

Freedom From Souliness

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the difference between soul and spirit, and how living according to the desires of the soul can lead to deception and spiritual stagnation.

Duration: 56:46

Scripture: Matthew 12:46, Luke 16:15

Topics: "Spiritual Discernment", "Christian Obedience"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of discerning between soul and spirit in Christianity to avoid deception. It highlights the dangers of souliness, focusing on emotional manipulation, intellectual stimulation, and false healings. The speaker urges listeners to prioritize obedience to God over emotional experiences or intellectual knowledge, pointing out the need to have a clear conscience and worship in spirit and truth.

Transcript

Okay, we're going to study now the fifth study in sixfold freedom that we have in Christ. So if you remember what we've already covered, we've seen a number of cages from which the Lord wants us to be free. We saw first of all the cage of sin.

That's the most important one and the most serious of all. And then the cage of legalism or a legalistic attitude, which many people don't sometimes acknowledge as a cage. And so if you don't acknowledge it, you'll remain in that cage forever.

Because, you know, the devil's aim is to prevent us from knowing that something is a cage. And then many people also don't think of the world system as a cage in which you can be trapped and hindered from flying because worldliness influences your thought processes. You place value on the things that the world places value on.

Jesus once said that, Luke 16, 15, all that the world considers great is an abomination to God. And if you also consider great what the world considers great, then you're involved with, you're appreciating something which is an abomination to God. We use the things of the world, but we're not to consider any of them great.

One of the great tactics of Satan is to make us think that something is great. Then he can very easily make you fall into it. And he has convinced all the people in the world that sex is a great thing.

And so a lot of people fall into it. But if you can call the bluff of the devil and say sex is not a great thing. Imagine if you young people can call the devil's bluff and say, sex is not a great thing.

You know, Jesus is great. He won't have power over you in that area. And the other thing the devil convinces people is that money is a great thing.

Money is a tremendous thing, the world says. And if you can call the devil's bluff there and say, money is not a great thing. I'm sorry, I don't think money is a great thing.

He won't get far over you there. He's got to make something great in your eyes before he can get power over you in that area. So if Jesus is always great in your eyes, he's just lost out.

And the Holy Spirit is always trying to change our value system to show us that what the world considers great is not actually great. But Jesus is great. And the things of God's word, those are the great things.

And if you can be convinced about that, the devil won't have power over you in that area because you won't be running after. And if you don't get something, you say, well, that's not great. And if you didn't get the newspaper one day, do you weep and lament over it? Not at all.

You say, that's okay. It's not important. So just make sure the devil doesn't fool you by making you think something is great, which God doesn't consider great.

That's one of the very simple ways of overcoming temptation. So that's the cage of the world. And then we thought of the fourth cage, which is fear.

Fear is another thing. I mentioned yesterday that it's not a weakness. As long as you call it a weakness, you'll never overcome it.

But when you look at it as a sin, do not fear. Put it in the same category as do not commit murder. Do not commit adultery.

Do not steal. Do not tell lies. Do not fear.

But very most believers don't put it in that same category. They put it in another category. And that's why they never overcome fear.

They overcome adultery. They overcome murder. They overcome stealing.

They overcome telling lies. But they never overcome fear because that's not put in the same category. So that devil's got many ways.

When you know the truth, the truth will set you free. Okay. Now, today, in number five, we want to think of another cage.

And I'd like to call that souliness. Freedom from souliness. Now, souliness is not a word that you find... I can't show you a scripture for it.

But the Bible says that man is spirit, soul, and body. And you can live according to the lusts of your body. And you know you won't be a spiritual man.

Now, many people stop there. Man is spirit, soul, and body. Okay.

They say, if I don't live according to the lusts of my body, I will live in the spirit. Not necessarily. You can overcome all the lusts of your body and live in the soul.

And still not live in the spirit. In fact, there are a lot of intellectuals in the world. They don't steal.

They don't... Many of them don't commit adultery. They don't kill. They're very upright, honest people.

They are interested in research and science. And they live very decent lives. They're not spiritual.

They're not living according to the lusts of their body. In fact, they despise people who live according to the lusts of their body. But they are no better.

Because they are living according to the lusts or the desires of the soul. And if we don't understand this, that can be another trap, another cage. Like the desires of our body can keep us trapped.

If we live in the desires of the soul, that doesn't look so ugly and so dirty as the desires of the body. But it's just as much bringing us into captivity. And I want to try and explain what this means, so that we understand a little bit.

Now, if you're a new Christian, don't worry if you don't understand it. If you're newly born again, it's like telling a kindergarten student, we're talking about multiplication here. And if you can't understand multiplication, don't worry.

Few years later, you'll understand multiplication. Right now, you may be in the place of ABC and addition. Okay, fine, forget it.

So if something you hear today, you don't really understand it, never mind. Just leave it aside. Maybe one day in the future, it will be clear.

But I believe that some of us need to understand. And personally, my belief is that there is so much deception in Christendom today, where the people are preaching, their doctrines are all correct. But their preaching and their ministry is not in the Holy Spirit.

It's in the soul. And because people are not able to distinguish between soul and spirit, multitudes of Christians are being deceived by something soulish, thinking it is spiritual. Now, in the Bible, let me show you, first of all, in 1 Corinthians and chapter 3, you see in that last section, chapter 2, verse 14, up to chapter 3, verse 1. From chapter 2, verse 14, to chapter 3, verse 1 of 1 Corinthians, it describes of three types of men.

First of all, chapter 3, verse 1, a man of the flesh or a carnal man. That is a man who lives according to the lusts of the body, a man of flesh or a carnal man. He lives according to the lusts of his body.

And then in chapter 2, verse 14, it speaks about a natural man. And the word there is a soulish man. The word for soul, in the Greek language from which the New Testament was translated, is a word called psuche or P-S-Y-C-H-E, from which we get the word psychology.

Psyche is a Greek word which means soul. So a person who lives according to psyche, psuche, is a soulish person. That's what's described in verse 14.

A natural man or a soulish man, he can't accept the things of the spirit of God. In other words, a man, a very clever man, he may not live according to the lusts of his flesh, but he's highly intellectual, but he can't accept the things of the spirit of God. And it's not just intellectual.

He may be very emotional, and he still can't accept the things of the spirit of God. Some of it is foolishness to him, even though he doesn't live according to the lusts of the flesh. He's a little better than the carnal man in terms of decency of life.

He's easier to deal with than with the carnal man who may be a crook and a cheat. This man may be very upright, sincere, intellectual. You know, nice if you're an intellectual type, you'll enjoy talking to him about intellectual things, but he's not at all spiritual.

And then the third is in chapter 3, verse 1, where it speaks about a spiritual man. So here we read of three types of men. Spiritual man, soulish man, carnal man.

Which corresponds to what we read in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 of man being spirit, soul, and body. So that's what we want to think about. What does it mean to not live according to the lusts of the body and not live according to the lusts of the soul, but to live spiritually? Now, I want to explain this a little further.

You know, when God gave Moses the pattern of the tabernacle, the word tabernacle means a dwelling place. And God said, make a tabernacle for me to dwell. So the tabernacle was the dwelling place of God.

And that was to be a picture of Jesus Christ, of you and me, and of the church. Okay, it's a picture of man. Who is supposed to be the tabernacle of God.

And that's why the Old Testament tabernacle, when God gave the pattern, was divided into three parts. When we studied the tabernacle, you remember, the first was the outer court, which everybody could see, visible. And then there were two parts which were covered, invisible, called the holy place and most holy place.

Exactly like man. There's one part, visible, that's our body, and two parts that are covered, invisible, soul and spirit. The tabernacle was an exact picture of man.

Now, God dwelt with a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire, not in the outer court, not in the holy place, but in the most holy place, teaching us that in the New Covenant, God will not be dwelling in our body. It's not in my hands or in my ears or anywhere. It's not even in my soul.

You know, we understand He doesn't live in our body in the sense I can't touch God. I mean, I don't feel God in my hands, which shows that He's not in my body. But what many people don't understand, I think many of you too, is that God does not dwell in our soul.

Once you understand that, it'll liberate you, it'll set you free from a cage. He dwells in the deepest part of us, the spirit. So if you think of it as three concentric circles, okay, then God is in our spirit.

And from our spirit, He enlightens our soul and even gives strength in our body. It's true, but God dwells in our spirit. Now, how does this affect us? Because a lot of people, if you think God dwells in your soul, you try to use your mind to try to remember, okay, Jesus is with me now.

And I'm concentrating on the Lord is here and I'm using my mind to think about Him. And then I go and do some other work and my mind is fixed on something else. And I say, hey, I can't concentrate on the Lord.

He's not here now. Why is that? Because you think that God dwells in your mind. He doesn't dwell in your mind.

Your mind can be fixed on 101 things. He doesn't disturb God in your spirit. It's a great liberation to know that.

Because some people are trying to practice, like the Roman Catholics say, the presence of God in their mind. They try to use their mind and say, okay, Jesus is here now, He's with me. Now, how long can you think like that? After some time, you forget it because you got other things to do.

What happens then? When He goes away from your thinking, is He disappeared? No, He doesn't dwell in our soul. If He dwelt in our soul, then you'd have to think about Him. He's here now.

And when I go down, I got to think He's coming with me now or somewhere else. And how long can I do that? And a lot of people try to live this type of life, thinking it's Christianity. It's Roman Catholic mysticism.

You're not supposed to live like that. Because Paul didn't live like that. Even Jesus didn't live like that.

So, we can have our mind fixed on something and that doesn't take away God's presence from us. There's something deeper than mind where God dwells and that's in our spirit. You see, the other part of our soul, our soul has got three parts.

The mind, the emotions, which is our feeling and our will, decision-making power. The second thing we need to know is that God doesn't dwell in our emotions. That's also very important for us, particularly to remember when we pray or when we sing songs on Sunday morning or when you're in a very emotional meeting.

You know, you can be some preachers have the ability to whip up people's emotions to such an extent they start crying or they start laughing. Now, God is not in your crying and God is not in your laughing. And you can sing, you know, somebody can write a beautiful hymn which makes you weep and you feel all emotional.

But God is not there. No, there are a lot of people who weep who are living in bad lives. God is not with them because God is not in our emotions.

He's in our spirit. And somebody can go and fight with his wife and come and feel very emotional on Sunday morning. You think God is with him? God is miles away from him.

But he feels so emotional and he may even speak in tongues and think he had a wonderful time with God. He had a wonderful time in his emotions. I mean, the Buddhists have that with their chanting.

They have a wonderful time in their emotions. And there are Muslims and Hindus who have their yoga and they have that experience of being transported out of the body and all that type of thing they talk about and enlightenment like Buddha said. It's all in the soul.

I believe they have some experiences. I don't question it. Because the soul has such tremendous powers that you know just like there's a lot of difference between say me and a bodybuilder.

I mean a bodybuilder who's muscular can do a hundred things which I can't do. How did he manage that? Because he spent years developing his body. I didn't have time to develop my body like that.

And he's able to do a number of things with his body which astound me. Amazing how he can do it. There are people who pull trains and trucks and all that with their teeth and all that type of stuff.

I say, boy, it's amazing. Because they've developed their body to such an extent. Now in the same way with yoga, Buddhism, people develop their soul to such an extent that they can do powerful things with their soul which you and I can't even dream about.

You know there are powerful intellectuals who've developed their intellect to such an extent they can grasp things and explain things and do so many things because they have spent years developing their mind just like that bodybuilder spent years developing his body. In the same way, there are a lot of people who have an emotional Christianity. All of their Christianity is in their emotions.

They feel if they are emotional, God is close to them. When they feel like weeping, when they sing a song, they say, oh, Jesus is so near. I mean that's as foolish as the intellectual trying to imagine that Jesus is right now with me.

It's got nothing to do with this. The presence of the Lord with you or not with you does not depend on your mind. It does not depend on your emotions.

It depends on your spirit. And the most important part of your spirit is your conscience. Whether your conscience is clear.

If your conscience is absolutely clear, that means every sin that you know of has been confessed to God. And every sin that you know of where you hurt another human being has been confessed to a human being. Everybody you cheated, you have returned the money.

Every lie you told, you have confessed it. Every angry expression you made, you have asked forgiveness. Your conscience is clear.

God is with you. It's got nothing to do with whether you think or you feel. But if that's not clear, you can weep like anything.

When you sing a song or feel emotional, you're just deceiving yourself like a lot of people in many Pentecostal charismatic meetings. The emphasis there is not on conscience. See, particularly over the last 25 years, there's been a tremendous emphasis in Christendom on praise and worship.

In one sense, it is good. But if you're not careful, you can be deceived. Haven't you all seen a Christian movie where Jesus died on the cross? Almost every time I see a Christian movie, I weep when I see Jesus suffering so much.

People who saw the passion of the Christ, they wept when they saw it. But it didn't make them spiritual. Temporary.

It's emotion. And emotion doesn't make anybody spiritual. Like understanding.

You know, you can understand something, it doesn't make you spiritual. We can say that spirit is deeper. When Jesus spoke about the foolish man who built his house on the sand, and the wise man who dug

deep and went through the sand to hit rock.

You know what the sand is? The sand is your soul. So when you hear God's word and you just go, it only goes as far as your mind, you don't have a stable life. You say, no, it goes deeper to your emotions.

You get all excited. You'll still have an unstable life. It's still sand.

You have to go down and hit rock. Blast the rock and that is your will. That's when the word of God can penetrate into your spirit.

See Hebrews chapter 4 and verse 12. Hebrews chapter 4 and verse 12. It says here, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the dividing point of soul and spirit.

How far does the word of God penetrate? To that dividing borderline between soul and spirit. And you know what that borderline is? Your will. So the word of God has penetrated all the way through your body, which is your eyes and your ear, if you're reading or hearing, it's gone through your body.

It's gone through your mind. Right now it's going through your mind and you can hear something which can stir your emotion. And the word of God goes past that to the point where it says, what are you going to do about it now? Are you willing to yield your will and say not my will, but God's will? Then the rock is blasted and you have put a foundation on the rock.

If you haven't said not my will, but God's will to that particular thing God is speaking to you about, you can come here for hundreds of conferences. Many people are just understanding in their mind, stirred in their emotions and they go away and say, we had a wonderful conference. Why? Because we understood something.

Not only we understood something, we got stirred in our emotions. That's not enough. It must go to the dividing point of soul and spirit to penetrate my spirit.

Then I become a spiritual man. And if you can understand this, it will set you free from a lot of deception. And that's why I say, there are churches, I've been in a number of Christian churches.

There are some churches that major on the intellect. That means you go to their churches and all the time the emphasis is on the study of God's word. It's like a Bible school.

They sit there and they explain about all the Old Testament things are type of New Testament here. And Joseph is a type of Christ and the tabernacle is a type of Christ. They study all that and they have so many wonderful studies and the intellect is all stirred in the Sunday morning with this tremendously intellectually stimulating messages.

And all those people nod their heads and they go home and say, boy, that was a wonderful meeting. But the word of God only got as far as the sand. And then there are other people some other churches that react against all this and say, ah, that's all dry intellect.

We don't want all that. That's all dead stuff. We are spiritual people.

And they get into the realm of emotions. Their whole meeting is whipping up the emotions. You know, you like putting a handful of surf into a bucket of water and keep stirring it.

You know, a lot of bubbles come up. It's pretty exciting for children. And so all these soap bubbles and all a lot of people who are spiritual babies are excited in those type of meetings where the pastor is a great expert at whipping up the surf and all these bubbles are flying around and all the little children are all excited.

There's a great meeting, he says. We feel so excited, everybody. And you really feel nice.

There's no doubt about it. You feel pretty nice with all these soap bubbles floating around. Just like children like to see these soap bubbles floating around.

And these people go back and say, boy, aren't we thankful we're not in all that type of dead intellectual meeting. We had a great spiritual meeting. That was also sand.

And the devil says, great. I fooled both these people. These fellows thought it was spiritual and they were only emotional.

And they thought they were getting away from this intellectual stuff. And those fellows despise the emotional stuff and say, boy, these fellows don't know God's word. Both of them are built on sand because they did not allow the word of God to reach the dividing point of soul and spirit.

So I say, I want to be in a church where, okay, I get instructed in my mind. That's good. I go through the sand.

I get stirred in my emotions through the singing, through the preaching. I go through the sand, but I don't get satisfied till I hit rock. And I say, Lord, I've got to do something about it when I go home.

I've got to apologize to my wife. I've got to write a letter to that brother and ask his forgiveness. And I've got to return that money.

I've got to return that book I haven't returned for so long. I've got to set this other thing right in my life. My financial matters are not straight.

See, that guy wasn't just intellectually stirred or emotionally stirred. He hit rock. He said in some area, not my will, but thine.

He's the only person who hit rock. Now, if there is somebody like that in one of these other churches, okay, that one fellow hit rock. But most people are in one of these two type of churches, either intellectual or emotional.

And the preaching also... See, you listen to a lot of preaching. I mean, I listen to a lot of preaching on Christian television just to see, try and gauge the spirit of these people. And I'm not fooled.

I know they are convincing my mind and some of them are fantastic in stirring my emotions. I say, but do they get me to do something? I mean, they get me to confess a lot of things with my mouth. Probably not.

Maybe the odd person who does that. But a lot of people can watch this hour after hour, year after year after year after year and think they are becoming wonderfully spiritual. And they're not at all.

They're just carnal. They still lose their temper. They still lust with their eyes in spite of all these messages they've heard.

They still love money. They still fight. They quarrel.

They are jealous. They are competing with their fellow believers. And they're not really becoming godly.

They're not becoming Christ-like. And if only they would sit back and say, well, I've been to school for five years. Why am I still in the kindergarten? Something must be wrong with that school.

There is, certainly. If you're listening to this type of stuff and it's not making you spiritual, it's not making you repent like I asked you the other day. How many of those messages that you hear make you weep for your sin by the time you finish listening to it? Probably not even one of them.

It doesn't convict you deeply in your heart. Because the word of God does not penetrate to the dividing point of soul and spirit. I want to say to you, you must sit in a church.

If you want to be spiritual, go to a church where the intellect is instructed, the emotions are stirred, but where it doesn't stop with that, but where the word of God challenges you to do something. Probably makes you weep. Sure.

I believe it could be a very spiritual meeting where everybody goes away weeping more than everybody goes away laughing. Yeah, the Bible says that. Weep, you who are laughing in James.

Anyway, so if we can understand this, the reason why we need to understand this is because there's a lot of deception going on in Christendom today where psyche, psychology, P-S-Y-C-H-E, the soul, the psyche, the soul part of powerful people with soul power are able to move people intellectually. They're able to weep in the pulpit and make people emotional. You know, I mean, if you see me crying right now, you'll feel a little something in your heart, right? I mean, I wish I could, but I don't want to do that.

I thank God I can't cry so easily. I'm pretty tough nut. But I don't want to be that type of preacher who can just cry and make you all sob and weep.

And sometimes when you see the tears coming down my eyes, that's an allergy. Don't think I'm trying to be weeping or anything. Sometimes the dust in the air makes water come out of my eyes.

I'm not weeping. I'm quite OK. Don't worry.

But don't be fooled by all this. But you know how you feel like when you see somebody weeping, you suddenly feel a little sad and sorrowful for that man. And don't be fooled by all this.

Jesus didn't do that, didn't try all these type of tricks. The only time Jesus wept was at Lazarus's tomb. He didn't try to speak in such a way and weep and make people emotional.

And I say, if Jesus didn't do it, I don't want to do it. Whenever I listen to a preacher, I always want to see, I want to picture, is that the way Jesus did it? Right from the time I was a young Christian, I studied the Gospels to see how did Jesus preach? I used to see all these American creatures with a holding a mic going up and down the platform all the time. And I can't imagine Jesus sitting with people and going up and down and stirring everybody up.

And then I don't see that picture in the Gospels. So I said, Lord, I don't want to be like that. That's American.

It's not Jesus. So I said, I don't want to be like that. That sounded, it looks great, but it's all a drama.

I mean, that's good for Hollywood, but it's not good for building spiritual churches. But many young people are fooled by all this. And particularly here in India, they say, oh, this is great.

I want to start doing it. And then you have all these Indian clones, C-L-O-N-E, clones of these American preachers who do the same thing here. And they rig up their church also exactly like that and start moving up and down.

And they have their, the way they say it, you know, there are techniques of, have you heard it? And, you know, you heard these people speak like this. And the spirit is telling you to repent. Don't be fooled by all this type of gimmicks.

These American clones who come here to fool people. Brown skinned, black skinned clones who are trying to imitate these people. These are all techniques.

That people are taught to move people, you know, to get them emotional. I can't imagine Jesus trying such tricks. And yet there are a lot of people who are fooled by that.

And you go, boy, that's really powerful stuff. So I'm just trying to get you out of this cage of deception. The cage of spiritual deception, not with false doctrine, but with correct doctrine, with souliness, souliness techniques to move people emotionally.

Don't be deceived by it. It's got nothing of spiritual value, zero. Spiritual value is where the word of God penetrates to your will and says, come on, yield your will to God.

Say not your will, but do God's will in that area. And if you refuse to respond to these type of emotional stirrings, you'll become a spiritual person. But what happens if you keep on just thinking this is spirituality and keep on listening to all this type of stuff that just stirs your intellect and stirs your emotions, you'll find yourself, I warn you, you'll find yourself after five, six years of it, utterly carnal, sitting in the kindergarten and deceived by the devil.

Get out of that cage. Recognize what souliness is for what it is. Let me show you 1 Corinthians 15.

And verse 45. 1 Corinthians 15 verse 45, it says, So it is written, the first man, Adam, became a living soul. And the last Adam became a life giving spirit.

Do you see that? The first Adam was the one we all descended from. He was a living soul. He lived in his soul.

But the last Adam, that's Jesus Christ, became a life giving spirit. You can't give life to others with your soul. Adam was not a life giving soul.

He lived in his soul, but he was not a life giving person. You can be a life giving person only if you live in your spirit. In other words, with your intellect and your emotions, you cannot give life.

You see, for example, there are lots of people around the world in many, many countries today and many, many denominations who are preaching the messages which we put on the internet. From the 70 hour CD and all, we've got a lot of my messages on the internet and a lot of people are preaching that. But what are they preaching? They've got something in their mind or in their notebook by listening to this message.

And they go somewhere to that church and leave out the parts which will offend that church and preach it. And they get honor and perhaps they get money. But they haven't brought life.

Because life doesn't come through just the points in a sermon. Life comes from the spirit. It's not from... You can preach the same sermon that a spiritual man preaches and you won't get the same results.

Why is that? I mean, if it's the same sermon, shouldn't it produce the same results? No. Because in the New Testament, New Covenant service is not from the soul. If it was from the soul, then the same sermon should produce the same results.

But no. The last Adam is a life-giving spirit. You must learn to live in your spirit.

And that's why you need to put to death this living out of the soul. And I just like to explain that a little further. In Matthew's gospel in chapter 16.

In Matthew's gospel chapter 16, Jesus said to Peter in verse 23. He turned to Peter and said, Get behind me, Satan, because you are a stumbling block to me. And listen to this.

You are setting your mind, setting your mind not on God's interests, but man's interests. Listen to that phrase. You're setting your mind not on God's interests, but man's interests.

A lot of Christian preaching today is man's interests. How will this help you? To feel more secure. To feel more happy.

And to be more wealthy and to be more healthy. It's all setting on man's interests. That is what is wrong with today's preaching of God's word.

It is a man-centered gospel. It's a psychological gimmick to make people feel nice. And you make a lot of money if you're a preacher interested in money.

That's the type of thing with which to make money. Whereas if you want to have your mindset on God's interests, you'll have to teach them glorify God's name. Forget about what you get out of it.

Live for the glory of God. Whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, live for the glory of God. That's the type of preaching that Jesus preached, that John the Baptist preached, that the apostles preached.

And that's the type of preaching you and I need to hear if we want to be spiritual. And what does Jesus think of all this type of preaching which is centered on man's interests? You want to hear what Jesus thinks of it? Here it is. Get behind me, Satan.

Ah, you wouldn't call that Satan, would you? What did Peter say which is so satanic? He said, Lord, don't go to the cross. That's out of human love. A lot of human love is satanic.

Lord, don't go to the cross. Don't put this thing to death. Don't put the soul life to death.

Get behind me, Satan. You are interested in the things of man, not in the things of God. I believe there are two types of preachers.

Those who seek to lead people to set their mind on God's interests. And those who set their mind on their own interests. One is spiritual and the other is soulish.

They don't tell you to be evil. The people who set their mind on your interests, they don't tell you to be bad. They tell you to be good human beings.

You know, be disciplined, don't eat too much, be slim. And you find many of these preachers are they keep fit and they look nice and they dress well. And it's very pleasant to the eyes.

And a lot of people are fooled by all this. A lot of people today, because they can't distinguish between soul and spirit. They are like spiritual babes, just fooled by both.

And in fact, a lot of people who receive what they call baptism in the Holy Spirit today. I believe it's just a baptism of the soul. A baptism in the soul where the emotions are all stirred.

And they say, boy, I really got something. Well, if you really got something, you'd be a holier person from tomorrow. But if you're not and you just get all excited in the emotions and even speak in tongues, I don't want a baptism in the Holy Spirit like that because that's just a baptism in the soul.

It's in the emotions. So there's a cage called the cage of deception. And I'm trying to open the door of that cage so that you can fly out and not be trapped inside this deception that is prevalent everywhere, all over Christendom today.

So I want to turn to another passage in Matthew chapter 12. You know, when Jesus was preaching somewhere, it says in Matthew 12 in verse 46, while he was still speaking, his mother and brothers were standing there and they said, we'd like to speak to you. And Jesus turned around and looked at his disciples and said, who is my mother? And who are my brothers? These who hear the word of God and do it.

Now to a soulish person, that sounds crazy. Soulsh people cannot understand the family of God. They are more attached to their unconverted parents than to the family of God.

That's one mark of a soulsh person. Jesus was not soulsh. He could look at his disciples and say, who is my mother? Who are my brothers? These who hear the word of God and do it.

I want to ask you, my brothers and sisters, be absolutely honest now. How many of you have fulfilled the first condition of discipleship in Luke 14 26? Hating your father, your earthly father, your earthly mother, your wife, your children, your brothers and sisters. Soulsh people just don't understand that verse.

And if you haven't understood that verse, that's a pretty clear indication that you haven't obeyed it. And of course, you're a soulsh person. I'm not saying you're an evil person.

You're not a carnal person. You're not carnal. You don't fight and quarrel and tell lies and get angry.

You're just soulsh. And even after many years, you're not spiritual and you'll never be spiritual. Because when you hear a word saying, hate your father, mother, brother, sister, like Peter, you say, oh, no, no, no, no, don't let that happen.

And the Lord says, get behind me, Satan. Your mind is set on man's interests. From the beginning, we have taught discipleship.

But I have found through the years, in many, many places, many people have joined our churches who have not followed those conditions of discipleship. And that's why we have a lot of, not carnality, but

souliness in our churches. And that's why you have a lot of young brothers and sisters who have absolutely no clue what is a spiritual ministry and what's a soulish ministry.

And that's why they are fooled by all these other preachers who sound so nice. And they say, it's all scriptural. And it's very intellectual, it's moving.

But ask yourself, how much victory does it give you over anger? How much victory has all that preaching given you over lust? How much has it delivered you from the love of money? In fact, you've become a bigger lover of money after watching all those programs. Haven't you seen that? Don't you wake up and say, how is that happening? That can't be Christ. That can't be the Holy Spirit.

You have been deceived. You've been caught in a cage of deception. And the devil doesn't want you to know it.

When you know the truth, it'll set you free. As I said, if you're in the kindergarten and this sounds like multiplication, just leave it. One day you'll need it and you'll understand it.

But if you've gone beyond the kindergarten, boy, you certainly need it to understand the difference between a ministry which is soulish and a ministry which is spiritual. For example, a lot of the healing that goes on today. Have you noticed a distinct difference between today's healing ministries and the healing ministry of Jesus? Luke was a doctor.

He was a medical doctor. And when he wrote the Gospels, he was very careful about the type of healings he described what Jesus did. Outstanding miracles.

I mean, even Matthew and all. He spoke about people who were born blind and they didn't have to go around showing doctor certificates in order to prove that they were healed. It was so outstanding a miracle.

First of all, compared to the pathetic type of so-called healings that go on today. You know, if you can understand the difference between soul and spirit, you'll discover that a lot of today's healings are what I would call psychosomatic. Psycho from the word soul and soma is our body where bodily healing comes because of psychological reasons.

It's true. If you get a person to think positively, the power of positive thinking, I tell you, there is a power in positive thinking. It's not the power of Jesus Christ.

It's the power of yoga. It's the power of Buddha. And you think, start thinking positively.

Don't think negatively. I mean, life becomes a little brighter and I tell you, you live a healthier life. There's no doubt about it, but it's got nothing to do with Jesus Christ.

No, that's not the healing of Christ. And you, for example, if you stop being anxious and worried and tense, even doctors will tell you there's a nerve called the vagus nerve which goes down to your stomach, which produces ulcers. And you'll be healed from ulcers if you stop getting anxious and worried.

It's got nothing to do with the name of Jesus. It's just got to do with bodily processes that start functioning properly when you have a right attitude, when you forgive others, you can get healed of asthma and arthritis and many things. There's a book I've read, a wonderful book by Dr. Macmillan called None of These Diseases.

He was a medical doctor and he has written case after case after case after case in that book. It's just full of cases of people who are healed without injections, without tablets, without medicines. And he was not a Pentecostal or charismatic healer.

He was a practicing doctor, but he was a Christian. And he said, all that I told these people was, forgive that person. Stop having a wrong attitude to that person and don't be worried about this.

Case after case after case of people who are healed who never took any tablets or medicines or injections and were not healed when they took hundreds of tablets and injections. Because God has made us in such a way that when your soul is, when your attitude to people is good, your body becomes healthier. A lot of today's healings are like that.

They come into an atmosphere where people are made to feel nice and made to think more positively and they feel a little better when they come there. And some of them, you know, with sicknesses which were caused by some of those things. But you don't get people born blind suddenly opening their eyes with all these psychosomatic tricks.

And that's why you never see such cases in such healings. But a lot of gullible Christians sit there with their mouth open and say, boy, wasn't that wonderful? Well, Luke would not have said that. Neither would Paul have said that.

They look for that which was a genuine miracle done in the name of Jesus Christ which was not the result of, you know, swaying people with emotional music. Have you noticed in all the healing campaigns today, you have to get people into a good emotional mode with one hour of singing before you get the healing. Have you ever wondered why? Or you never think about those things? There are many clever arguments for it.

Oh, we got to get the presence of God. I'll tell you, you don't need music to get the presence of God. On the day of Pentecost, Peter didn't get everybody to sing for one hour and get everybody all emotional and then say, come on, now let's receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

No, those are all gimmicks. This is all stirring up the soul. Music has replaced the Holy Spirit today.

And if you don't see that, you'll be fooled. It's not evil. It's good Christian music.

And I tell you, you really feel nice and you call it worship. But Jesus said, the Father is seeking for those who will worship in spirit. Tell me in heaven when the Father is listening to all the worship that comes from people.

Here is one guy who's divorced his wife. And a lot of these people who stand up and preach are people who have divorced their wives and married second time, third time, or someone who's living in sin. And I've heard some of these preachers even justifying their anger.

They should be ashamed of themselves if they get angry. And then they've got this tremendous ability to move people. They collect money and all that.

For example, I heard, I wasn't there at the meeting, but one of those guys who came here to preach in Bangalore said, today Jesus has told me to collect, take an offering. I said, brother, you've insulted a friend of mine, a very good friend of mine, Jesus. He never collected money when he was on earth.

How in the world can he tell you to collect money? Has he changed his mind after going to heaven? No, that's not the real Jesus. That's another Jesus. But do you know the number of believers who sit with their mouth open and say, boy, Jesus told him to take an offering.

I said, which Jesus was that? You're not going to fool me. There's only one Jesus I know and that's the one in the Bible who never asked anybody to give him money. But you know, you can be so moved by everything else that happens that you even give the money.

Jesus is God. It's not God. It's your emotion.

And don't think that just because you know a lot of the Bible, you can't be fooled. You can easily be fooled. The Bible says that it's going to be such that almost the elect themselves would be deceived.

That's how it's going to be in the last days. So when all this preparation like this goes on in order to get people all stirred up and then in that climax of emotion, they feel nice and they come up and say something. Jesus was not like that at all.

He never did that. Where do you find in his healing meetings that he gets everybody swaying and emotional, get a choir all ready to sing and then only he can do the miracle. What a lot of garbage.

He just walked down the street and see a sick person and heal him. And most of the time, he would even tell, he would tell that person, don't tell anybody. I'm so happy you got healed.

I mean, today what happens is you get that fellow up there and say, give your testimony here now. Yeah, I couldn't hear properly. I mean, I could hear about 75%.

Now I hear 80%. Boy, let's praise God for that. I'm not deceived by all this because the whole purpose of getting that fellow up here is to show that I'm a great healer.

Jesus was not interested in that at all. Soulless Christian is interested in his own glory. A spiritual Christian wants to hide and point to Christ.

And a spiritual Christian is happy that somebody is healed. He doesn't want anybody know about it. Great man, you were sick and you're healed.

Never mind if nobody knows about it. I'm happy that you're healed. I don't want anybody to know that I was the one who healed you or I'm a great healer.

There's a lot of deception in the healing ministry. There's a lot of deception in this music ministry and a lot of praise and worship. And I tell you, if you're not careful, it can come into your midst where you think you feel great because the choir is so good.

Now tell me honestly, God in heaven as he listens to people singing, here's a person who living in sin, but he's an excellent music leader. And it leads a tremendous time of worship. Beautiful.

His pitch is right and everything is perfect. He's a great musician. And here's another fellow who can't sing for nuts.

He gets every note wrong. And he's singing majesty and all crooked and all way off tune and majesty and all. We'd be like, don't shut up, man.

Let's sing properly here. But that man's got his heart pure. He said, okay, I'll sing it quietly.

Majesty, I worship you, Lord. Do you know that fellow's praise is worship in the spirit? And all this emotional type of thing, God just ignores it and the angels ignore it. Even they've got light on it.

How many of you believe that? It's a spirit because that fellow's got his conscience clear. Maybe he can't sing for nuts. He doesn't get the tune right.

And this fellow's got his tune right, but his conscience is not clear. The father is seeking for those who will worship him in spirit. And in truth, I want to say to all of you who sing in the choir, if your conscience is clear, your worship will be accepted.

It's good to sing properly. I'm not saying we shouldn't sing properly. It's like just like being dressed neatly.

But God's not going to listen to your prayer just because you're dressed neatly. How many of you are so crazy to think, I wore a good dress today, so God will listen to me. Stupid.

Or I sang well today, so God will listen to me. No, you can come in ragged clothes. If your conscience is clear, God will listen to you.

And you can't sing properly in your music, never mind. If your conscience is clear, God will listen to you. The most spiritual people are not the people who can sing well, but those whose conscience is clear.

So let's keep these things in mind lest we be deceived by the tremendous amount of deception there is through souliness. And as I said, if something has not, something you couldn't understand, just leave it there. Maybe listen to the message a little later.

And you'll get something out of it. But I'll tell you this, after observing today's Christianity, I believe the greatest need, particularly for those who watch a lot of Christian television, is to discern between soul and spirit. If you don't, I can guarantee you'll be deceived.

Those of you who admire today's charismatic preachers and healers, I can only warn you, and those who think emotion is the Holy Spirit or intellect is the Holy Spirit, no, it's obedience. Obedience. Are you obeying God? That's the test of whether you're a spiritual person, not how much you feel emotion in the meeting or how much you understand.

Let's pray.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/17/SID17140.mp3>

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/CNx9lLk3jLw.mp4>

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