

The Nature of Man - Spirit, Trichotomy

by John Murray

The sermon explores the complex nature of man as a union of body, soul, and spirit, emphasizing the significance of each component in understanding human identity and existence.

Topics: "Nature Of Man"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of the soul and its relationship to the human constitution. They argue that the soul encompasses the entirety of a person's life, including their intellectual and moral faculties. They differentiate the soul from the spirit, which is the faculty of God consciousness and the seat of spiritual mind. The speaker emphasizes that while the soul is the seat of reason, it does not have a direct connection to God, whereas the spirit does. They conclude that man is composed of both body and soul/spirit, and that the soul/spirit survives death and retains its identity.

Transcript

Let us pray. O Lord, our God, do Thou grant that we might rightly interpret the identity that is ours, the nature Thou hast given us, so that we may bring that nature which Thou hast given us into perfect service of Thy kingdom, that every thought might be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. And may we ever realize that the adornment of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ depends upon our understanding of that revelation which Thou hast given us and the proper application of it to our own thought, to our own lives, and to our own ambitions.

In Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen. Now I have to give my own perception of the evidence bearing upon this caption that man is soul or spirit separated from the body and death as spirit and even calls disembodied persons spirits and represents the disembodied state as one of consciousness, as one identity.

So I will just give you some references. Matthew 27.50 Luke 23.46 John 19.30 Acts 7.59 Hebrews 12.23 1 Peter 3.19 with which also should be compared 2 Corinthians 5.1-10 Philippians 1.22-23 Luke 16.19-31 Luke 23.43 Now this is a feature which let us in rationality take into account the state to our first date of continuity of our personal identity which now is in the disembodied state in the age to come subsequent to the resurrection. I am going to give you now a summary statement for what may be inferred from these data.

On the basis of these biblical data we must conclude that man is soul or spirit as well as body. There is an aspect to man's personality distinct from what is bodily. We may state that aspect by saying that there is an entity apart from which the body is not a living organism.

An entity endowed with different properties and is therefore not subject to the dissolution of which the body is susceptible and which it undergoes at death. An entity endowed with different properties and is therefore not subject to the dissolution of which the body is susceptible and which the body undergoes at death. This entity survives death and retains its identity and differentiating character.

By virtue of this entity man retains consciousness and self-consciousness is aware of his consciousness and is active in a well and mode of existence suited to the disembodied state. The highest exercises of man rational, moral and religious beings are predictable of man in virtue of this aspect which belongs to his metaphysical being. This soul or spirit exists as a substantial abiding entity exists as a substantial abiding entity in which all that we are most characteristically as created in the image of God has its seat, unity and abiding meaning.

Meaning, abiding meaning is just to say that there is an ego an ego, spiritual in its nature indivisible and indestructible continuously subsistent and active through all the changes of life in this world in the intermediate states and in the to come.

For man, identity, body these are dependent one upon the other the integrity of personal life in perfect harmony but we are not able to discover the precise nature the precise nature of the union in respect of body and spirit we do know that this union is organic, intensive and so constituted by the creator perfect correlation and coordination in the two aspects we now come to deal with the subject irritating to deal with it this tripartite metaphysical man man's soul and man's body this is a viewpoint that was adopted into from after where too many concepts and too many sources well, Apollinaris Apollinaris because the Apollinarian human nature certain affinities with you dichotomy traditionally and more or less consisted with this viewpoint that in a system of biblical psychology we

have we have the tripartite nature of man of man that a half of that subject has received very popular popular exposition and admission field well, let me just give you one or two examples notable name is duality that man metaphysically is a synthesis of two absolutely distinct elements metaphysical body and spirit he is quite insistent that the soul belongs to the imitative man's metaphysical being immaterial super sensuous aspect of man's being nevertheless so that these are not simply two aspects but two separable constituents two separable constituents of the immaterial aspect of man's nature two separable constituents now this requires definition if they are separable constituents how are they distinguished well the spirit proceeds immediately from god himself and it is the spirit

that carries the divine image the spirit that carries the divine image since the fall this spirit has retired into itself has retired into itself and has become for man as it were extinguished in any case the spirit no more is dormant in the natural man in any case the spirit no more is dormant in the natural and is restored restored only by the provision of redemptive grace only when faith is formed in a man the soul is life the spirit life emanating when united with a body since the fall the nature of man has lost its equilibrium lost its equilibrium because the spirit has been extinguished or at least is dormant and so the soul soul becomes an unessential disharmony of energies and passions now a word about that is a very eloquent very brief position the soul is the life of man in the

most inclusive sense the life of man embraces the intellectual and moral life the intellectual and moral package in other words the soul includes all the energies that are natural to man and necessary to a definition of human nature when man has fallen soul continues to be man spirit faculty of god consciousness the seat of spiritual mindedness it is that through which god is worshiped reason but reason has a representative knowledge spirit has a precept because spirit is the sanctuary where god makes himself known since the fall the spirit does not operate in the unregenerate man natural man because indeed spirit does not operate in the natural man and that is why the natural man soul is man man is dwelt by soul regenerate man is anthropos you know that because man indwelt by spirit

dwelt by soul regeneration it is the function of the holy spirit in regeneration to awaken this spirit this dormant god consciousness regeneration controls the animal nature of man it purifies the intellectual and moral it purifies the soul but it's special and primal to quicken the spiritual quickens traumatic heart when applied divine meaning traumatic heart spiritual man dwelt quickens spirit nature is now human nature again under the hegemony of the spirit harmoniously and appealing he offers objection to wanton worshiped and honored was of that western age well now that's a very very very close line I am now going on to pretty fellow now this youth might have to be much deeper at four hours in a semester four semester hours I'm going to make the first concerns Genesis 2 7

misinterpreted misinterpreted by Jason and misinterpreted by what I mean in Genesis 2 7 soul in the human constitution it's not a tertium quid third sign living soul is a designation of man designation of man in his entirety it does not specify an element in his being specifies the being that he is namely living breathing creature living soul in Genesis 2 7 is a designation of man in his completeness as a creature formed by truth just from the ground and breathing into his nostrils of the breath of life I shall come back to take perhaps its significance for biblical use now I second the observation I'm going to make but I think it's fatal to the trichotomic construction of human nature namely that personality in his entirety personality in his entirety is sometimes in scripture described

in terms of body and soul and at other times in terms of body or flesh evidence here I think is very significant you remember Matthew 10 28 Matthew 6 25 Matthew 10 25 they are not able to kill the body but they are not able to kill the soul and these texts are surely intended to describe the whole personality and therefore intended that the whole personality is comprised in body and soul you find the same thing in 1 Corinthians 7 34 which we also had yesterday 1 Corinthians 7 34 in terms of body and spirit and in 2 Corinthians 7 1 in terms of flesh and spirit and flesh these texts are intended to be an embracive description of the elements of human nature for what is emphasized in these is the embraciveness of sanctification of the perfect we are to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness

of flesh and spirit we are to be holy in body and spirit whereas in other instances you see the embraciveness of human nature is expressed in terms of body and soul well you have various other examples of that you do have other examples of that but I will not burden you with any in order to facilitate usage of the personality of the body and soul at other times is that the soul as well as the spirit the soul as well as the spirit is designated to be the seat of the highest spiritual exercise the soul as well as the spirit is said to be the organ the organ of the highest spiritual exercise now there is a trichotomic contention trichotomic contention is that the spirit as distinct from the soul is the organ of spirit the organ of god consciousness therefore the organ of the highest

spiritual exercise from various angles first of all sorrow or grief nothing in our in our regenerate state will be sorrow and if sorrow is because it is exercises of soul conflict trichotomic contention well the buzzer will

go very shortly so i stop at that point

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