

Jonathan Srock

The Spiritual Realm Life Group

Week 1

Opening Prayer (5 Minutes)

Teaching (30 Minutes)

Setting the Stage

- The Spiritual Realm
 - There are two realms of existence, the spiritual realm and the physical realm.
 - The spiritual realm is the place where God, Satan, angels, demons, and other spiritual powers and entities dwell.
 - The spiritual realm, and spirit beings, can interact with the physical realm. The Bible presents multiple accounts of demons interfering with humans and animals.
- The Natural (Physical, Material) Realm
 - The natural, or physical, realm consists of everything that is around us, all that God created.
 - The physical realm consists of the materials of creation that we see with our eyes and interact with through our five senses.
 - What God declares in the spiritual realm happens first, then the natural realm follows.

Meeting the Players

- You Are an Amphibian
 - Just like amphibians that can exist both in water and on land, you have a connection to both the physical and spiritual realms.
 - Every human being is made up of at least a spiritual and physical part. The body is physical, but the soul and spirit (or soul/spirit) is spiritual.
 - You have a spiritual connection to God and the spirit realm, but you also have a connection to the natural/physical world.
- Composition
 - Three views of human composition
 - Trichotomy – the belief that the human person consists of three parts: body, soul, and spirit.
 - Dichotomy – The belief that the human person consists of two parts: body and soul/spirit.
 - Monism – the human composition is of one or person with no distinction between the spiritual and physical.
 - The Bible supports either of the first two views best. It's hard to make a case for monism because of the biblical separation between the spiritual and physical parts of us. For most of Church history, Dichotomy has been the major position. Only in recent history has Trichotomy been adopted by some.
 - I am okay with either position. You can make a biblical case for either. Trichotomists suggest that there are several passages in the Bible that separate the soul and spirit. Dichotomists argue that it's hard to define the soul apart from the spirit.
 - While physical death separates the body from the soul/spirit, At the second coming of Christ, the spear/so will be reunited with the body and the body will be made eternal.
 - The Body

- You could argue for the temporary separation of the body, but it is still important enough for Christ to give us an eternal one. Therefore, the body is an essential part of our composition and identity.
- The Bible makes a distinction between the flesh and the body in some places. The flesh refers to the desires that can cause temptation and sin in our lives. But there is not a literal separation of the flesh and the body. This does not make the body sinful or evil.
- As we will discuss later, the fleshly desires we have and God's Spirit within us are at war with one another. This is a form of warfare.

Galatians 5:16–17 ESV

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

- The Soul
 - People who argue for the separation of the spirit and soul to find the soul as being the housing for the things that make us individuals as human beings.
 - The soul houses the personality, preferences, and inner person. The choices we make, the way we reason, and our mental processes (the mind) are included in the soul.
 - The soul and spirit are the eternal parts of us. These will be with Jesus the moment our bodies fail us. Paul says, "To be absent in the body is to be present with the Lord" ([2 Corinthians 5:6-10](#))
- The Spirit
 - The main distinction that can be made about the spirit as opposed to the soul is that the spirit of a person is that part of us that connects us to God. It is a spiritual connection between us and God who is Spirit ([John 4:24](#)).

- Our spirit connects with God in worship and communication. This does not mean that our spirits cannot sin against God. It also does not mean that unbelievers do not have a spirit. Their spirit is dead to the things of God until God brings them alive.
- Key Passage: [2 Corinthians 2:6-16](#).

2 Corinthians 2:6–16 ESV

For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. For this is why I wrote, that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything. Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs. When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a door was opened for me in the Lord, my spirit was not at rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia. But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

- People with the view that our soul/spirit is the same part of us (the inner part of us) point out Scriptures that seem to use spirit and soul interchangeably.
- Creation of Man and Woman

Genesis 2:7 ESV

then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

Genesis 2:21–22 ESV

So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

- The Image of God

Genesis 1:26–27 ESV

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

- Part of the argument for the soul and spirit to be separate may come from an understanding of the image of God in humans. Those who accept three parts to humans argue that the Spirit is the part that makes us different from animals, the part that connects with God, and therefore is how we are made as bearers of God’s image.
- There are several theories of what it means to bear the image of God.
 - **Higher faculties** such as reason, logic, a will, creativity, and imagination, to name a few.
 - **Physical resemblance** to God in that our bodies resemble God’s body (this is the least likely option)
 - **Complement of male and female** resembles the Trinity and shows completeness or wholeness within humanity
 - **Spiritual nature** that connects with God.
- Virtually all theologians and Bible scholars agree that the image of God separates us from animals. God did not give His image to animals. Only two humans. We are different than animals, and the pinnacle of God’s creation. He made humans last and spent the most time making them.

Joining the Play (Beginning Week 5)

Discussion (40 Minutes)

Application (15 Minutes)

- You work and move in two realms. You see things in the natural world so easily, but your faith muscles and senses are not as keen in the spiritual realm.
- There's a war between the flesh and the Spirit. The Holy Spirit wants to make you holy and pleasing to God while the flesh has its own desires.
- We still fight the war between flesh and Spirit after salvation. The difference is that we can choose to walk in the Spirit and ignore our fleshly desires.