

# UNDERSTANDING THE TRIPARTITE MAN

*Gal 5:16-18; 25– I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ...If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

We are to walk in the spirit so that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But if we strive (by our own volition) to overcome the flesh, we will fail. We have the unique ability to connect with God and the natural. The spirit gives life to the body.

*“For the body without the spirit is dead” – James 2:26*

The role of the human spirit is to receive both life and wisdom from God. The essence of life is to have a relationship with God. So essentially, no person was ever meant to have within himself (independent of God) the resources of wisdom to enable him or her to make a success of life. Wisdom is the ability to choose the right goals and to achieve those goals by the best means. It's a far cry from the knowledge you can obtain from your environment.

□ Source of wisdom is in God alone.

*Daniel answered and said: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His –Dan 2:20*

*So the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as He had promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty together –1 Kings 5:12*  
*Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses –Deut 34:9*

*That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him –Eph 1:17*

Our spirit has direct access to divine this God-given wisdom; the human spirit is that part of a person's being which exercises rule and direction over his or her life.

## **Functions of the Human Spirit**

The spirit, like the soul, has three functions (in diagram; next section) and they relate in a direct, but not exclusive, way to the three functions of the soul.

## **Knowledge**

Knowledge that comes intuitively, and not as the result of rational, deductive mental process is one of the functions of the spirit. We understand with our mind but we know with our spirit. *(For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things 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 know the things that have been freely given to us by God –1 Cor 2:11-12).* Some of the

greatest human discoveries have been made by intuitive insights. Truths have been revealed to men through their spirits.

The mind receives information and in contrast, the knowledge of God comes direct to our spirit. The substance of our spirit is life-giving. When God touches our spirit, we experience eternal life. Our spirit in turn, can bring life (restoration, hope and healing) to another through Him.

THE HUMAN SPIRIT		
INTUITIVE KNOWLEDGE	CONSCIENCE	WORSHIP OR COMMUNION

THE HUMAN SOUL		
MIND	WILL	EMOTIONS

### Conscience

The conscience is another function of the human spirit. *(To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled –Titus 1:15)* It opens our eyes to general moral truths (e.g. honesty, faithfulness) and the ability to apply them to situations so that we stand for truth. The Holy Spirit can reveal the standards of God’s holiness and love. This paves the way for conviction of sin to repentance (Hebrews 10:19-22). Obedience to conscience is key to good moral behavior. The Holy Spirit continues to write the law of God in our conscience.

Conscience bears witness to the truth. **The authenticity of moral law registers in the conscience, not the mind.** Paul says “I speak the truth in Christ – I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit” (Rom 9:1). The Apostles did not prove truth but declared truth from a clear conscience. *(But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God –2 Cor 4:2)*. Only a conscience that is kept clean by the blood of Jesus is able to accurately bear witness to truth. *(This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men –Acts 24:16)*. Conscience can be seared *(Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron –1 Tim 4:1-2)*.

### Communication

The last but not least of the functions of the human spirit is worship or communion.

*God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth –John 4:24*

**True** communication comes from our spirits. The substance of this communication is Love. If we are in touch with the Love of God and speak from the depths of our spirits, we bring life to one another.

### **Let's get a little deeper in this...**

Knowledge received in the spirit is meant to rule over the reasoning of the mind (remember that reasoning is a very naturalistic process). The conscience, on the other hand, is intended to direct and control the decisions of the will.

The Holy Spirit resides within the human spirit. He will go no further without the desire and consent of the human will. By our actions or inactions, we can quench the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19); limit Him from working in and through our lives.

### **Spirit, Mind and Faith**

☐ When God speaks, we receive this knowledge intuitively in the spirit and faith arises as a result.

☐ Knowledge on which faith rests is a unique in itself. It is the direct, intuitive knowledge that comes from God to our spirit. Our rational mind battles with that kind of knowledge.

*But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned –1 Cor 2:14*

☐ When we respond in faith, the power of the Holy Spirit is released from our spirit into our mind and beyond.

☐ Operating in unbelief defuses God's power in our life.

*For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it – Heb 4:2*

*Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed –Matthew 8:3.* A child-like faith response is needed to flow with the prompting of the Spirit. Unless we are willing, like children, to trust the divine knowledge we receive in our spirit, we will never understand the ways of the kingdom of God. For example, when we pray for the sick and operate in the rational mind (without the simple trust that God will heal), we limit ourselves from releasing power through Him.