

SLB-015 (10-8-06)

Understanding the Soul and Spirit

Human Life and the Soul

"To attain any knowledge about the soul is one of the most difficult things in the world." - Aristotle

The particular dilemma of the Biblical Scholars of all ages has been the seemingly contradictory and confusing scriptural usage of the words "Soul" and "Spirit"; and passages that state that all mankind and even animals have souls and even spirits, but yet, that man is unique in God's creation with a soul; and Believer's are unique in having a spirit.

Furthermore, souls are said to die, yet the soul is said to be immortal.

Many false doctrines have been developed because of this dilemma.

Confusion about the Spirit

- The Hebrew and Greek words for 'spirit' ('Ruach' and 'Pneuma' respectively) are also translated in the following ways:- Life, Spirit, Mind, Wind, Breath
- God uses His spirit to preserve the natural creation, including man.
 - God is called “The God of the spirits of all flesh” (Numbers 16:22), and “the Father of spirits” (Hebrews 12:9).
- The spirit of God which is within man is therefore the life force within him. "The body without the spirit is dead" (James 2:26).
- "God breathed into (Adam's nostrils) the breath (spirit) of lives; and man became a living soul (creature)" [Gen. 2:7].

Confusion about the Spirit

- As the **body** (soma) without the spirit (pneumatosis) is dead, so faith without deeds is dead. James 2:26 (NIV)
- At death, "the dust (shall) return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecc. 12:7).
- "All flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath (spirit) of life...died...every living substance was destroyed" (Gen. 7:21-23).

Confusion about the Spirit

- Job 27:3—“For my life is yet whole in me, And the spirit of God is in my nostrils”; 32:8—“there is a spirit in man, And the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding”; 33:4—“The Spirit of God hath made me, And the breath (spirit) of the Almighty giveth me life.”
- The Virgin Mary said; “My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour” (Luke 1:46, 47).

Confusion about the Spirit

- It is by his spirit that the Christian both serves and worships God.
- Paul testified: “For God is my witness, Whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel” (Romans 1:9).
- Jesus said: “God is a spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).
- Certainly, we cannot define spirit here as “physical respiration”.

Confusion about the Spirit

- When God takes away His spirit it results in death.
- Psalm 146:3-5 "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath (spirit) goeth forth, he returneth to his earth (the dust from which we are made); in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help".

Confusion about the Spirit

- Because God's spirit sustains all of creation, this same process of death occurs to animals.
- Men and animals have the same spirit, or life force, within them.
- "That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one (i.e. the same) breath (spirit); so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast" (Ecc. 3:19).
- "and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the **spirit** returns to God who gave it."44 Ecclesiastes 12:7 (NIV)

Confusion about the Spirit

- This description of men and animals having the same spirit and dying the same death, alludes to the description of how both men and animals, who both had the spirit of life from God (Gen. 2:7; 7:15), were destroyed with the same death at the flood:
- "All flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath (spirit) of life...died...every living substance was destroyed" (Gen. 7:21-23).
- The record in Genesis 7 clearly shows that in fundamental terms, man is in the same category as "all flesh...every living substance". This is due to his having the same spirit of life within him as they do.

Confusion about the Spirit

- Job speaks of "the spirit of God" as being "in my nostrils" (Job 27:3 cp. Isa. 2:22).
- The spirit of life within us is therefore given to us at birth, and remains as long as our body is alive.
- When God's spirit is withdrawn from anything, it immediately perishes - the spirit is the life force.
- How do we explain these facts, that death comes when God removes his spirit; that the unsaved man and animals are said to have a spirit?

Confusion about the Spirit

- If God "gather unto Himself His spirit and His breath; all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust. If now thou hast understanding, hear this" (Job 34:14-16).
- Here, Job tells us how we can understand these seemingly confusing/contradictory verses and concepts.
- Let's establish definitions for:
 - small "s" spirit for man and all living creatures in God's Creation;
 - Large "S" Spirit for mankind; and
 - ALL CAPS "SPIRIT" for God, the Holy Spirit.

Confusion about the Spirit

- This is necessary, since the ‘essence’ of Life is tied up in the Biblical term, “spirit”. It refers to several
- Small “s” spirit for man and all living things in God’s Creation:
 - This is the “life force spirit” aspect of God’s “Fatherhood” over Creation.
 - Without this “physical life force spirit”, all living things (Biological Life) will die (separated from the earth).

Confusion about the Spirit

- Large “S” Spirit for mankind:
 - This is the “Spiritual Life Force” reserved for the Human Species; without it, the Soul is “dead” to God (separated from God), totally without the Life of God, and therefore, only influenced by the ISNA.

Confusion about the Spirit

- ALL CAPS “SPIRIT” for God, the Holy Spirit.
 - The Holy Spirit is the Agent of “re-creation” or “restoration of Life”; as seen in the Holy Spirit’s role in the restoration of the earth in Genesis 1:2; and in the “Regeneration/New Birth of the Human Spirit at Faith in Christ.
 - Life (the 2 types of Life) initially come from the Father through Jesus Christ.
- In other words, ALL death is “spiritual” in one sense or another!

The Doctrine of Death

- The 7 Deaths of Scripture: (*Thanatos*)
- Physical Death
- Spiritual Death
- The Second Death
- Positional Death
- Sexual Death
- Operational Death
- Temporal Death

The Doctrine of Deaths

#1 Physical death

- For the plant and animal Kingdoms (Biological Life) it involves an end of physiological processes (the end of respiration).
- For the unbeliever, it involves the soul leaving the body (Lk.16:22) and traveling to Hades (Torments Compartment).
- For the Believer it involves the Soul and Spirit leaving the body and traveling to Heaven.

The Doctrine of Deaths

#2 Spiritual death

- Definition: all men are born physically alive but spiritually dead.
- Born without a human spirit (Jd.19), man is separated from God and is dead.
- Spiritual death began with Adam and was passed on to all mankind (Gen.2:17; Rom. 5:12,14,15,17-19,21; 1Cor.15:22 "*For as in Adam all die*"; 2Cor.5:14,15; Eph.2:1; Col.2:13; 1Pet.4:6; Jd.12).

The Doctrine of Deaths

#2 Spiritual death

- Christ died spiritually on the Cross for all men, which provides salvation as a potential (Rom. 5:6,10; 6:10; Col.1:22; Heb.2:9).
- Spiritual death is canceled by the Holy Spirit in the new birth (Eph.2:1; 1Pet.3:18; 1Cor.15:22; Rom.5:17,18; Col.3:4; 2Tim.1:10).
- Faith in Christ is the mechanics (Jn.11:25-27).

The Doctrine of Deaths

#3 The second death

- Definition: spiritual death is perpetuated in the Lake of Fire for all who reject Christ (Last Judgment; Rev.2:11; 20:11-15).
- It is only for unbelievers (of all time).

The Doctrine of Deaths

#4 Positional death

- Definition: we are identified with Christ in His death on the Cross.
- This "death" must be understood in the light of current positional truth.
- Via the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we share everything Christ is.
- This includes His deaths on the Cross (2Tim. 2:11 "*For if we died with Him we shall also live with Him*"; Rom.6:3 "*Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized in His deaths?*"; cp. vs.2,4,5,6,8; Col.3:3).

The Doctrine of Deaths

#5 Sexual death

- Definition: the inability to procreate.
- Examples: Abraham and Sarah (Rom. 4:19); Zacharias and Elizabeth (Lk.1:7).

The Doctrine of Deaths

#6 Temporal Death

- Definition: the believer out of fellowship (carnality and/or reversionism; Lk. 15:24,32; Rom.6:13; 7:9-11; 8:6,10,13a; 1Tim.5:6; Jam.2:26).
- The solution is the command "*Arise* (aor.act.imper. of *anistemi*) *from the dead*" (*ek nekron*) in Eph.5:14.
- This is based on the Grace Recovery Technique of 1Jn.1:9.

The Doctrine of Deaths

#7 Operational death

- Definition: failure to produce divine good (Jam.2:26; Jd.12 "*doubly-dead*").
 - Example (Jam.2:14-17).
 - There is no application of Bible Doctrine (Jam.2:24).
 - It means to be a hearer only (Jam.1:23).
 - It is possible for a local church (Rev.3:1).

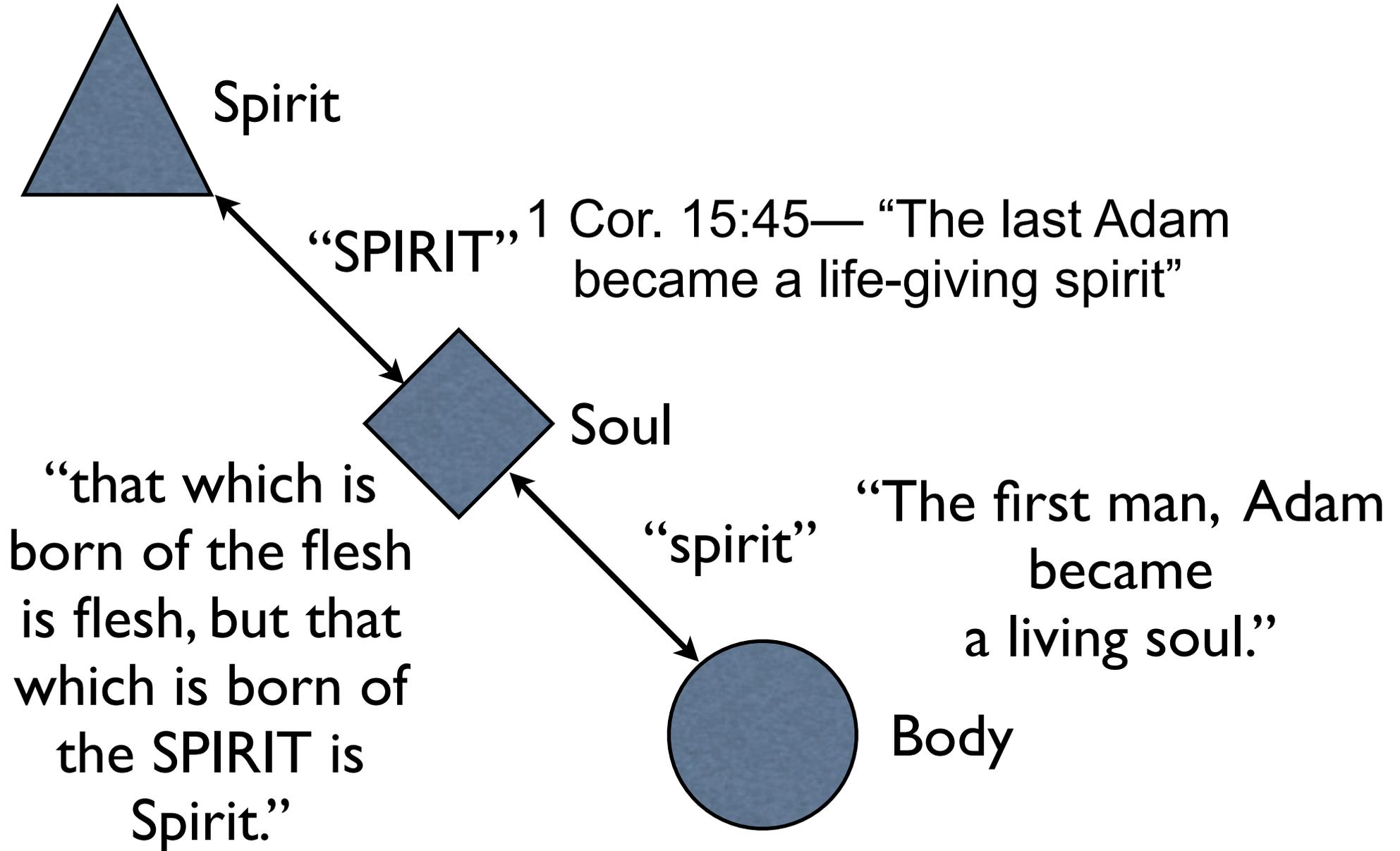
The Doctrine of Deaths

- #1 Physical Death: Matthew 8:22; Philippians 1:21, and many others
 - The breath (spirit) of Life is absent.
- #2 Spiritual Death: Ephesians 2: 1; Romans 5:12; 1st Cor. 15:22; Prov. 14:12
 - The Spirit (Human Spirit) is absent.
- #3 The Second Death: Revelation 20: 12-15; Hebrews 9:27
 - The SPIRIT (Holy Spirit) is absent.
- #4 Positional Death: Colossians 2: 3-4
 - The position in Adam is absent.

The Doctrine of Death

- #5 Sexual Death: Hebrews 11: 11-12; Romans 4:17-21
 - The reproduction of the Biological life force is absent.
- #6 Temporal Death: Romans 8:6, 13; Ephesians 5:14; 1st Timothy 5:6; Revelation 3:1; and James 1:15
 - The function of the Spiritual life force is absent.
- #7 Operational Death: James 2:26
 - The reproduction of the Spiritual Life Force is absent.

Life in Relationship to the Soul



Human Life and the Soul

- *May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole **spirit** (pneuma), **soul** (psyche) and **body** (soma) be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1Thessalonians 5:23 (NIV)* Man was made of three component parts: body, soul, and spirit.
- In the physical he possesses physical-consciousness through his five senses.
- With his soul, which is the seat of his intellect, will and emotions, he possesses self-consciousness, thereby having knowledge that he is a personality.
- By his Spirit, he is enabled to know God and to worship and serve Him after his human Spirit has been quickened by the Holy Spirit.

Human Life and the Soul

- Isaiah 43:7 Even every one that is called by my name, for I have CREATED (BARA) him for my glory, I have FORMED (YATSAR) him, yea, I have MADE (ASAH) him.
- CREATED - bara = The Soul
- FORMED - yatsar = The Anatomy
- MADE - asah = Physiology something, ()

Human Life and the Soul

The Soul

The Anatomy

Physiology

- *the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath [spirit] of lives, and the man became a living **soul** (nephesh). Genesis 2:7 (NIV - corrected)*

Human Life and the Soul

- Our bodies while on earth are natural or soulish bodies and are engaged chiefly with the activities and the environment of earth. This body, designed for the Soul's earthly life is called a "natural" body.
- When the resurrection body is called "a spiritual body," it is not meant that it will be composed of intangible substance. Robert S. Candlish has said: "The words natural and spiritual, as applied to the body, have respect not so much to the nature of the substance of which the body is composed, as to the uses or purposes which it is intended to serve."

Human Life and the Soul

- **Flesh** (sarx, sarx, σαρξ) Strong's Number 4561 probably from the base of 4563; flesh (as stripped of the skin), i.e. (strictly) the meat of an animal (as food), or (by extension) the body (as opposed to the soul [or spirit], or as the symbol of what is external, or as the means of kindred), or (by implication) human nature (with its frailties [physically or morally] and passions), or (specifically) a human being (as such)
- *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14 (NIV)*

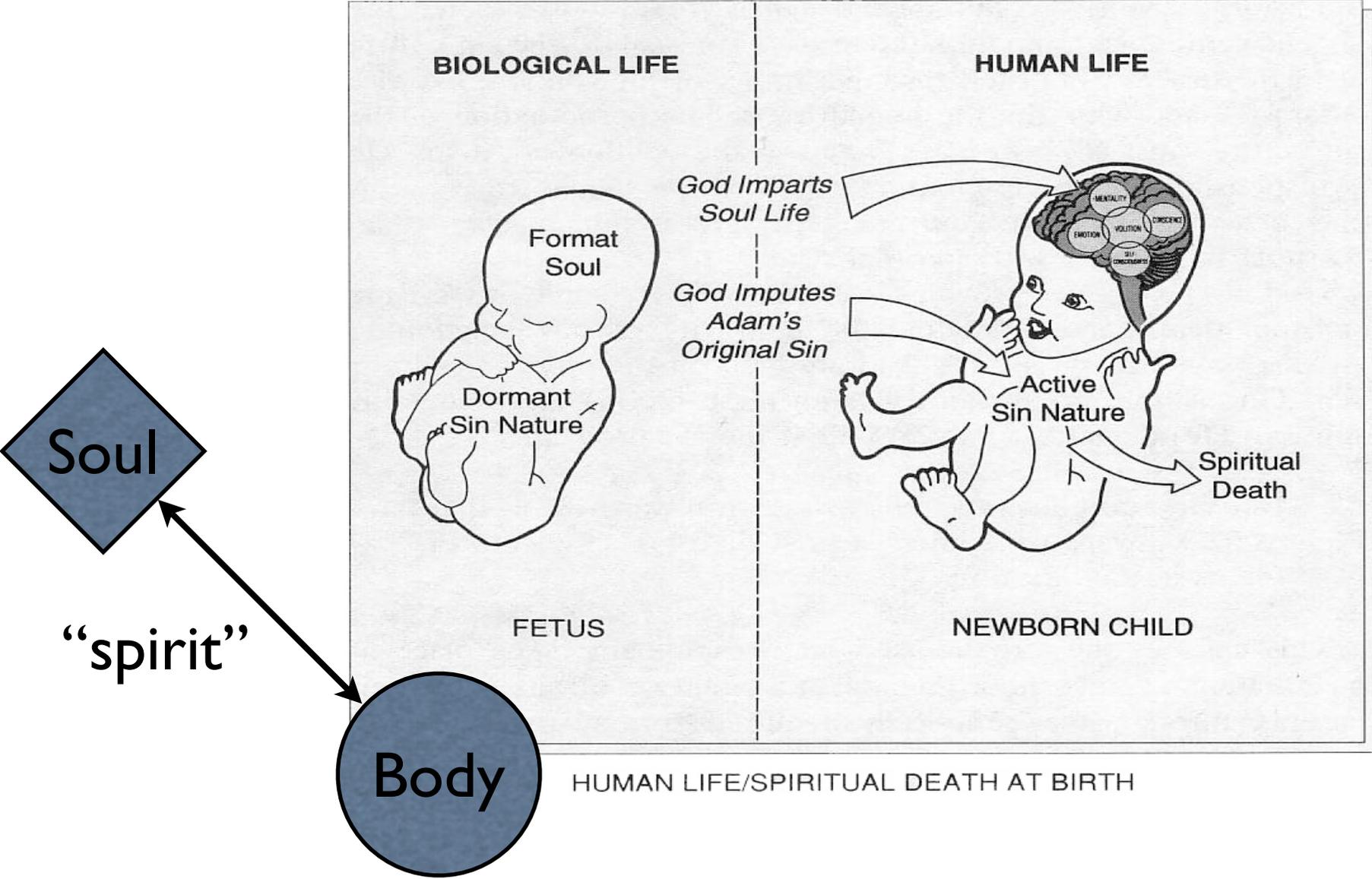
Human Life and the Soul

- **Body** (soma, so'-mah, **σωμα**) Strong's Number 4983 from 4982; the body (as a sound whole), used in a very wide application, literally or figuratively.¹ The biblical definition of death is found in James 2:26 where it says that death is the separation of the spirit from the body.
- *As the **body** (soma) without the spirit (pneumatōs) is dead, so faith without deeds is dead. James 2:26 (NIV)*

Human Life and the Soul

- Human Life is distinct from Biological Life.
- Animals (Biological Life) die when there is insufficient blood to sustain life.
- Humans are clearly stated to die when the Soul departs:
- Rachel's death in Genesis 35:18 equates with the soul (Hebrew nephesh) departing.
- And when Elijah prays in 1 Kings 17:21 for the return of a widow's boy to life, he entreats, "*O LORD my God, I pray you, let this child's nephesh come into him again*".
- So death meant that something called nephesh (or "soul") became separated from the body, and life could return when this soul returned.

Human Life and Spiritual Death



Human Life and the Soul

- **Soul** (psyche, psoo-khay', **ψυχη**) Strong's Number 5590 from 5594; breath, i.e. (by implication) spirit, abstractly or concretely (the animal sentient principle only; thus distinguished on the one hand from 4151, which is the rational and immortal soul; and on the other from 2222, which is mere vitality, even of plants: these terms thus exactly correspond respectively to the Hebrew 5315, 7307 and 2416).¹

Human Life and the Soul

- **Soul** (nephesh, neh'-fesh, נַפֶּשׁ) properly, a breathing creature, i.e. animal of (abstractly) vitality; used very widely in a literal, accommodated or figurative sense (bodily or mental). ¹
- *the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath/spirit of lives, and the man became a living **being** (nephesh). Genesis 2:7*
- *In his hand is the **life** (nephesh - soul) of every creature and the **breath/spirit** (ruwach) of all mankind. Job 12:10 (NIV)*
- *In these verses we see the “common” use of spirit and soul; spirit as the life force and soul as the essence of the living being.*

Human Life and the Soul

- Now, in these verses we will see the technical use of the word Soul, best identified by capitalizing it.
- *The Soul that sinneth, it shall die (Ezekiel 18:4).*
- *Then my **Soul** will rejoice in the LORD and delight in his salvation. Psalms 35:9 (NIV)*
- *For whoever wants to save his **life** will lose it, but whoever loses his **life** for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his **soul**?*

Human Life and the Soul

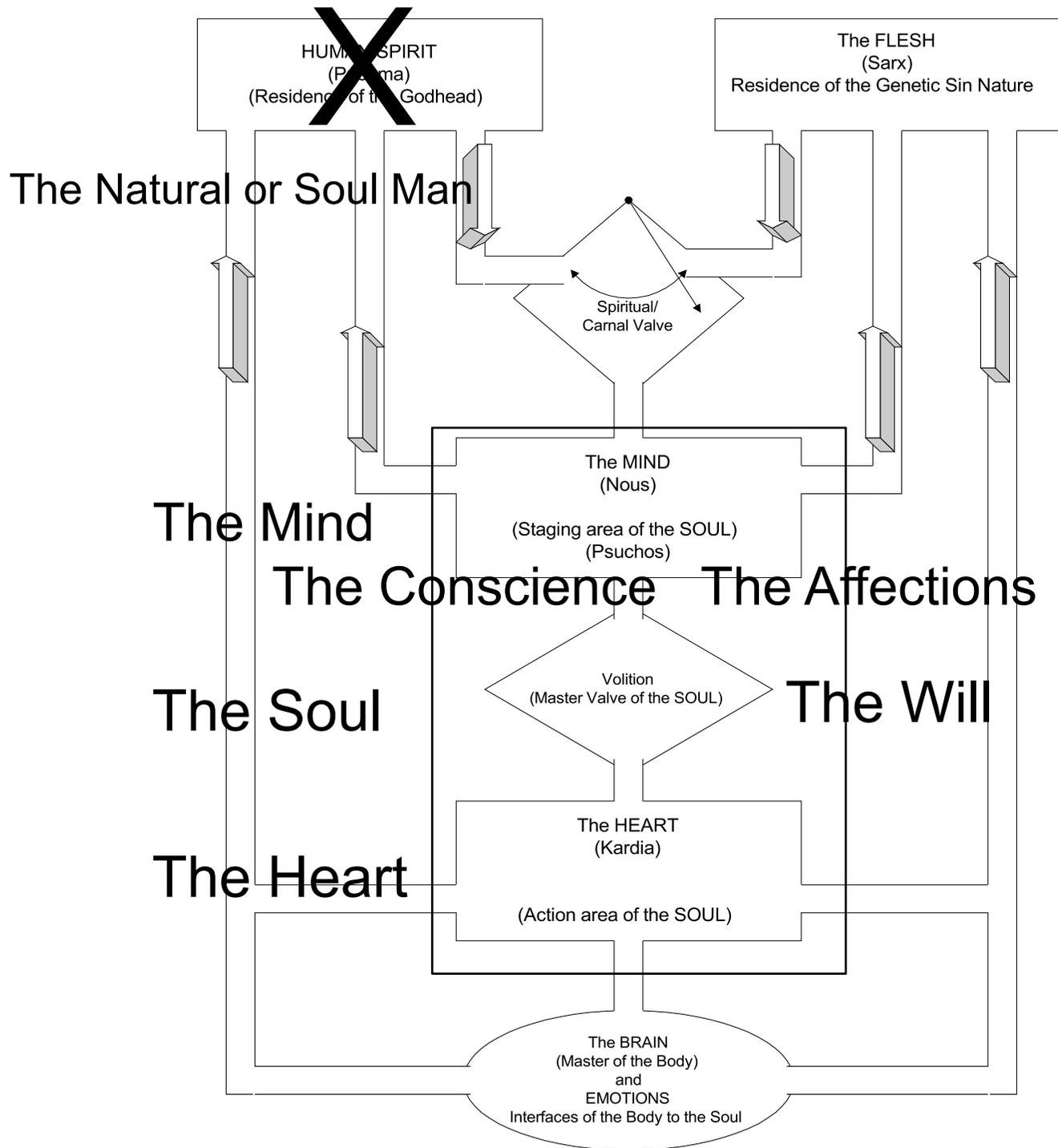
- *The natural (Soul) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:14).*
- Here, again we see the technical use of Psuche, or Soul, to differentiate the Spiritually dead unbeliever from the Believer, whose Spirit is functioning.

Human Life and the Soul

- **Spirit** (ruwach, roo'-akh, רוּחַ) Strong's Number 7307 from 7306; wind; by resemblance breath, i.e. a sensible (or even violent) exhalation; figuratively, life, anger, unsubstantiality; by extension, a region of the sky; by resemblance spirit, but only of a rational being (including its expression and functions).
- *Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the **Spirit of God** was hovering over the waters. Genesis 1:2 (NIV)*

Human Life and the Soul

- **Spirit** (pneuma, pnyoo'-mah, πνεῦμα) Strong's Number 4151 from 4154; a current of air, i.e. breath (blast) or a breeze; by analogy or figuratively, a spirit, i.e. (human) the rational, (by implication) vital principle, mental disposition, etc., or (superhuman) an angel, demon, or (divine) God, Christ's spirit, the Holy Spirit.¹
- *God is spirit (pneuma), and his worshipers must worship in spirit (pneumati) and in truth."* John 4:24 (NIV)



Human Life and the Soul

- **Mind** (nous, nooce, **νοῦς**) Strong's Number 3563, probably from the base of 1097; the intellect, i.e. mind (divine or human; in thought, feeling, or will)
- So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my **mind**; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my **mind**. 1 Corinthians 14:15 (NIV)

Human Life and the Soul

- **Conscience** (suneidesis, soon-i'-day-sis, **συνειδησις**), Strong's Number 4893 from a prolonged form of 4894; coperception, i.e. moral consciousness.¹
- So I strive always to keep my **conscience** clear before God and man. Acts 24:16 (NIV)
- To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their **minds** (nous) and **consciences** (suneidesis) are corrupted. Titus 1:15 (NIV)

Human Life and the Soul

- *But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification [intellect] and exhortation [will] and consolation [emotion]. 1 Corinthians 14:3 (NAS)*
- *Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart [kardia] and with all your soul [psyche] and with all your mind [nous] ." Matthew 22:37 (NIV)*