave my sponge in the sun, without soaking it regularly in the bowl? It will dry out again of course. "

I must say that after this demonstration, everyone understood well.

You might say, this story is very sweet and simple, but how can I renew my soul (my mind) as stated in ***Ephesians 4:23***?

First of all I must understand that my soul is located between my body and my spirit. It is a buffer as I said at the beginning. Everything that my body will see and hear will impact my soul, for we must remember that our body sends what it sees or hears, immediately to our souls. And as this is repeated throughout the day it will dry our souls and pollute them.

It is a process that never stops. If my soul continues to receive spiritual pollution, it will become the enemy of my body. It will be totally submitted to my body. In the long term, I will finally let the sin enter into my life and I will come to the point of denying God. This is the goal of the devil.

The goal should be to regularly dip my sponge into the bowl full of water. If I stop renewing my mind (my soul), I can tell myself it is not so important after all, I'll do it tomorrow! But remember that the messages coming from my senses arrive several times a day to my soul, and therefore I may find myself backsliding.

Paul says it again in **Romans 12:2** *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Some people think by reading this verse that the renewing of your mind occurs only once. No, that would mean no more struggles between the spirit and the flesh.

And this is not what tells us **Mark 14:38** *Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

There is a struggle between the two and my body will always try to overcome my spirit.

This renewal is different for each of us, simply because we all have different personalities.

Some will have an inordinate attraction to food that will cause obesity. Some for the opposite sex that will cause adultery, others for tobacco that will cause lung disease and the list goes on. I'm not saying that obese Christians are not spiritual, but simply that we all have struggles with our bodies and some of these struggles are visible whilst others are not.

Far from me to want to judge anyone, but I think that a balance between my spirit, soul and body will enable me to live in the perfect will of God.

Jesus teaches us how to act in our bodies. He deliberately uses words and actions to make us understand that we must subdue our bodies as soon as we perceive that a situation may become an opportunity to pollute our souls.

Let us read **Matthew 5: 29-30** *If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.*

Obviously I will not tear out my eyes or cut my hand off on the pretext that I do things that pollute my soul.

But here Jesus makes the point that we must not take this command lightly. The spiritual pollution of our souls will eventually lead us to hell if we do nothing to stop it.

If the Holy Spirit clearly shows me a weakness in my relationships, my diet, my language, my readings, etc. I have to stop, because it is better to arrive in the kingdom of God without having experienced these things, than have done some or all of them and finish up in hell.

I do not mean to be legalistic, because I'm not. It is clear that what will be a stumbling block for one will not be at all for another. This is why it is important not to generalize. For example we must not say: "Do not do this because I noticed that for me it is not a good thing."

God wants self-controlled children who know their personal weaknesses and do not adopt the weaknesses of others in their own lives.

Unfortunately I have often seen in communities that Christians act stupidly and almost force others to adopt their weaknesses by making rules for everyone to follow.

Our Father has made available to us several ways to renew our souls so our spirits are justified.

The first, and most important way is through His Word, the Bible. He left us all this teaching so that we can live a happy life for all eternity.

Regular reading of the Bible is fundamental for the renewal of our souls. This is where we will draw all knowledge. The Bible is like a manual.

We cannot just build knowledge through sermons on Sundays and perhaps from a few meetings during the week. Nor from sermons we listen to or watch on TV or the Internet.

I am thankful to God for all these ways, but they are extras and not the basis of my spiritual teaching.

Many Christians do not read the Bible today.

Praying is another way that our Father gave us to renew our souls.

To grow as Christians, a full relationship with the Holy Spirit is essential, because it is He who will teach me, and by His teaching our souls will be strengthened and renewed.

John 14:26 says *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*

How is the Holy Spirit going to teach me?

He teaches me when I speak with Him and when we have dialogue together. (See my study on the Holy Spirit). It is my responsibility to put myself in a position to receive.

It is obvious that if I do not take time to talk exclusively to Him and be taught by the Holy Spirit, I will not be able to penetrate deeply into a relationship with Him.

Sometimes you can hear some Christians say: "I pray in the car or I pray in the shower." I know this because this is the way I prayed in the early years of my new birth.

If you do this it is obvious that you love your Father in heaven.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 says *we are to pray without ceasing.* But if you pray only in your car, only in the shower, etc ..., you cannot renew your soul as God wants you to. You miss many opportunities to strengthen yourself, to take control of your body and draw what you need from your regenerated spirit.

I must balance my spirit, my soul and my body as if they were one. I cannot afford to imbalance one of the three, because the others will become out of balance.

Moreover, the devil will not hesitate to attack my body, my soul or my spirit. He will use any means to cause us to sin. Whether he draws us to himself through the body, the soul or the spirit, his goal is to lure us into hell for eternity. We will fight this battle with the powers of darkness until we die.

The fact that we are born again gives us access to eternal life once and for all. If I am born again my spirit is justified and will be in the kingdom of God for eternity.

Even if I sin it remains true that I have eternal life. (For more details see my study on the New Birth)

But even if my spirit is eternal, I must make every effort not to sin, so that my soul will not be polluted.

Let's look more closely at how Satan attacked Jesus' spirit, soul and body.

Matthew 4:1 *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.*

Christ had spent forty days alone in the wilderness. For Him, these forty days were full of lessons from Holy Spirit.

One might think that Jesus had ample time to talk and receive from the Holy Spirit.

The devil began with his body.

Matthew 4:2-3 *And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. 3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."*

Imagine not eating for forty days. I think the body of Jesus was saying to his soul: "I'm hungry, give me something to eat!" What a struggle between His body, His soul, and His spirit. But Jesus did not flinch. Why?

Because the balance between His body, soul and spirit was there.

Matthew 4:5-6 *Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.*

This time it's His soul that the devil tried to tempt.

It is with our souls that we make decisions. If I decide to speak, act or do anything else, it is my soul that will have the final decision.

Here the devil is trying to bring down Jesus by attacking His soul. "Go ahead, go ahead make a decision to throw Yourself down. Again Jesus did not flinch. Why? Because the balance between body, soul and spirit was there.

Matthew 4:8-9 *Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."*

With this last attempt satan is trying to bring down and tempt Jesus in His spirit.

The Bible says in **John 4:24** *"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

It is with our spirits that we worship God.

It is with our spirits that we connect with the spiritual world. God is Spirit, satan is also a spirit. And if Jesus had agreed to worship satan, He would do so with His spirit. Again Jesus did not flinch. Why? Because His mind, soul and body were in perfect balance.

What can we say about these temptations? Firstly, Jesus was tempted in all things, like all other humans are.

Hebrews 4:15 *tells us: For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

But all His strength lay in the fact that His spirit, soul and body were in perfect balance.

Let's see some examples:

Everyone has experienced these situations at least once in their lives.

For example, when in a given situation I realize, too late of course, that I have replied badly, or that I left without saying what I should have said, or that I have made fun of someone or that I drank too much alcohol and became drunk. And within seconds, I realize that I acted without thinking. This is a typical example of acting in the flesh and not allowing our bodies to be tamed by our soul or intellect.

Such reactions are so quick. We act without thinking. We realize the impact of what we've done only after the damage is done. If we are honest, we've all faced such situations at least once in our lives. It is the feeling of not being able to master our own words, thoughts or actions. Sometimes we hear someone say: "The temptation overpowered me."

Proverbs 13:16. *says : Every prudent man acts with knowledge, But a fool lays open his folly.*

From reading this verse, we realize how vital it is for our renewed souls to dictate the thoughts and actions of our body.

Why does my body act like that? Why do I feel he is the master in so many situations?

Because my body is not used to allowing my soul to dictate my thoughts and actions. Because I have not taken the time to think and consider the areas in which my soul does not yet have mastery over my body.

The only way we can be justified in Christ is when our body is in submission to our renewed spirit. With much discipline, as we meditate on passages from the Bible and as we dialogue regularly with our best friend, the Holy Spirit, our bodies will be renewed.

Then we will no longer be surprised that our bodies are not the masters of our souls. But my body will become my ally and will also have spiritual desires.

In a difficult situation in his life, King David had a strong desire to be even closer to God. He said:

In **Psalm 63: 1** *O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.*

His soul and body, at the time, were in agreement.

As I communicate with my Father through the Holy Spirit and mediate on such Scripture, the desires of my body and soul will become one and the same. As we said a little earlier, I need to take some time to think and meditate on the Word of God before I react in any given situation.

The potential danger is when everything is going well and we let our guard down.

Keep in mind that this fight is ongoing, as we have already mentioned above.

Romans 6:12 says: *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.*

My body will always be tempted by greed which is against the teachings of Jesus Christ.

It's like my body is pulling in one direction with a certain force and my soul is pulling in another direction.

When my soul is renewed, it will push my body in the opposite direction with a greater force. But the fact is that my body will continue to tempt me to be greedy and if I do not listen to my regenerated soul, my body will cause me to fall into temptation.

Some Christians become less vigilant and overconfident and fall back into the temptations they thought they had overcome.

We should never forget that we must fight the good fight until the end.

How do I renew my soul or my thought life?

What role has my spirit in this balance?

Ephesians 4:23 says: *and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,*

From this verse we know that there is a renewing of our intellect which is our soul.

To a sportsperson, training is vital for him to attain good results. Accordingly, for a Christian training is equally as vital for the transformation of the soul in terms of results. As for the sportsperson, if I cut back on training my body, my spiritual growth will suffer accordingly.

I have to understand that my soul works just like a muscle. The more I train it, by drawing closer to God through His Word, the stronger it will be.

When I speak about how to approach Bible study, I am not saying that we have to read for the sake of reading, to devour the pages without thinking, as some Christians do. And once they finish reading, they find sometimes that they have not learned anything new because they have not meditated on the Word and applied it to their lives.

I remember when I read the Bible as a young Christian, the most important thing for me was to read as many verses as possible. I read quite a few books of the Bible, but I was reading for the sake of reading and God's Truth had not taken root in my life a few weeks after my reading.

Of course, it is good to desire to read in full the story of a character from the Bible. In this case it is good to read for example the story of David, then read it again, this time stopping at each passage, projecting ourselves into the story in context and imagining that we are silent spectators. This is where the Holy Spirit assists us. One of His goals is to help us understand the Scriptures in depth and apply them in a very practical way in our lives.

As we consider again how our soul works like a muscle, we realize that it will grow and become stronger and more resistant to temptation.

This spiritual training must be scheduled regularly so that our souls become stronger and have mastery over our bodies.

Romans 6: 12 *Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.*

When an athlete stops training, after some time his muscles will weaken and become less resistant and powerful.

No matter, whatever the level of performance that had been achieved, it is just a matter of time before his muscles will regain their previous strength.

This is the case with our souls as well. Regardless of the level of spiritual growth, if I stop training, it will just be a question of time before I backslide and lose all the benefit of years of spiritual discipline.

I am not speaking here of the state of my soul before my new birth, but the state of my soul after my new birth. When I am born again, there is only one sin against the Holy Spirit that can make me lose my salvation.

When I understand that God loves me, it is my spirit which bears this witness. When I understand a passage in the Scriptures that had once been a mystery to me, it is my spirit that is witnessing to me through the Holy Spirit. When I feel the desire to be nearer to Jesus because I love Him for who He is, it my spirit that is communicating to me.

My spirit is always willing in matters that relate to God.

Have you ever thought: "I really want to talk with my Father in prayer. I have this strong desire, because it's good for me."

You know that it is good, that you will reap benefits, but you can't make the decision to do it. You have other opposing thoughts like: "I won't pray during the day, I usually pray in the morning or the evening". Or, "I don't want to isolate myself now, I am too busy."

These are typical examples of how my spirit speaks to my soul, but in this case, my soul is not listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit. It is a soul that needs to be renewed and filled afresh with the Holy Spirit.

Roman 8:16 says: *The Spirit of God himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God.*

When the Holy Spirit speaks to me, He speaks to my spirit. And it is my responsibility to continually be transformed in my soul as His Spirit testifies to my spirit.

Paul illustrates this fact very well in ***Romans 7: 21-23*** *I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. 22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

In verse 21, he realizes that his body is fighting against his soul. The Bible says that even as a born again Christian, my body tries to bring me into captivity to sin and to do the things that God condemns.

And why is Paul aware of this principle?

In the next verse we will find the answer.

It is because he takes delight in the law of God and chooses to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. It is because his inner man is being renewed, that Paul takes pleasure in this law.

People who are not born again don't have this law warring inside of them. So if there is a war within you, you're on the right path.

Paul knows that this war will continue until he has received the celestial body that God will give him when he enters into His kingdom.

This is what he says in verse 23 when he is speaking of the fact that his body causes him to walk in disobedience by taking him captive, like a prisoner.

He is perfectly aware that his soul and spirit, for the moment, are currently locked in his body, he is like a "prisoner in his body."

These statements of Paul may seem negative or pessimistic, but they are not at all, because Paul continues in **Chapter 8 of Romans: 1-2** by saying: *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus,[a] who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.*

Now that we understand that we live in a body and have a spirit and soul, we will be much more able to walk according to the Spirit.

It is through knowledge that we grow spiritually.

Reread the passages dealing with the spirit, soul and body.

Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you and teach you. (See my study on the Holy Spirit)

Give it your utmost attention and do not grow slack.

Regularly ask the Holy Spirit to regenerate your soul through your spirit.

Remember, the Holy Spirit is a person who is with you all the times. Speak to Him as you would your best friend.

He will show you what to do.

It is a learning process that takes place in our minds because it relates to things of the spirit and not the flesh.

Since I gave the demonstration about the sponge to my children, my youngest prays every evening: "Jesus, help me to dip my sponge".

May God help you through prayer, dialogue with the Holy Spirit, Bible study, and personal discipline, to regularly dip your sponge in your spirit that is being regenerated in Christ Jesus.

This study has been offer to you by "***The Real Good News***" Ministry.

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