

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

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## SPIRIT, SOUL, AND BODY

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Th.5:23). This verse clearly indicates that a human being is composed of three parts: spirit, soul, and body. In this article, I want to search the Scriptures, and try to ascertain what differences there are in these three parts. I will say at the outset that there are some difficulties with this subject, so you should examine what I say with caution. I will try to avoid speculation, and just stick to clearly-revealed truths; but if there is an area where I must speculate, I will tell you so.

First, let me suggest that, for the most part, the Scriptures picture man as a “dual being.” I know that sounds strange after just citing a passage which shows a three-fold distinction, but hear me out. Generally speaking, there is an “inward man” and an “outward man” (cf. 2Cor.4:16). The “outward man” is further described as “our earthly house” (5:1), which refers to our fleshly body. And, “If our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” The “house not made with hands” is that “spiritual body” to which Paul referred in 1Cor.15:42-44 (cp. the “mansions” of Jn.14:2).

By contrast, our “inward man” is currently “at home in the body,” and therefore, “absent from the Lord” (5:6). However, it longs to “be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord” (5:8). And finally, our inward man can find itself “naked” – i.e., separated from any kind “habitation” or body (5:2-4). This describes physical death (cf. Jm.2:26).

These facts make it clear that man is basically a “dual being,” consisting of “inward man” and “outward man.” Now, let’s break this down further, and examine the makeup of each.

In Hebrews 4:12, the Bible says, “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Here, the inward man is identified as “soul and spirit,” while the outward man is identified as “joints and marrow.” (Another term that is used for the outward man is “flesh and blood,” cf. 2:14). These verses show that both “inward” and “outward” man is further subdivided into two parts: “soul and spirit” (i.e., inward man), and “joints and marrow” (i.e., flesh and blood; the body; or outward man).

Now, let us pause, and draw some safe conclusions. The body, while made up of “joints and marrow” or “flesh and blood,” blends harmoniously into one single entity called the “outward man.” The “inward man,” while made up of “soul and spirit,” likewise blends harmoniously into a single entity. But consider this: at the point where flesh and blood unite, it may be difficult to tell where flesh ends and blood begins! I say that only to suggest what may also be true of soul and spirit. W. E. Vine, quoting another scholar, said this: “Soma, body, and pneuma, spirit, may be separated, pneuma and psuche, soul, can only be distinguished (Cremer).” And because of this, the words “soul” and “spirit” are sometimes used interchangeably (compare Mt.10:28 with Jm.2:26).

Next, I will TRY to distinguish between soul and spirit. The Bible says, “God IS Spirit” (Jn.4:24; cf. Lk.24:36-39); and that He is “the FATHER of spirits” (Hb.12:9). Based on this, I would suggest that the “spirit” is that part of the inward man which is made in the image of God (Gn.1:26-27), and distinguishes us from the animals. In this context, the word “soul” seems to refer to “that in which there is life; a living being” (Thayer). Hence, “soul” refers to “me” (my person), which animates my body; and “spirit” is that part of “me” which is made in God’s image. CAUTION: THIS PARAGRAPH CONTAINS SOME SPECULATION; SO, I URGE YOU TO CAREFULLY EVALUATE WHAT I HAVE JUST SAID IN LIGHT OF REVEALED TRUTH. I could be quite mistaken about the distinction between soul and spirit. But whatever that distinction is, it is clear that “soul and spirit” make up the “inward man” (1Th.5:23; Hb.4:12; cf. 2Cor.5:1-8).

To conclude, man is indeed made up of two parts: the inward man, and the outward man. Those two parts may be further divided into “soul and spirit” (inward man) and “joints and marrow” (or “flesh and blood,” i.e., the outward man). To deny these truths would reduce all of the Scriptures cited above to nonsense.

✍️ Lanny Smith

# A Servant of The Lord

In 2 Timothy 2:24-26, the apostle Paul penned some qualities that a servant of the Lord must possess. So, let's take a look at these must have qualities. Beginning with, a servant of the Lord...

## Must Not Quarrel.

To "not quarrel" means, "do not cause a complaint or dispute." The wise man wrote, "It is honorable for a man to stop striving, Since any fool can start a quarrel" (Proverbs 20:3). You see, as a servant of the Lord we should always seek to avoid contention, and we should always strive to be kind and peaceable to all (Romans 12:18; Ephesians 4:32).

## Must Be Gentle To All.

One characterizes "gentleness" by being, "mild tempered." Paul compares the gentleness expressed by himself and others when they preached the gospel to those in Thessalonica, to how a nursing mother cherishes her own children (1 Thessalonians 2:6-8). Also, Jesus said, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:29). You see, Christ possessed a gentle attitude, and as His servants, we too need to do our best to imitate Him by likewise being gentle to all.

## Must Be Able To Teach.

To "be able to teach" means, "the ability to apply the truth with clarity." Paul, advised Timothy to, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). Friends, in order to be able to teach the truth with clarity to others, we must study God's word, so that we may know the truth and how to rightly divide it. So, let's diligently study God's word, and let's be able to teach it to others.

## Must Be Patient.

To "be patient" is, "to be steadfast during times of opposition, longsuffering, or forbearing." Paul exhorted the Thessalonian brethren to, "warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all" (1 Thessalonians 5:14). Now, we all understand that patience is not always easy to come by. However, we all need

to be mindful of those words of Paul, and we need to take heed to them as a servant of the Lord, always striving to be patient with all, just as the Lord is patient with us (2 Peter 3:9).

## Must Humbly Correct Those In Opposition.

How does one humbly correct those in opposition? Well, one does this by gently instructing those who oppose the truth. Now, notice what Paul instructed those in Galatia, "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself least you also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). You see, it is important to humbly and gently correct those in opposition, for Paul goes on to explain the importance of this to Timothy when he says, "...if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil..." (2 Timothy 2:25-26).

Once more, it is very important for a servant of the Lord to possess and maintain these qualities. Therefore, my beloved brethren, let us all strive to not quarrel, be gentle to all, be able to teach, be patient, and humbly correct those in opposition.

✍️ Brad Phillips

## Belleville church of Christ

5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258

[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

### Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study .....	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship .....	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship .....	4:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study .....	7:00 p.m.

### Evangelist

Brad Phillips ..... (765) 720-2816