

THE RECONCILER

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THE INCREDIBLE SPIRITUAL ANATOMY OF MAN

Man Is A Spirit

Humanistic (Greek) philosophy defines man as a "soul in a body" but the Bible reveals a *completely different* understanding of man. We are SPIRITS who have soul and live in a body. We are spirits made in the image and likeness of God. The humanistic understanding has robbed us of a true understanding of who we really are and the incredible and unique capacities with which we are endowed.

By defining man as a "*rational animal*" or a "*soul/mind in a body*" we have greatly diminished the understanding of what it is to be a human being. It is time for us to rediscover the amazing reality of what it is to be a human and the incredible spiritual technology with which we are endowed. Bible students are accustomed to giving attention to having correct *theology* - the understanding of who God is - but we need also to pay attention to having a correct *anthropology* - the understanding of who man is.

What distinguishes us from the animals is not the sophistication of our brains but the fact that we - unlike the animals - are spirits. We are spiritual beings with the capacity to relate to the physical world with our bodies and the spiritual world through our spirits.

Science has explored the capacity of the MIND, but little research and study has been done (until now) into the capacity of the SPIRIT of man. Our gyms and sports clubs teach us how to develop our BODIES and our universities and schools teach us how to develop our MINDS. Neither has taught us how to develop our SPIRITS. They do not touch or explore this subject and so our generation has been cheated from being given an understanding of the awesome possibilities of what it is to be a human - a spirit made in the image and likeness of God.

Not even the Bible colleges and churches teach us how to develop our spirits because they have traditionally followed Greek anthropology (understanding of man) and have understood man to be a soul and a body. Until now Bible students have focused almost exclusively on the theology of the Bible but have paid little attention to anthropology of the Bible. We need to study and explore the anthropology of the Bible and discover what it teaches us about what it means to be a human being.

Tradition Ignores The Biblical View Of Man

Traditional Christianity has - tragically - paid little attention to this subject. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas and the Reformers continued to follow the Greek definition of man as a "RATIONAL ANIMAL" which originated with Aristotle, the tutor of Alexander The Great. Ignoring the Hebrew and Biblical teaching, they failed to develop this aspect of Biblical teaching. They believed that man is a soul and a body and that all knowledge comes through the five senses (except that which was revealed to Jesus, the prophets, the apostles and a few other exceptional people). They gave themselves over to analyze the Scriptures by the mind, rather than being inspired by the Bible to discover how we can develop our spirits and connect them to God as disciples of Jesus did.

Paul, being a Hebrew, understood the anthropology of the Bible well and writes: *"may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely; that your whole **SPIRIT, AND SOUL, AND BODY**, may be preserved blameless in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."* (1 Thess. 5:23)

Paul actually says that the things of God **cannot** be understood through the mind nor do they come to us through the five senses! *"But, as*

*it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined"... - these things God has revealed to us **through the spirit**. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ... So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. The natural person (literally 'the mind-dominated intellectual person') does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned."* (1 Cor. 2:9-14)

Here Paul explains that the things of God **cannot** come to us through the five senses or through the mind but only through the spirit of man. And so for Paul receiving revelation and communication with God is not an intellectual exercise but an exercise of the spirit of man.

Even where Bible teachers pay passing recognition to the fact that man is a spirit who has a soul and lives in body most of them fail to see the consequences of the distinction. What difference does it make? It changes everything! By understanding that we are spirits we can now more readily see that we were made for communication with God who is a Spirit. This capacity is at the heart of what we are as humans. Our body gives us the capacity to communicate with the physical world through the five senses, but our spirit gives us the capacity to communicate with the unseen spiritual world - with God Himself.

Our Amazing Inner Technology

As spirits we have the inner "technology" which enables us to communicate with God. This 'technology' is like a Wi-Fi modem within us that gives us the capacity to receive COMMUNICATION from God. We also have the capacity to receive spiritual LIFE from God, (1 Cor. 15:45, John 20:20) LOVE from God (Romans 5:5) and even to receive impartation of GOD'S OWN NATURE. (2 Peter 1:5.)

Because Western society is based on an understanding of man as mind rather than the true understanding of man as a spirit many are left doubting the existence and relevance of God. Within such a culture the pursuit of God (since He lies beyond the reach of the mind and senses) is regarded as irrelevant. It is this misunderstanding of man as a mind in a body that is at the core of modern humanism and atheism that regards God as either non-existent or irrelevant. However, when we return to the Biblical understanding of man as spirit we can begin to see clearly why the pursuit of God is the central goal of human existence. This is why Jesus says the primary responsibility of man is to, *"seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."* (Mt. 7:33)

PURSUING HAPPINESS GOD'S WAY

The pursuit of happiness through the development of our minds and bodies have left us strangely dissatisfied and unfulfilled because fulfillment cannot come to spiritual beings through the mind and body alone but only through the development of our spirits. When we are born again (through faith in the work of Jesus on the Cross) our spirits become re-connected with God's spirit and we are back home where we belong. We can communicate with God again. It is time for God's people to tell their fellow men and women who they really are: spiritual beings made in the image and likeness of God and made for intimate personal communication with God.

We are now in a better position to understand Jesus' words: *"the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him."* (John 4:23) Jesus is saying that He is about to make it possible for the spirit of man to be restored to direct communication with God

When man ate of the TREE OF KNOWLEDGE Of Good & Evil - deciding to be controlled by his mind rather than by his spiritual communication with God - he broke spiritual connection with God. He became MIND DOMINATED rather than SPIRIT LED Jesus restores this connection between us and God the Father

through the Cross when we put our faith in it. His Spirit fills our spirits with the life of The Holy Spirit, the love of God and the nature of God. Only then do we discover who we really are and what it is to be a human. The development of our spirits must become again the focus of humanity. Abiding with God, being filled with God's life, hearing and obeying God, communicating with and enjoying God are the central privilege and calling of every person.