

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth The Spirit World (Introduction)

In this series of Rightly Dividing the word of God we are going to be looking at places in the spirit world. When we refer to places in the spirit world we are talking about such places as Paradise or Abraham's Bosom, Hell, The Bottomless Pitt etc. During this study we will identify what the word of God says in regards to these places and give as much information as we possibly can in regards to each place.

In this lesson we are going to discuss the three parts of man and also what happens to these three parts when a person dies. This will serve as a good introduction lesson for this series because it is important to see where a man goes when he dies before we look at the actual places in the spirit world.

3 Parts of Man : (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

According to the above verse we see that man has a body, a soul, and a spirit. The body is the easiest part of man to define. Every time we look in the mirror we see our body. Our body is simply the flesh that we see when we look at one another.

We will define the soul as the real you. As we will see later in this lesson the soul has a bodily shape and is located on the inside of your flesh. The reason for saying that the soul is the real you is because when you die the soul lives on. This is the part of you that is eternal so to speak, and it is the part that goes to heaven or hell depending on what you have done with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The spirit is the hardest part to define specifically. We know that God gives it (Ecclesiastes 12:7) and we know that as a result of sin it is dead (Ephesians 2:1) and needs to be born again (John 3:3-7). In the word of God you will find the spirit connected with air or wind (John 3:7-8) but this is about the best we can do to define it accurately. You can also see these 3 parts of man given in Genesis 2:7 in regards to the creation of Adam.

Many will try and teach that the soul and the spirit are the same thing. In Hebrews 4:12 we see that they are not the same thing. According to Hebrews the soul and the spirit can be divided between by the word of God and if you can divide between them then they are not the same thing.

The next question then becomes what happens to these three parts when a person dies. We will list two different scenarios because things were different before the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we will discuss what happens before the resurrection of Jesus and after the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

What happens to the 3 parts of man when he dies before the resurrection of Jesus Christ :

The body of goes back to dust, it simply decays to nothing (**Genesis 3:19**). This happens to both a lost person and an Old Testament Saint before the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The spirit goes back to God who gave it (**Ecclesiastes 12:7**). This happens to both a lost person and an Old Testament Saint before the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. You might ask what would God want with a lost person's spirit, remember it is dead because of sin so what does it matter if it goes back to God.

The soul of an Old Testament Saint went to Abraham's Bosom or paradise before the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (**Luke 16:19-22**). The soul of a lost person went to Hell before the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (**Luke 16:19-23**).

Here is a good place to show that the soul has a bodily shape and is the real you. Note that the rich man's body in Luke 16:19-31 was buried but he lifts up his eyes in Hell. The passage also says that he has a tongue and he feels pain. He also remembers his brothers back on earth and does not want them to come to the place called hell. It is the soul of the rich man that was in Hell and note it has a body and a mind, it is the real you.

Some might be asking are you sure about these 3 parts going to these 3 places, sure look at the passage that deals with the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. He had these 3 parts and they went to the same places. (**Luke 23:39-56**)

- When Jesus died his body was placed in the tomb (verse 53). The only difference is that his body did not go back to dust because he was resurrected 3 days later.
- Jesus commends his spirit into the hands of his father (verse 46). So his spirit went back to God.
- Jesus told the repentant thief that he would be in paradise with him that day (verse 43). Jesus' soul went to paradise, but his soul also went to the hell side of the center of the earth according to **Acts 2:25-31**.

In the Lord Jesus Christ we see an example of what happens to the 3 parts of man when he dies.

What happens to the 3 parts of man when he dies after the resurrection of Jesus Christ :

The reason we make a difference for after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is because after the resurrection as we will see in the next lesson in this series, paradise is moved from the heart of the earth to the 3rd heaven. So there is a difference for where people go.

The body of a lost or a saved person after the resurrection goes back to dust just like it did before (**Genesis 3:19**). The spirit of a lost or a saved person goes back to God who gave it just like it did before (**Ecclesiastes 12:7**). The soul of a lost person goes to hell just like it did before (**Luke 16:23**). The difference is the soul of a saved person after the resurrection of Jesus Christ goes to heaven (**2 Corinthians 5:6-8**). This shows us why the most important thing in the world is your soul and where it spends eternity depends on whether you are saved or lost. (**Mark 8:34-38**)

