

Triune Nature

Evidence of Our Triune nature

- 1 Th 5:23, “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - “spirit” (Gk, *pneuma*): wind, breath, spirit
 - “soul” (Gk, *psyche*): inner self or person, life, soul
 - “body” (Gk, *soma*): physical body, physical being
 - What does the phrase, “sanctify you through and through,” suggest about God’s intent?
- Creation Account
 - *bara* primarily means to create something out of nothing
 - Gen 1:1, “In the beginning God created [*bara*] the heavens and the earth.”
 - *asah* primarily means to form something using preexisting materials; “make, form, separate or differentiate”
 - Gen 1:21, “So God created [*bara*] the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind.”
 - Gen 1:27, “So God created [*bara*] man in his own image, in the image of God he created [*bara*] him.”
 - 3 creative acts, 3 occurrences of *bara*, each resulting in a new level of existence
- Conclusion: Both Old and New Testaments provide evidence of our triune, three-part nature.

Overview: Human Spirit

- According to my model of human being, human spirit is:
 - Eternal & exists in spiritual realm
 - Stable; experiences only small, slow changes after salvation; except for trauma
 - One’s true or fundamental nature; “character”

Overview: Human Psyche

- What is the traditional definition of soul?
- According to my model, human psyche is:
 - Eternal & exists in spiritual realm
 - Volatile/dynamic (changes easily, quickly)
 - Directs the outward expression of ourselves, our personality

Spirit and Psyche — Distinct From Each Other

- 1 Th 5:23 [read earlier]

- Heb 4:12, “For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow.”
 - What does this tell you about distinguishing between soul and spirit?
- The Bible attributes similar functions to both spirit and psyche
 - Bitterness
 - Gen 26:35 “They were a source of grief to Isaac and Rebekah.”
 - “grief,” Heb: “bitter **spirit**”
 - 1 Sam 1:10, “In bitterness of **soul** Hannah wept much and prayed to the Lord.”
 - Distress
 - Isa 54:6, “The LORD will call you back as if you were a wife deserted and distressed in **spirit**.”
 - 2 Ki 4:27, “Leave her alone! She is in bitter distress.”
 - “she,” Heb: “her *nepes*/soul”
 - Rejoicing
 - Lk 1:47, “... and my **spirit** rejoices in God my Savior.”
 - Ps 35:9, “Then my **soul** will rejoice in the Lord and delight in his salvation.”
 - Vexed, troubled (OT)
 - 1 Ki 21:5 (ESV), “But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, ‘Why is your **spirit** so vexed that you eat no food?’”
 - Ps 88:3, “For my **soul** is full of trouble.”
 - Vexed, troubled (NT)
 - Jn 13:21, “After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in **spirit** and testified, ‘I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me.’”
 - Jn 12:27, “Now my **heart** is troubled”
 - ‘heart,’ Gk: *psyche*/soul
- Conclusion: Spirit and psyche are distinct from each other, yet scripture seems to attribute similar functions to both.

Spirit and Psyche — Both are Eternal

- Eternal existence, either life or punishment
 - Mt 25:46, “Then they will go away to **eternal** punishment, but the righteous to **eternal** life.”
 - Jn 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have **eternal** life.”
 - 1 Th 4:17, “After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord **forever**.”
 - Jude 7, “They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of **eternal** fire.”

- Rev 20:10, 15, “¹⁰ And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night **for ever and ever**.... ¹⁵ If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”
- Spirit exists after physical death
 - 1 Pe 3:18-20, “¹⁸ For Christ ... was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ through whom also he went and preached to the **spirits** in prison ²⁰ who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built.”
 - spirits (Gk, *pneuma*)
 - Who were these spirits, according to this verse, and why did Jesus preach to them?
 - How long had they been there?
- Psyche exists after physical death
 - If Jesus preached to the spirits after his death (1 Pet 3:18-20), what does that indicate about their awareness and ability to make decisions?
 - Rev 20:4, “I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the **souls** of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God.”
 - Where did this scene occur?
 - “souls” (Gk, *psyche*)
 - Who were these souls and what had happened to them?
 - Story of the rich man & Lazarus, Lk 16
 - vv 19-20, “There was a rich man ... [and] at his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus.”
 - v 22, “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried.”
 - What happened to each of them when they died?
 - v 23 (referring to the rich man), “In [Hades], where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.”
 - How aware was the rich man of himself and his surroundings?
 - vv 27-28, “²⁷ Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father’s house, ²⁸ for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.””
 - What does this reveal about the rich man’s abilities?
 - A person’s psyche continues to exist and is fully functional after physical death
 - What happens to a person’s physical body after death?
 - Specifically, what happens to a person’s brain?

- Conclusion: The spirit and psyche are both eternal and exist in the spiritual realm right now.

Overview: Human Body

- Temporal; only lasts a while
- Exists only in the physical realm, can only sense that realm
- Gen 3:19, “By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”
 - physical body made from elements of physical earth, will return to it after death
- Ro 6:12, “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.”
 - “body” (Gk, *soma*)

We’re Highly Integrated

- Reading the Bible is one of the most important ways for us to build up our spirits. Which of our parts are involved in that process?
- Rom 10:17 (ESV), “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”
 - “hearing” (Gk, *akoe*): (1) hearing; (2) ability to hear; (3) what is heard, the message; (4) pay attention to, listen carefully; etc.
 - According to this verse, where does faith come from?
 - The spiritual quality of faith is the result of physically hearing or reading scripture and the psyche processing what scripture says.
 - How does faith, a spiritual quality or capacity, affect our attitude and choices (psyche)?
 - How does this ultimately affect our actions (body)?
- What is a psychosomatic illness?
- How might a healthy spirit affect the psyche?
- How might a wounded spirit affect the psyche?
- What effect might a long term physical illness have on one’s mental state (psyche)?
- How might that also affect one’s spirit?
- Point: We are highly integrated beings, with our spirits, psyches and bodies working together, cooperating and supporting each other. What affects one part of us can affect the rest.

Closing

- You are a spirit being with a psyche, temporarily living in a physical body.

Blessing

“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Th 5:23)

Proposed Model for Human Structure

Human Spirit	
Description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● eternal ● exists in spiritual realm ● stable 	Traits or functions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● source of human life ● matures, strengthens ● interacts with God ● character (true self)
Human Psyche	
Description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● eternal ● exists in spiritual realm ● volatile/dynamic 	Traits or functions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● personality (expression of oneself)
Human Body	
Description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● exists in physical realm ● temporal 	Traits or functions