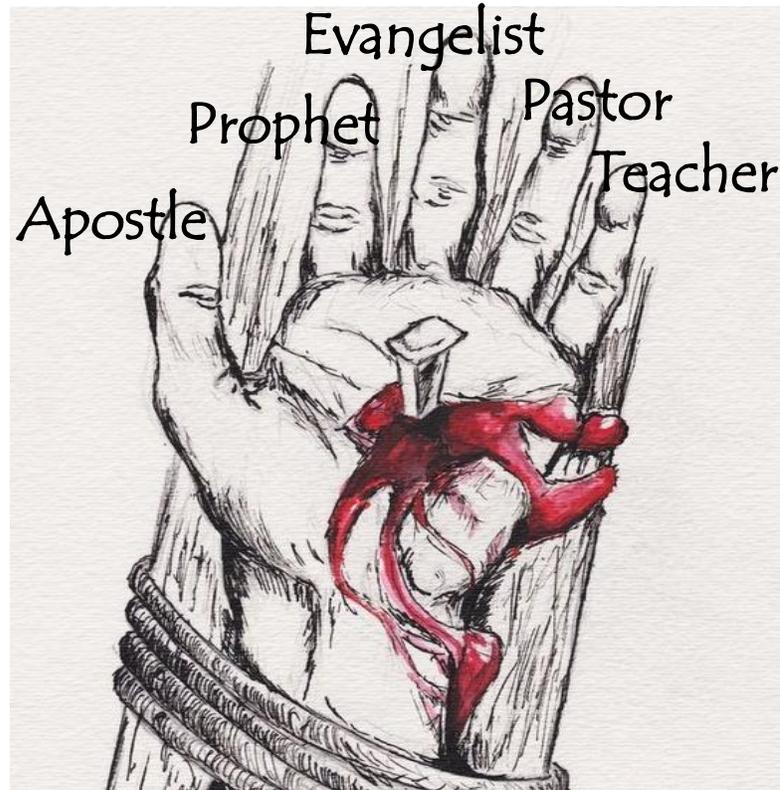


God's Complete Plan of Salvation (The Soul)



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God's Complete Plan of Salvation

According to the Scriptures

INTRODUCTION

I want to thank you for your time and interest in taking a closer look at God's marvelous plan of salvation from start to finish with me. I have heard much teaching on salvation, concerning the born- again experience, which is wonderful in itself and I've heard much teaching on the redemption of our *natural* bodies to our glorified bodies, that we will receive when Jesus returns; yet I have heard very little teaching on God's plan for the soul to be born again. In this study we will examine from start to finish God's practical plan of salvation for the whole man (spirit, soul, and body). I will spend a lot of time on the soul because just like our spirit has already been born again, I will prove, from the scriptures, that God has a plan for the soul to completely be born again. Right now, according to the Word of God, the soul is in a process of being born, as we work out our salvation according to Philippians 2:12 and 1Peter 1:22-23. Now don't let this disillusion you and cause you to close this study guide at the introduction, but continue with me as we walk through God's Word together and find *His* mind on salvation.

God's Complete Plan of Salvation According to the Scriptures

A. I want to begin first with the composition of man, which is spirit, soul and body according to I Thessalonians 5:23.

What we learn from I Thessalonians 5:23 is that the entire composition of man is spirit, soul, and body.

Confirming scriptures:

- Genesis 2:7
- Hebrew 4:12
- I Samuel 1:15
- Number 19:13
- Matthew 10:28

In this lesson outline we are going to deal with each department of man individually. According to Hebrew 4:12, the Word of God proves the dividing of spirit, soul, and body and maintains this throughout the scriptures. So, to understand correct teaching concerning salvation, we have to rightly divide when and which department the Word is addressing regarding the spirit, soul, and body.

The Bible is a collection of divine books that deal mainly with God and His creation of mankind, man's fall into sin, and God's redemption for him.

Since man is spirit, soul, and body, when he committed sin (*concerning man's fall in the garden*) it affected all three areas. Therefore, it stands to reason that God would have to redeem all three areas to completely restore mankind. We will now attempt to study and rightly divide the scriptures regarding salvation, and how to apply redemption to each department. This is the correct way to teach and understand God's salvation; otherwise, we will be confused, divided, and mixed up trying to teach the Body of Christ salvation from start to finish.

B. GOD'S ORDER OF SALVATION VERSUS MAN'S ORDER

The first thing I want to deal with, as I teach on salvation, is the order of God versus the order of man regarding spirit, soul, and body. Let me explain.

The popular teaching in the Body of Christ is "man is a spirit, he has a soul, and he lives in a body." Now, if we believe that statement we are really saying that the soul is something that we have, as opposed to who we are. But, one day in my walk with God, He challenged me on that statement, and made me see that throughout His Word, God teaches that man is a soul, he has a spirit, and he lives in a body. If we believe what I just said then, the soul is who we are and not something we have. When I begin to rightly divide and teach each department, you will see why it is important to get this right.

In Genesis 2:7 God said He breathed into man's nostrils and man became a living soul, and all throughout the scriptures God maintains that man is a soul. Refer to the following scriptures:

- Acts 2:41
- Acts 4:32
- Revelation 20:4
- Genesis 12:5
- Matthew 11:29
- Mark 8:36-37
- Luke 12:20

I know by now a lot of questions may be going through your mind, because most of us were taught (and I have taught it myself), that man is a spirit; but now, I choose to agree with God, that man is a soul. Later on in this lesson outline, I will explain the spirit nature of the soul; but, right now, it is important to believe as the scripture has said.

C. THE THREE DEPARTMENTS OF MAN

In this part of the lesson I want to lay out God's plan of salvation, according to the scriptures, as it refers to each department: the spirit, the soul, and body. Let me say this and, then we will go to the scriptures to prove it.

1. The Spirit

The spirit is completely saved, made perfect, and will never be touched by sin again. It will return to God if the soul does not make it into glory.

- Ecclesiastes 12:5-7 > The spirit returns to God alone if the soul chooses eternity without God. (Remember, man is a soul and his "long home" is eternity, as stated in verse 5.)
- Proverbs 20:27 > This is a fact throughout the scriptures that many have not, or will not except—that the spirit in man's soul is not who he is, but, instead, what he has. It is God's candle by which He uses to tell us right from wrong. It is His judge inside the soul, and what causes us to know and fellowship with God. It is also how He will judge all of us in the end, along with His Word (Romans 2:14-15). It is very important that we realize that the spirit is not who we are, but it is what we have. Again, God said man is a soul. Now, how dare we change what God said about us! (Genesis 2:7)
- John 3:6 > The very day a soul calls on the name of Jesus, God's plan of salvation is put in motion in that person's life. His spirit is instantly born of God's spirit and made perfect just like God.
- Matthew 5:48 > God made your spirit perfect and now tells your soul to be the same.
- II Peter 1:1-4 > The spirit receives God's divine nature.

• I Peter 3:4 > The hidden man of the heart in every saved person is a meek and quiet spirit. The Word says it took a great price to purchase it, which was Jesus' death on the cross, and it can never be corrupted by sin again. (I John 5:18)

• John 10:27-29 > When we were born again we became God's sheep and the scripture says we will never perish. Because of this scripture, many teach that we are unconditionally eternally secure. They teach that a born again person can go back live and die in sin and he or she will never be lost, yet what they don't realize is that your **spirit** will never be lost again; but—not the soul. Even though the spirit is born again, we have to rightly divide the scripture and when we do, we will find that the soul is in the *process* of being born again and needs to follow Jesus if it expects to follow the spirit back to God (John 10:27). (See also I Peter 1:22-23, James 1:21, I Peter 1:9)

• John 10:27-29 > Jesus said my sheep hear my voice. We are His sheep because of a born again spirit and that's also why we can hear and know His voice. But, before Jesus said, “I give them eternal life and they shall never perish,” notice He said, “they follow me”. This is the key to never perishing for the soul; otherwise, it seems like once a person is saved choices don't matter anymore. However, we know from other scriptures that this cannot be true because God will never take away man's right to choose. Please note that there are hundreds of scriptures in the Old and New Testament that say “if” such as:

- I Corinthians 15:1-3 > We are saved *if*...
- Colossians 1:21-23 > He will present us *if* we continue
- Matthew 24:13 > Endure to the end and you shall be saved
- I Peter 1:9 > The born again soul will not be finished until the end of our faith
- I Peter 1:13 > Hope to the end
- Hebrew 10:39 > The complete saving of the soul doesn't take place until the end of our faith based on our continuing in the faith.

So, back to my thought in John 10:27-29. 'Never perish' is for those who continue to follow Him after the born again spirit experience. (John 8:31-32):

- John 6:66 > Notice here that a disciple can chose to turn back
- I Timothy 1:19-20 > Notice these two disciples had faith but they shipwrecked
- John 6:67 > Notice Jesus will not make us follow Him. It's a choice before we are born again and after we are born again
- John 6:68 > Notice Peter said, “Jesus, you have the words of eternal life.” So, to have eternal life and never perish, we have to continue. (John 8:31)

These scriptures show that a person (soul) } Revelation 3:5
who is in the book of life *can* } Revelation 22:18-19
perish. } Acts 1:16-20

Please remember also, in Ecclesiastes 12:5-7, that the spirit will return to God who gave it, if the man (who is a soul) chooses not to follow Jesus. So, it is very important to rightly divide the Word according to Hebrew 4:12, as to which department of man the Word is referring to when we teach on salvation of spirit, soul, and body.

Now, let's continue to examine scriptures concerning the spirit and, then proceeds to the soul and the body. I want to encourage you to examine the following scriptures and this is what you will find about the spirit:

- he is perfect
- he cannot sin
- he will not sin
- he is incorruptible
- he will never be lost again
- he has the mind of Christ
- the Holy Spirit dwells within him
- he is seated in heavenly places

(When you finish reading these passages, please remember that the spirit mentioned in these scriptures [the spirit inside us] is not who we are; but he is the candle of the Lord. That's why if the soul chooses not to follow Jesus after the born again experience, the spirit [the candle Proverbs 20:27] will return to God alone.)

- Hebrews 12:23
- I John 5:18
- I Peter 3:4
- I John 3:9
- John 3:6
- John 10:28
- Matthew 26:41
- I Corinthians 2:14-16

2. Salvation of the Body

Before I start with the soul, let me say a little about the salvation of the body. We know according to the scriptures that the body is perishing (the outward man is the body, the inward man is the soul, the hidden man is the spirit). (II Corinthians 4:16)

- I Corinthians 15:52
- I Corinthians 15:44
- Philippians 3:21

These scriptures prove that the complete salvation of the body will not take place until the return of Jesus, when we receive our glorified body.

Greek Definition of the Spirit and Soul

The Bible provides two words in Greek that have been interpreted as spirit and soul. Pneuma, which means a breath or a blast of air is normally interpreted as spirit; Psuche, which means to breathe or more accurately, life because of breathing, is normally interpreted as soul. The two words have been sometimes interchangeable by early scholars, but some modern scholars believe they are different. It is their opinion that the scripture of Hebrews 4:12 shows that the soul and spirit can be divided, therefore, they must be different. This belief teaches that spirit (pneuma) is the breath of life from God, and that the soul (psuche) is the part of us that makes us human—that is, the mind, will, and emotions. Hebrews 4:12 says that the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. –KJV

Hebrew Definition of the Spirit and Soul

**Spirit: Roo-akh (*Ruach*) -Wind, breathe
Nesh-aw-maw (*n chamah*) - A puff of wind, divine inspiration, divine intellect.**

**Soul: Neh-fesh (nep hesh) - A breathing creature with appetite, desire, and mind.
A person, self.**

***Comment:** The easiest way to distinguish which definition is applicable to your focus scripture is to read the word in the complete context of the scripture. Reading a couple of chapters before and a couple more after your focus chapter usually helps to make things clearer.*

3. The Soul

The Definition of the Soul

Let's begin with the definition of the soul. Most teach the soul is the mind, will, and emotions. In my study of the Word of God, I've discovered that the soul is far bigger than the three components that I just mentioned. Keep in mind this main fact, according to Genesis 2:7, God said, "... man became a living soul." Since that is what he is, then everything else is departments and/or components of the soul. So, then the mind, will, emotions, heart, imagination, your choices, your character, etc., are all components of the soul. Also, according to the Bible, the spirit is hidden in the heart, which is in the center of the soul.

• I Peter 3:4 and • Job 27:3

•Psalms 51:6 > Notice two words in this scripture, parts and part. The "parts" is the soul and all its components, and the "hidden part" is the spirit which is hidden in the center of the heart. (Look at I Peter 3:4 again)

The Bible teaches that man is a soul with choices (Deuteronomy 30:19, Isaiah 1:19, John 8:31-32, Philippians 1:22). These choices come out of the soul, not the spirit. If all of our choices came out of the spirit they would be perfect, because the spirit was made perfect at salvation. (Hebrews 12:23) Most Christians live out of their souls, while disregarding the influence of the spirit; this, however, will get you in trouble with God now, and in the end. (Read Ephesians 5:1-7)

God, in His love and mercy gave us a born again spirit and called it His candle. (Proverbs 20:27) This is His Light (candle) in our souls that will always tell us what is right and righteous, but if the soul chooses not to follow the lead of the spirit (candle) within, then the soul can be judged.

Read Matthew 10:28 > Notice that the spirit is not mentioned in this scripture. Why? This is because the spirit will return to God if the soul goes to hell. (Ecclesiastes 12:5-7)

Think about how many Christians are deceived believing that old teaching 'I am a spirit and I have a soul'. Here is why this line of teaching is so deceptive, because it fills you with false hope and a false sense of security. As I study the scriptures, I find that the spirit is perfect, cannot sin, will not sin, and is like God, having a divine nature. (I John 3:9, Hebrew 2:23)

Now, if I believe the spirit is "*who I am*", then what happens to me when my soul is acting in contrast to the nature of the spirit? I come up with the excuse "I'm perfect, I'm on my way to heaven no matter what my soul is doing." That is the lie that has the Body of Christ off course and the Bible teaches no such thing. In Ezekiel 18:4 the Bible says, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die" and God says you are a soul.

Now, let us look at God's plan to save the soul. Take a look at Philippians 2:12. Notice Paul said, ". . . work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

- Point 1: He said *work out* your own salvation not work for it Ephesians 2:8 says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast." Remember, Jesus paid the price for this great salvation, but let me explain what Paul is talking about.
- Point 2: Look at Philippians 2:13 and remember throughout this teaching that it is God in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Yet, there is one word in these scriptures that the Body of Christ has missed when dealing with grace – ***OBEDIENCE!*** When a person calls on the name of Jesus Christ, according to Romans 10:13, the Bible says that he shall be saved. Titus 3:5, Ezekiel 36:25-27, 2 Corinthians 5:17, and 2 Corinthians 1:10 all explain how that salvation works. That person's spirit is instantly born again, his soul is renewed and refreshed, his body is sanctified, and hence, he is a new creature. God expects for every new creature to walk in obedience to Him after he has been saved in order to bring his soul to a complete born again state. Let me prove this by the scriptures:
 - 1 Peter 1:9 > The end of our faith is the salvation of our souls. This is why the Bible encourages you to stay in the faith. Read 2 Corinthians 13:5
 - James 1:21-25 > We have to do the Word for the soul to be born again. Notice in verse 25 James said 'a doer of the work'. This is the same work Paul was describing when he said 'work out your own salvation with fear and trembling'. This work is no more than obedience to the Word of God after your spirit has been born again.
 - 1 Peter 1:22-23 > Notice the words "seeing", "purified", "obeying," and "being born again". All of this takes place in the soul when we obey the Word. Notice again, that you have to "see to it" that you do this. Grace will not make you obey God. Obedience is a choice and God will not interfere with or take away your choice. There are over 1500 "if's" in the Bible. Such as:
 - Isaiah 1:19, "If you are willing and obedient you will eat the good of the land"
 - 1 Corinthians 15:1-2, "You are saved if you keep in memory..."
 - John 8:31-32, "You are my disciples if you continue . . ."
 - John 15: 6, "You will stay in Jesus if you abide in Him," etc.

So, anyone who tells you that Jesus' death on the cross, His grace, the Heavenly Father, or the Holy Spirit will make a person obey them doesn't understand the work of salvation. Yes, grace is free, but if you don't choose to co-operate with grace before and after you are saved, you will be lost. So, we are back to that one word for every soul, which is **OBEDIENCE!**

- I Thessalonians 5:22-23 > Notice that a person must obey God and abstain before He can sanctify them. Remember, God is the sanctifier, but the person has to choose to obey.
- 1 Peter 1:13-15 > Notice Peter said, "Gird up the loins of your mind;" in Romans 12:1-3, Paul says to renew your mind. The mind is a component of the soul. When

the mind is taught and chooses to obey the Word, there will always be a transformation. When we obey the Word, then we can look forward to Romans 8:24 which is the salvation of our souls and bodies, that we don't see yet.

•1 Peter 2:11 > In this scripture, Peter used the same word that Paul used—abstain, which is a choice the soul has to make. Now, keep in mind that it is the soul that has to make the choice, because the spirit is always willing (Matthew 26:41). If a person fails to obey God, God will not judge his spirit, but He will have to judge his soul. That is because the spirit is not at fault. This is also why Paul said to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, because if your soul fails to obey God, you lose out with God.

•James 5:19-20 > If a soul obeys "truth", he stays on a path called being 'born again'; yet, if he disobeys God and lives a lie—his soul is heading to death. Notice in these scriptures that it is the soul that goes to death and/or hell, because the spirit returns to God. Keep in mind, that the spirit in us is the candle of the Lord (Proverbs 20:27). Read also Ecclesiastes 12:5-7 and Matthew 10:28. For instance, let's look at Jesus. Even His spirit didn't go to hell with Him.

Let me explain. We all know that Jesus, himself, never sinned, but according to 2 Corinthians 5:21 He became sin for us. This was one of the reasons why He had to go to hell. But, notice while He was on the cross, before He died He said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." So, His spirit went back to God *who* gave it, His body went into the tomb, and it was His soul that went into hell alone. (Acts 2:27) Now, some will say that when Jesus made the statement, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" that He meant the Holy Spirit, but I beg to defer because Jesus also said, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" We all know that the Holy Ghost is God, and the Father is God, and when Jesus became sin, God the Father and God the Holy Ghost had to turn away from Him at that moment. Read Hebrews 1:3 which says He purged our sins by Himself.

Also, the Bible teaches that Jesus was made like unto us. (Hebrews 2:17) Man was born spirit, soul, and body and Jesus was born spirit, soul, and body. The Holy Ghost came upon Him when He was about 30 years old when John the Baptist baptized Him in water. So, when He said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," it was HIS spirit, not the Holy Spirit. Likewise, it was *the* Holy Spirit that made Him a quickening spirit.

The Spirit Nature of the Soul

It is important for us to understand the spirit nature of the soul; and by that I mean, the difference between natural, as opposed to, supernatural. Let's look at I Corinthians 15:45-49:

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

1 Corinthians 15:46, “Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.”

1 Corinthians 15:47, “The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven.”

1 Corinthians 15:48, “As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly.”

1 Corinthians 15:49, “And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

Notice the Word said in verse 45 that Adam was a living *soul* and in verse 46 it said that he was *not spiritual*. Now, if the Word says that he was not spiritual then we don't need to argue with the Word, we just need to find out what God is saying. If we finish reading verse 46 it continues to say that the first man was natural. So, here we see the contrast between the natural and the supernatural, or we could say between the earthly and the heavenly, which is exactly what is being described here.

When we take a close look into the Word of God we will find that the soul is also spirit, but it is a natural or *earthy* spirit. So when the Word said man was not spiritual, it simply meant that he was not supernatural, heavenly or divine. Man is spirit but not spirit as in the “God kind” as of yet. What I mean by this is that man cannot be of the “God Kind” until the new birth, or let me say, man's “God kindness” begins at the new birth, and not before. (Read Genesis 1:11-12; 20-25 & 26 and you will find God made everything after its kind, but man was made after *His image and likeness*. ***BIG DIFFERENCE!***) In Genesis 2:7 we see man's make up, which is spirit, soul, and body. Man is a soul, who has a spirit, and lives in a body. Man is a soul, his body was made from the dust of the earth; his soul and spirit were made from an earthly element called *wind, air, or breathe*. (Job 7:7, Ezekiel 37:1-10)

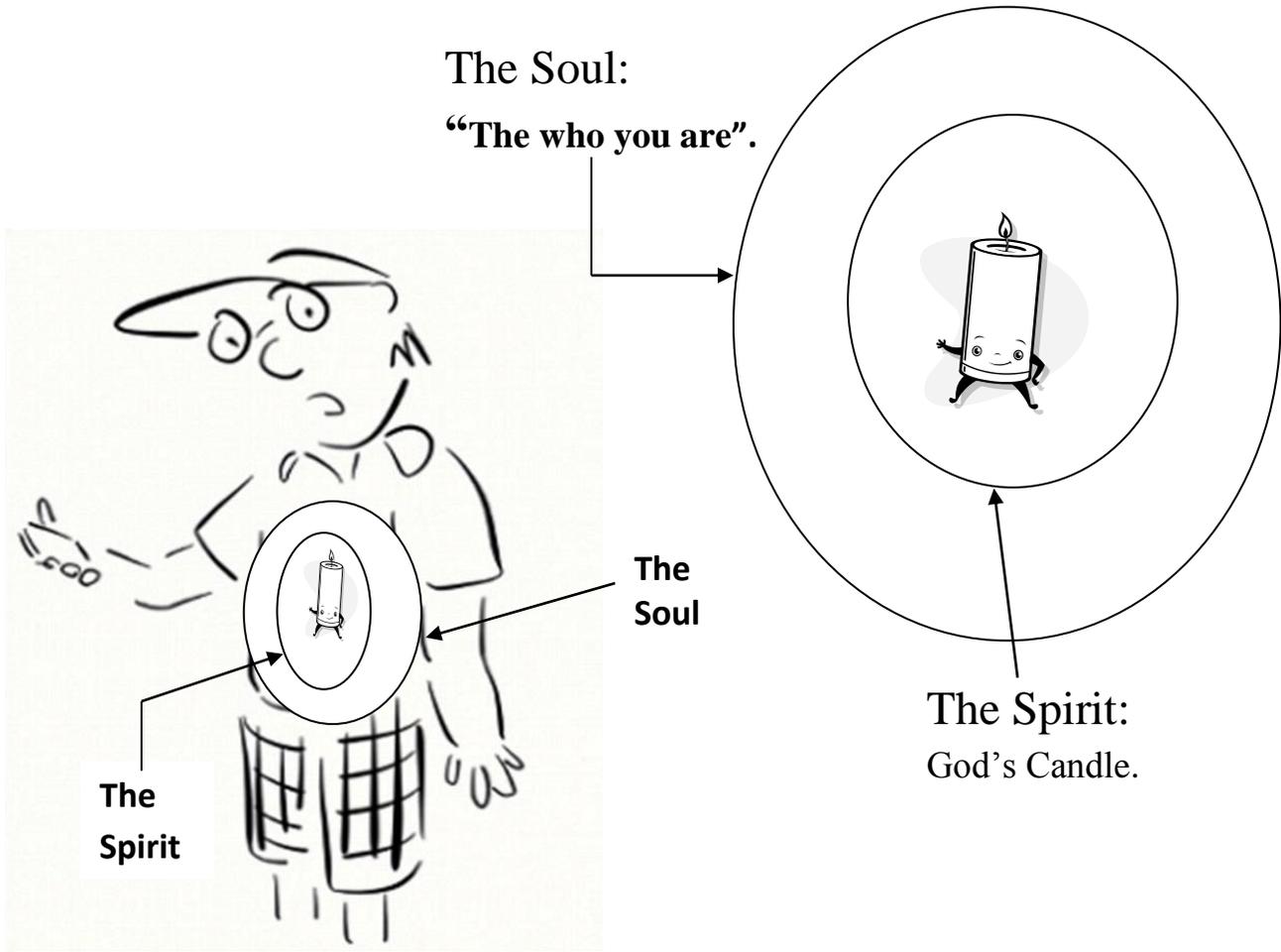
It is very important to know that the spirit and soul are both *natural spirits*. Although, they are both natural spirits, God chose to name one “soul” and the other “spirit”. Here is how we distinguish the two: the one called *the soul* is the person (Mark 8:34-38) and the one called *the spirit* is God's candle. (Proverbs 20:27)

EXAMPLE 1:

Soul → Mark 8:34-38: The *whosoever—his life, him, himself—are* all equal to the soul in these verses.

Spirit → Proverbs 20; 27: The candle in man is God's light, God's eye's, God's judge, and God's standard of righteousness within man's soul. It is not the “who he is” but, instead, the “what he has.” The soul is *the person*, as he is so named throughout the Bible, by God Himself.

SEE ILLUSTRATION ON NEXT PAGE



In Hebrews 4:12 we see spirit, soul, and body. The “joint and marrow” mentioned in that verse is the body. In the same verse it speaks of “dividing asunder” all three *departments*, which means that the entire Bible addresses each area of man. II Timothy 2:15 shows that when we study the scriptures, we need to pay close attention to see when the Word is addressing all three departments at once, or when the Word is addressing each individual department. When it comes to salvation, there is one overall plan, but it is administered in three different ways.

Let me explain. The spirit is saved and/or born again instantly when the soul makes the choice to call on Jesus. The soul himself is being saved as he walks in obedience to the Word, and at the end he is born again according to I Peter 1:9. The body will be changed at the last trump and then the whole salvation process will be complete (I Corinthians 15:51-53). So, when studying the Word it is important to know that some scriptures may be addressing one department, while not the others. If we don’t “rightly divide” as the Word is dividing, we will develop false doctrines such as “man is a spirit, he has a soul and lives in a body”. The truth is that “man is a soul, he has a spirit, and he lives in a body”. You may ask, what is the difference?

EXAMPLE 2:

The *soul* → the person—is being made perfect through his choices to obey the word of God.
(This is a life long walk of sanctification)

The *spirit* → God's candle— is made perfect at salvation.

The *body* → Man's earth suit— will be perfected at the last trump.

Many Christians are taught that they are a spirit, and immediately their minds think of “the candle of the Lord,” and not the soul. Now, as I have already discussed in this study guide, the Spirit, which is the candle of the Lord at the new birth, is made perfect, cannot sin, and will return to God. It becomes a problem and deception to think that *this* spirit (God's candle), is who I am; because it gives false hope. That is because many Christian's souls are sinning and, the way to excuse it is to say or think ‘I'm a spirit’; yet, on the other hand, if they realize ‘I am a soul’, then they will be motivated to be more responsible when they see that it is still possible to lose their soul, even though their spirit is born again.

Allow me to reiterate what I have just explained—the spirit and soul were made from the wind in the earth, and that is why they are natural or earthy. When salvation is complete, each department of mankind will be divine. The soul and the spirit will both be born from above, from what is called “the wind of heaven,” which is the Holy Spirit, and the body, will be made by the Word. (John 3:8, Acts 2:1-2, John 1:1-3 & 14); then what Apostle John said will become a reality (I John 3:2).

I want to encourage you, as I close this particular study guide, to meditate on these things and the Lord will give you understanding (2 Timothy 2:7). Remember this, that God is the one who put man together—spirit, soul, and body (Psalms 139:14, Genesis 2:7); and God is the only one who can take him apart—spirit, soul, and body (Hebrew 4:12). When man sinned, sin affected him, spirit, soul, and body; and, in order for God to completely restore a man, He had to restore him, spirit, soul, and body.

It was for this reason the Holy Spirit moved on me to teach on God's complete plan of salvation, according to the scriptures. Read 2 Corinthians 1:10 and you will see a picture of God's complete plan of salvation, according to the scriptures, for your spirit, soul, and body. We can say it like this: the spirit is saved, the soul is being saved, and the body will be saved. That's God's complete plan!

So, then every one of us will need to follow the Apostle Paul's example, when he said in 2 Timothy 4:7, "I have fought a good fight (1 Timothy 6:12—it's the fight of faith); I have finished my course (Hebrews 12:1-2 –the course is the race we're in) (See Acts 13:25, Acts 20:24); I have kept the faith (Notice it's all about staying in *the* faith.); and, Jude 1:3 says to contend for the faith. **WHY SHOULD WE CONTEND FOR THE FAITH?**

BECAUSE 1 PETER 1:9 SAYS AGAIN, "RECEIVING THE END OF YOUR FAITH WHICH IS THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOUL."

My brothers and sisters let no man deceive you. You cannot live in sin, after you have been born again, and make it in. Your soul is not yet born again, it is *being* born again. **OBEDIENCE** to the Word of God and His Holy Spirit, after salvation, is the key to the soul being *completely* born again. (Philippians 1:6)

There is much, much, more, but we will deal with it in another study guide. I pray Ephesians 1:16-18 upon you as I close. Thank you for your time and may the entire five-fold ministry begin to teach the truth to the Body of Christ regarding God's complete plan of salvation, according to the scriptures.

*From the desk of Apostle Curtis Louis
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To God Be the Glory!

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