

Human Will and Decisiveness

Will

- Spirit includes the will, which exhibits determination, purpose, resolve, aim, intent
- Scriptural examples
 - Deut 2:30, “But Sihon king of Heshbon refused to let us pass through. For the LORD your God had made his **spirit** stubborn and his heart obstinate in order to give him into your hands, as he has now done.”
 - “stubborn” (Heb, *qushah*): (1) be hard, stubborn; (2) be cruel, severe; (3) be harsh
 - “spirit” (Heb, *ruah*): breath, wind, spirit
 - What does the phrase, “stubborn spirit,” suggest about the origin of the king’s attitude?
 - Ps 51:10, “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast **spirit** within me.”
 - “spirit” (Heb, *ruah*):
 - “steadfast” (Heb, *kun*): established, prepared, made ready, fixed, certain
 - What does “steadfast spirit” indicate?
 - Ps 51:12, “Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing **spirit**, to sustain me.”
 - How does this verse associate a person’s will with their spirit?
 - Mt 26:41, “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The **spirit** is willing, but the body is weak.”
 - “spirit” (Gk, *pneuma*): breath, wind, spirit
 - How does this verse associate a person’s will with their spirit?
 - Acts 19:21 (ESV), “Now after these events Paul **resolved** in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem.”
 - Was Paul’s resolve a function of psyche or spirit?
- Conclusion: Will is a function of our spirits.

Decisiveness

- Psyche has function of decisiveness (making choices or decisions)
 - Psyche receives inputs from your spirit and body
 - Compares those inputs with its own intellect, feelings, memories (functions of psyche)
 - Then decides how to respond
 - Sin warped the psyche, made it dominant, so it’s accustomed to being in control
 - Your body is accustomed to being indulged
 - Your psyche is accustomed to being in control and is biased toward your physical existence, including the world and it’s ways.

- Scriptural examples
 - Deut 21:14, “If you are not pleased with her, let her go **wherever she wishes.**”
 - “wherever she wishes” (Heb, *nephesh*) or psyche
 - How does this verse associate decisiveness with the psyche?
 - Ps 27:12, “Do not turn me over to the **desire** of my foes.”
 - “desire” (Heb, *nephesh*) or psyche
 - What does this associate with the psyche?
 - Mk 12:30, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your **soul** and with all your mind and with all your strength.”
 - What does this verse suggest about our choices?
 - Col 3:23 “Whatever you do, work at it with all your **heart**, as working for the Lord, not for men.”
 - “heart” (Gk, *psyche*)
 - How would this affect our decisions in our work or anything else we do?
 - Acts 3:23, “**Anyone** who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.”
 - “anyone” (literal Gk: “every *psyche*”)
 - What does “listen to him” mean?
 - What does this verse reveal about the consequences of our choices?
 - Rom 13:1-2,¹ “**Everyone** must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.² Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.”
 - “everyone” (literal Gk: “every *psyche*”)
 - Based on this passage, explain how our free will and decisions affect our standing before human authorities and God.
 - Php 1:27-28, “I know that you stand firm in one **spirit**, contending as one **man** for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you.”
 - “spirit” (Gk, *pneuma*)
 - “man” (Gk, *psyche*)
 - Explain what this verse reveals about the actions of the spirit and psyche.
 - 1 Pet 1:22, “Now that you have purified **yourselfes** by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.”
 - “yourselves” (Gk, *psyche*)
 - What decision does this describe and what was the result?
- Conclusion: Decisiveness is a function of our psyches.

Conflict between will and decisiveness

- Ro 7:15, 18-19 (ESV), “¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.... ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.”
 - “desire” (Gk, *thelo*) primarily means: purpose, willingness
 - When you were a sinner, what kind of nature did you have?
 - Do you still have debris from your sinful life that continues to influence your thinking and decisions?
- Conclusion: As we submit our psyches to our spirits, our will (function of spirit) affects our decisions (function of psyche)
- God will not violate human will

Spiritual Disciplines (Action)

- Receiving spiritual nourishment is not enough
- Service
 - Mt 20:25-28, “²⁵ Jesus called them together and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ²⁶ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’”
 - What example did Jesus set?
 - Heb 1:14, “Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?”
 - According to this verse, what function do angels perform?
 - Gal 5:13 (ESV), “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”
 - What is our responsibility toward others?
 - 1 Pet 4:10, “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”
 - How should we use our grace-gifts (aptitudes, spiritual gifts)?
 - Jesus is our prototype and he set an example of humbling himself to serve; God sends angels to serve us; we’re to serve others in love
 - Rev 22:3, “The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.”
 - Not every act of service needs to be a discipline
 - However, service as a discipline helps us develop humility, which counters self-centeredness, the basis of all sin

- Fellowship
 - Acts 2:42, “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”
 - “fellowship” (Gk, *koinonia*): (1) fellowship, close mutual association; (2) sharing, participation; (3) willing contribution
 - Heb 10:25, “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”
 - What form of service does this describe and who should receive it?
 - In what context should that happen?
 - Ro 1:12, “that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith.”
 - When are believers most frequently encouraged by each other’s faith?
 - Christianity is not to be a solitary experience; it’s a relationship, not a practice or lifestyle
 - Eph 4:16, “From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”
 - 1 Th 5:11, “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”
 - Fellowship creates an environment for believers to build each other up; i.e., make each other spiritually stronger
- Confession
 - Ro 10:9, “That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”
 - Jas 5:16, “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”
 - This kind of confession functions only in relationship
 - Confession or admitting our weaknesses and failures increases our humility, and creates opportunities to experience unconditional love and forgiveness
 - It also allows others to pray with and for us, to help us as needed, which benefits everyone involved
- Submission
 - This involves humility, honesty, confession and restitution as appropriate; involves yielding to those in authority over you
 - 1 Co 16:15-16, “¹⁵ You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. I urge you, brothers, ¹⁶ to submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work, and labors at it.”
 - Based on verse 15, how spiritually mature were people in that household?

- Why should other believers submit to such people?
- Eph 5:21, “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”
 - According to this, who should we submit to and how would that be beneficial to us?
- 1 Pet 5:5, “Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’”
 - What’s the significance of referring to submission and humility together?
- We defer to the experience and insight of those in our fellowship who are qualified to direct our spiritual growth and development
- Submission strengthens us spiritually by increasing our humility and allowing us to benefit from the spiritual maturity of others
- Conclusion: Spiritual disciplines of action focus on strengthening our spirit and helping it dominate the rest of our being

Closing

- Your reborn spirit is committed to conforming to God’s will. Until you transform your psyche so you knowingly and automatically embrace his will, your spirit and psyche will be at odds with each other.
- Spiritual disciplines of action will strengthen your spirit, which helps it prevail over your psyche and conform it to the mind of Christ.

Blessing

May the Lord help you develop the will — determination, purpose and resolve — to do whatever is necessary to strengthen your spirit.

Proposed Model for Human Structure

Human Spirit	
Description	Traits or functions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● eternal ● exists in spiritual realm ● stable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● source of human life ● matures, strengthens ● interacts with God ● basic character (true self) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ aptitudes (spiritual gifts, natural abilities) ○ traits (fruit of the spirit, other godly traits) ● thought ● knowledge & memory ● intuition & revelation ● will
Human Psyche	
Description	Traits or functions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● eternal ● exists in spiritual realm ● volatile/dynamic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● personality (expression of oneself) ● thought ● knowledge & memory ● decisiveness
Human Body	
Description	Traits or functions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● exists in physical realm ● temporal 	