

**Sanctification: Transformed into
The Image of Christ
Lesson 14**

I. Introduction

- a. In attempting to come to grips with a Biblical anthropology of man we encounter several **difficulties**. The reasons are quite simple. There's much more to man than anything that can be studied, quantified, associated, labeled, defined, or characterized.
- b. This is so because man is more than a physical being with physical processes. He is a spiritual being as well, and in recognizing this, one begins to understand just how **important** Biblical anthropology is and why an understanding of the Apostle Paul's views on the matter is vital.
- c. As our understanding of Paul's anthropology takes shape, we can begin to develop not only a systematic approach to the composite nature of man's being but more importantly, we begin to grasp how the whole man is **related** to Christ in two vital ways.
- d. The first and most important reason is that man is related to Christ by his need of Him. When we understand Biblical anthropology we understand the absolute spiritual deadness of the **natural man**. 1 Cor 2:14 *But the natural 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. KJV*
- e. Recognizing that condition of spiritual deadness then, true believers are drawn ever more into a loving relationship with Christ their savior and as a consequence realize a deep **desire** to be transformed into His image. Ps 42:1-2 *As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. 2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? KJV*
- f. It is not until we grasp Biblical anthropology that we begin to comprehend both the limits and extent to which God has **equipped** the believer to be a participant in the process of experiential sanctification. 2 Peter 1:3 *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: KJV*
- g. While the Apostle uses many words that point to his composite view of man, the **major** anthropological terms that occur in his letters are: body (soma), flesh (sarx), soul (psyche), spirit (pneuma), mind (nous), conscience (suneidesis), and inner man (eso anthropos).
- h. Undertaking an explanation of Paul's usage of these words in their contexts is a daunting task because of the apparent **overlap** between them, but it is necessary to our comprehension of the meaning he attaches to them and draws from them.
- i. There is an additional complexity to deal with as one studies the Biblical notions of the nature of persons and that is the lack of **precision** in the biblical languages relating to the composite structure of man.

II. Lack of Precision in the Terms Used:

- a. We look in vain in the Old Testament and New Testament for anything like scientific precision in the use of terms which are meant to indicate mental or spiritual **operations**.
- b. For example, in the OT lebh (heart) is made to stand for the **various** manifestations of our intellectual and emotional nature within the same version of the Bible.
 1. **Heart** 1 Chron 28:9 for the Lord searcheth all hearts, KJV
 2. **Mind** Deut 30:1 and thou shalt call them to mind KJV
- c. In addition, the KJV alone uses over **28** different English terms for the word *soul*. The problem with the English term "soul" is that no actual equivalent of the term or the idea behind it is represented in the Hebrew language.
- d. What we find in the OT is that the Hebrew system of thought does not include the combination of the terms "body" and "soul." That is because these terms are actually Greek and Latin in **origin**.
- e. Instead the Hebrew contrasts two other concepts which are not found in either Greek or Latin thought: "**the inner self**" and "the outer appearance" or, "what one is to oneself" as opposed to "what one appears to be to one's observers."
- f. In the OT the **inner** person is nepesh, while the outer person, or reputation, is shem, and is most commonly translated "name." This makes direct translation from Hebrew to either Greek or Latin somewhat problematic.
- g. Turning to the NT the words for mind (nous) and understanding (dianoia) are frequently used, but these terms too are not with any **precision** of meaning.
- h. Thus when Paul is quoting Isa 40:13, Isaiah's phrase, "spirit (ruach) of Yahweh" the **translators** render *ruach* by nous "mind of the Lord," 1 Cor 2:16 *1 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. KJV*
- i. Used in this way, NT Nous (mind) evidently means the organ of spiritual **perception**-a word borrowed from the Septuagint. So we have mind, heart, and spirit all being used virtually interchangeably in various translations.
- j. What this demonstrates is that with the evident lack of precision and the overlapping usage we see from version to version and from OT to NT, the careful Bible student must avoid forming an opinion of the exact meaning of these words that is too **inflexible**.
- k. Given these difficulties, rather than attempting to build a rigid **component** map of man, perhaps the better approach would be to focus on the processes and functions inferred by these terms. **Slide body soul spirit**
- l. Although, we can not know with any degree of **certainty** either from a biblical viewpoint or from a scientific one precisely what goes on within those immaterial processes, using logic and reasoning we can however make some inferences.

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- m. Therefore, guided by Scripture and further described and elucidated by current scientific research in the fields of neurobiology, quantum physics and neuropsychology we may gain insight into the inner workings of the **soul**.
- n. The reason it is **imperative** to have a Biblical anthropology is to enable us to build a conceptual framework that will greatly aid our understanding of ourselves from God's point of view and in so doing enable us to apply our discoveries to our daily lives.

III. The Body of Man

- a. What we can know with certainty is that Biblical Man is both material and immaterial. The material aspect of man is denoted by two separate words: *Soma* and *sarx*. However, there is an important **distinction** between these two words.
- b. **Soma** delineates the body, both of men or animals; whether living or dead it represents the body as a whole, the vessel of the life. Paul makes use of it roughly 85 times in his various letters. 1 Cor 6:13 *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. KJV*
- c. The "body" is not the **sum total** of the man, for he himself can exist apart from his "body," 2 Cor 12:2-3. *I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) KJV*
- d. Even so, the "body" is an **essential** part of the man and for this reason the redeemed are not perfected till the resurrection, for no man in his final state will be without his "body" Phil 3:21 *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.KJV*
- e. The exception appears to be when soma is used metaphorically, of the **mystical** body of Christ, with reference to the church. Eph 1:22-23 *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. KJV*
- f. A second word that expresses the material person, the mortal man is the word for **flesh** (*Sarx*) 1 Cor 15:39 *All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. KJV*
- g. The Greek terms soma and sarx often express two **similar** ideas IE: the flesh (the soft substance of the living body, which covers the bones and is permeated with blood) of both men and beasts: 1 Cor 15:40 *There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. KJV Gal 1:16 I conferred not with flesh and blood :KJV*
- h. While soma is used in relation to the eventual perfected state of the believer in a resurrection body, sarx more often delineates the **lower nature** of man, his sensuous nature. Rom 7:18 *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. KJV*
- i. Thus sarx is used to denote **both** the material and the immaterial earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore highlights that aspect of human nature prone to sin and opposed to God. Sarx often refers to the sin nature.
- j. The word flesh (*sarx*) is used to refer to the "unregenerate state of men," and is opposed expressly or tacitly to pneuma and is seen as the **seat of sin** in man (but this is not the same thing as assigning sin to the physical body). Rom 7:5 *For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.KJV*
- k. Flesh refers to the lower and **temporary** element in the Christian," as contrasted with the spirit, the inward and real, Gal 3:3 *Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? KJV*
- l. By way of summary: Sarx (flesh) in general stands for man as a creature; in his **distance from God.**" whereas soma (body) in general stands for man, as a creature, **made for God.**

IV. Application

- a. What does it mean to you that as a believer your physical body has been made for God?
- b. In what ways do you do something with that realization?
- c. What keeps you from doing something with that realization?