

CHAPTER 2

I Have A Soul (Self-Consciousness)

In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 the Apostle Paul gave a final benediction to the Thessalonian believers to whom he was writing: "And the very God of peace *sanctify you* (set you apart) *wholly* (completely) and I pray God your whole _____ and _____ and _____ be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." In chapter 4 we will study the *spirit*, in this chapter we will study the *soul* and in the next chapter we will study the *body*.

An English dictionary gives the following definition of the word "soul": "the part of the human being that lives, thinks, feels and makes the body act; the *immaterial* part of man (the part of man which is not physical matter and which is distinct from the body)." A person's body can be seen, touched and handled (see 1 John 1:1--the Lord Jesus had a real body). Have you ever seen a soul? Have you ever touched or handled a soul? Have you ever seen a body which contained a soul (if you are not sure about this, look in the mirror)? Have you ever seen a body which did not contain a soul (a dead corpse)? Is there a difference?

The Old Testament (Hebrew) word for "soul" is *NEPHESH* and the New Testament (Greek) word for "soul" is *PSUCHE* (the English words *psycho*, *psychiatry*, *psychology* all come from this word). These Bible words for "soul" are used in several different ways:

1) Very often in the Bible, "soul" means "*person*." Here are some examples:

Acts 2:43--"And fear came upon every _____ (or *person*, PSUCHE)."

Romans 13:1--"Let every _____ (or *person*, PSUCHE) be subject unto the higher powers."

Acts 2:41--"there were added unto them about three thousand _____ (or *persons*, PSUCHE)."

Numbers 31:19--"whosoever hath killed any _____ (or *soul*, NEPHESH)."

1 Peter 3:20--"eight _____ (or *persons*, PSUCHE) were saved by water."

2) Frequently in the Bible, the word "soul" means "*life*." Consider these examples:

Exodus 4:19--"all the men are dead which sought thy _____ (or *soul*, NEPHESEH)."

Leviticus 17:11--"for the _____ (or *soul*, NEPHESEH) of the flesh is in the blood."

Matthew 2:20--"for they are dead which sought the young child's _____ (or *soul*, PSUCHE)."

Matthew 6:25--"take no thought for (don't worry about) your _____ (or *soul*, PSUCHE)."

Matthew 20:28--"the Son of man came . . . to give His _____ (or *soul*, PSUCHE) a ransom for many."

Revelation 12:11--"they loved not their _____ (PSUCHE) unto the death."

John 10:11--"the good shepherd giveth his _____ (or *soul*, PSUCHE) for the sheep." The Saviour gave His life and died so that we might live!

3) Sometimes (especially in the Old Testament) the word "soul" is used in some very unusual and strange ways. Here are some examples:

a. It is used of *animals*:

Genesis 2:19--"whatsoever Adam called every living _____ (or *soul*, NEPHESEH)." (See also Genesis 1:21,24; Leviticus 24:18--"beast for beast" = "soul for soul.")

Revelation 16:3--"and every living _____ (or creature, PSUCHE, here referring to sea animals) died in the sea"

b. It is used of a *dead body*:

Numbers 9:7--"we are defiled by the dead _____ (or *soul* or in this case *corpse*, NEPHESEH) of a man" (see also Leviticus 21:11 and Numbers 19:13).

Note: In English we would never call a dead body a "soul" and we would not call an animal a "soul," but rather a "creature." The Hebrew and Greek words for "soul" carried a wider meaning and were sometimes used differently than the English word "soul."

4) The word "soul" sometimes is used in the Bible to describe the immaterial part of man, much like the English definition: "the part of the human being that lives, thinks, feels and makes the body act; the *immaterial* part of man (the part of man which is not physical matter and which is distinct from the body)." A good example of this is Matthew 10:28:

"Fear not them which kill the _____, but are not able to kill the _____: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both _____ and _____ in hell."

Please answer TRUE or FALSE. According to Matthew 10:28:

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|-----------|---|
| 1. _____ | The soul is part of the body. |
| 2. _____ | The soul is distinct and separate from the body. |
| 3. _____ | It is possible for men to harm the body. |
| 4. _____ | It is possible for men to harm the soul. |
| 5. _____ | It is possible for God to destroy the soul in hell. |
| 6. _____ | It is possible for a surgeon to kill the body. |
| 7. _____ | It is possible for a surgeon to kill the soul. |
| 8. _____ | We should be afraid of men. |
| 9. _____ | We should be afraid of the devil. |
| 10. _____ | We should be afraid of God (a good and healthy fear of the Lord). |

Suppose you were to have your arm amputated (and for some people this is very necessary). Would this operation remove part of your soul? Would you still be the same person or would you be 5% less of a person? Suppose your other arm were removed. Would you still be the same person on the inside? What if both legs were amputated as well. Would this affect your soul or change the real person that lives in your body?

Suppose you were on the operating table and the surgeon opens up your chest cavity. He sees your lungs, your heart, your liver and other internal organs. Do you think the surgeon would see your soul? Why or why not?

Suppose you were to have a heart-transplant operation. Would you be a different person after the operation? Suppose you were to suffer severe brain damage as a result of a car accident (so that you could not talk or even think). Would this make you less of a person? Suppose you were to die. Would death bring an end to the existence of your soul? Would your soul die along with your body? Though your body is dead, would **you** (*the person that you are*) continue to live on?

When a person dies, what happens to the soul (Genesis 35:18)?

- a. It perishes.
- b. It also dies.
- c. It departs.
- d. It goes back to the dust.

In Revelation 6:9, what did John see? _____ Did men kill their bodies? _____ Did men kill their souls? _____ In Revelation 20:4, what happened to the heads of these people that John saw? _____ Were their souls killed or destroyed? _____

Man has an eternal soul which lives on forever, either in heaven or in hell. A soul cannot be killed but it can be lost and destroyed: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and _____ his own _____" (Matthew 16:26). If you could have anything (or even everything) you wanted in the whole world, would it be worth an eternity in the lake of fire? _____ What does God call a person who provides for time (for this life) but not for eternity (Luke 12:19-20)? _____ A soul can be destroyed (Matthew 10:28); but what else can happen to a soul (Hebrews 10:39; 1 Peter 1:9)? _____ Has this happened to your soul?

According to Ezekiel 18:4, to whom does the soul of every person belong? Every person or soul belongs to:

- a. Himself
- b. Satan
- c. The Creator--the living God
- d. No one

Therefore, who is the only one who can save or destroy the soul of man? _____

Because we have a soul, we are **SELF-CONSCIOUS**. We are very much aware that we are persons, that we are alive, that we live in a real world with real people and that we dwell in a real body which sees, hears, tastes, touches and smells. There was a time (probably a very brief time) when Adam was just a BODY, made out of the dust of the ground. He was not yet alive and he was not conscious of being a living person. But God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of _____ and man became a living _____ (or *person* or *being*, NEPHESH)" (Genesis 2:7; see 1 Corinthians 15:45). He became a living, conscious person, created by God.

The rich man in Luke 12:19 was very conscious of himself, his life and his possessions. He even spent time talking to himself (verse 19). He had great desires and pleasurable plans. He was a person with feelings and thoughts and choices just like you and me. There was one thing, however, that he was not conscious of or sensitive to. He was not sensitive to the eternal needs of his own SOUL (see Luke 12:20). He was a "SOULISH" man (the Bible calls this the "NATURAL MAN" or the "SENSUAL MAN"--1 Corinthians 2:14; Jude 19), not a "SPIRITUAL MAN." Are you sensitive only to the things of man or are you also sensitive to the things of God?

The soul of man is the seat of man's feelings and emotions and desires. According to the Bible, the soul desires (1 Samuel 2:16), hates (2 Samuel 5:8), loves (Song of Solomon 1:7), rejoices (Isaiah 61:10), suffers (Genesis 42:21), mourns (Job 14:22), sorrows (Mark 14:34), etc. What else does the soul do (Ezekiel 18:4)? _____ And the result of this is the death penalty! But the living God is able to save the soul of the person who sins!

For the believer, the soul is also a battleground (see 1 Peter 2:11). There is a war constantly going on (see also Galatians 5:17). There are those things which would confirm and strengthen the soul (Acts 14:22) and there are those things which would harm (subvert or upset) the soul (Acts 15:24).

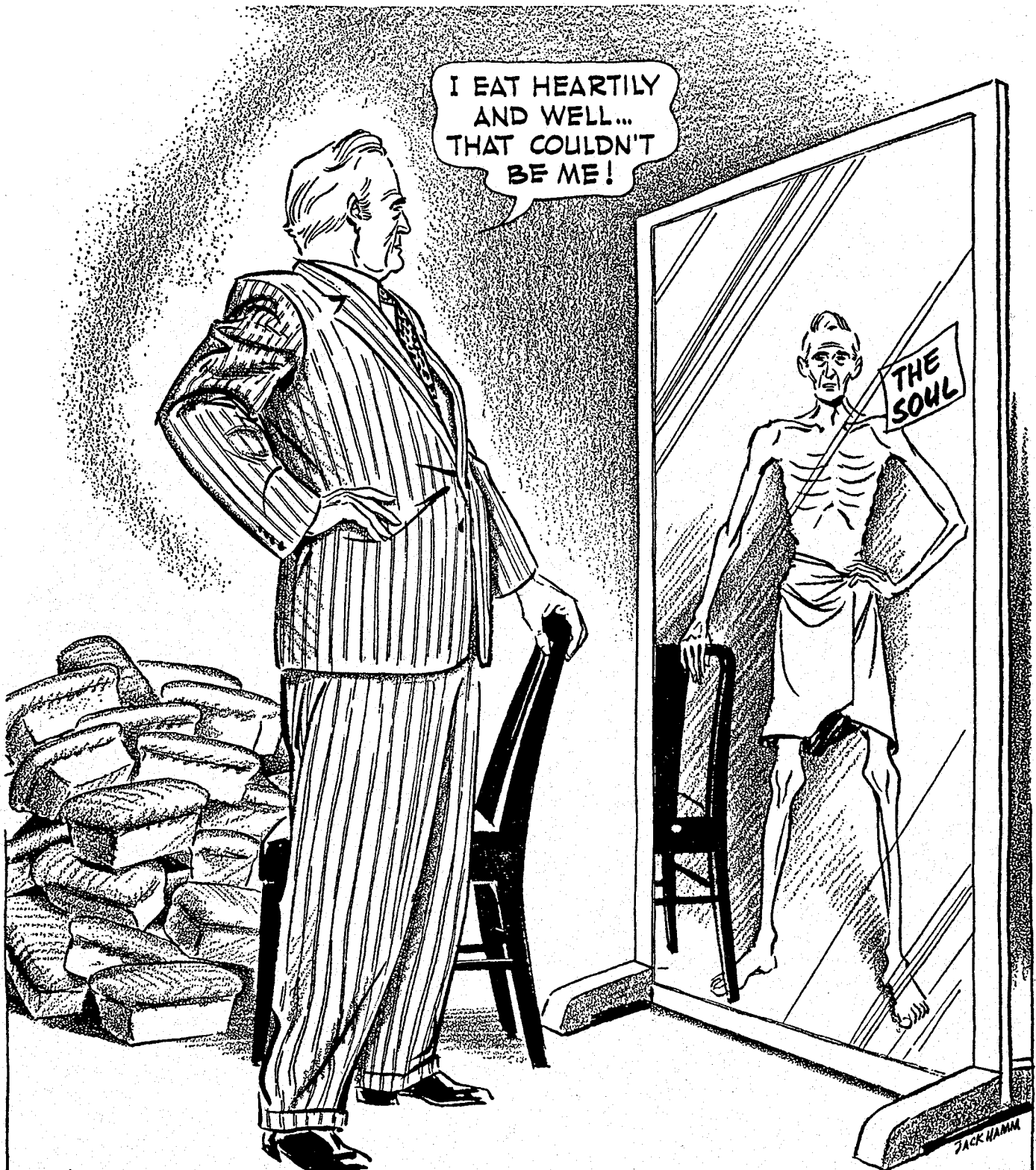
In 3 John 2 we learn something extremely interesting about the soul of a believer named Gaius. Apparently Gaius had some serious physical problems and the Apostle John was praying for his physical health. John said, "I wish (pray) above all things that you might prosper and be in health (physically) even as thy _____ prospers." The soul of Gaius was prospering! He could have sung the hymn "It Is Well With My Soul" and really meant it! Gaius was enjoying inner health. He was a healthy believer, healthy on the inside! John's prayer and wish was that Gaius would prosper and be in health on the outside just as he was prospering on the inside.

Suppose someone were to pray that same prayer for you. "I'm going to pray that you will be as healthy physically as you are spiritually! I wish that you might be as healthy on the outside as you are on the inside!" Would you want that prayer to be prayed? For some, that would not be a blessing, but rather a curse! You might cry out, "Please don't pray that prayer, because if you do and if God answers, I'll be in the hospital!"

Consider yet another question. What are some of the things you feed your body (good nourishing foods, junk foods, vitamins, etc.)? What are some of the things you feed your soul? To be healthy, we must feed on the right things. If you were to feed your body as well as you feed your soul, how healthy would you be physically? If you were to exercise your body as well as you exercise your soul (compare 1 Timothy 4:7-8), how strong and physically fit would you be? Do you care about your body? *How much do you care about your soul?*

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26)

DIET DEFICIENCY



"MAN DOETH NOT LIVE BY BREAD ONLY, BUT BY EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDETH OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE LORD DOETH MAN LIVE." — DEUT. 8:3