The Biblical Perspective on the Mind-Body Problem, Part One

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The old ditty has it: "What is mind? No matter. Well, then, what is matter? Never mind." That's not very funny, but it's quite descriptive of our knowledge. That's about all that many Christians can say about the mind-body question, "Well, mind isn't body and body isn't mind." And, yet, there is much more we need to say and many things we need to think about very seriously.

My intention is to move us a bit farther along the road to understanding in this area - not to complete the job but to move us somewhere beyond total ignorance. The title contains five important items. The first is "biblical, biblical perspectives." That means that we're going to base our approach on Scripture. The Scriptures are the basis and ultimate authority for our conclusions. I shall presuppose the Scriptures as the inerrant Word of God, given as the infallible rule of faith and practice concerning everything of which the Scriptures wish to speak, not concerning everything, but everything that the Scriptures intend to teach.

The Bible doesn't authoritatively tell us whether we ought to buy an American or Japanese car, for example.

The second word is "Perspectives." The plural assumes that there are more than one and I take this to mean ways in which the Bible looks at the question. The third word is tough - "mind." It is a word needing Biblical definition, because there are so many views that people hold that compete with biblical concepts. For instance, Thomas Huxley once wrote, "Thought is as much a function of matter as motion is." Moreover, the vague notions that most Christians have when they use the word "mind" should be sharpened. The present view prevalent in our country today, and perhaps around the Western world at least, is very close to a complete somatizing of man - making him all body. Respac, for example, puts it this way:

"Mind is nothing more than a term we employ to describe some of the functions of the brain." We'll have to examine that idea in some detail as we go along. The fourth important word is "body." We have to talk about body because, significantly, the Bible does not distinguish brain from the body. We must, therefore, understand as "body" everything that goes into the ground and rots, including the brain.. (Some brains, perhaps, rot before they go into the ground). With physicians, the definition might need to be altered to state that everything that goes into a jar of formalm is body. Finally, there is the word "problem." The problem to be addressed is the relationship of mind to body. What is this relationship, the nature of it, and what are the implications of that?'

I. Body

The first point to discuss is how the Bible deals with the body. There are two principal terms for "body" in the Bible. One of these is soma. In the term "psychosomatics" the word psycho means "soul" and somatics means "body." In the Old Testament the Hebrew word is basar, ("flesh") and its equivalent in the New Testament, sarx. 'Sarcophagus," for example, means a "flesh eater". It is important to understand something of the use of these Scriptural words and

something of the distinctions between them. "Body" speaks of this form that we know, that we see, that we touch, that we can feel. It often speaks of the form as a person. But, "flesh" means the living material of the body - the living material of this form and refers more to the composition of the body. "Flesh" also has the concept of weakness attached to it which goes along with the concept of sin affecting and weakening our bodies. Sin makes our bodies incapable of completely doing what they were originally designed to do.

The body is respected in the Scriptures. Scripture repudiates the Gnostic idea that matter is evil. Gnosticism taught that spirit is good and matter is evil. Many harmful ideas came from this basic Gnostic teaching which early got a grip upon non-biblical thinkers. Gnosticism was already a problem in New Testament times. Two whole books were written just to refute Gnosticism - the book of Colossians and the book of First John. Remember the passage in First John that says Jesus came not only "by water" but also "by blood." The Gnostics taught that Christ was not really the one who died on that cross - that some phantom or someone resembling Christ (there were various views of how it happened) died on the cross, but that the Christ who came upon the man Jesus was separable from Him and that this Christ left Him before the cross. It came upon Him at the baptism (the "water") and left before the cross (the "blood"). But John says, "No, He's the one who came not only by water but also by blood." He was arguing that Jesus Christ was a real man with a real body and that it was that body that died.

We see, therefore, that this problem already began in New Testament times, and that New Testament writers fought gnosticism even in its early stages. As it grew much larger many problems occurred in the Church. The Bible knows nothing of the body being evil. Matter was created by God and it was created good. When God finished creating matter He looked upon creation and He said, "It's good. It's all very good."

The idea that the body is evil, therefore, is not Christian. It is not a Biblical, concept. The body, however, becomes a problem, as we'll see later on, because of the way the soul programs it. Also, the body is affected by the results of sin, including God's curse upon this world, so that the body does not function as it ought. While it is not evil itself, the effects of evil are clearly seen in the body. In fact, the body is looked upon so reverently in the Bible that it has to be buried. Not to be buried, is considered a great insult. In Scripture, a dog eating an unburied body in Scripture is the epitome of temporal judgment. The dogs in the city were the city street cleaners. When a body was just cast aside and not buried and was eaten by dogs, that was a great disgrace. The ultimate insult to a living person was to call him a dog, because a dog was a scavenger.

The redeemed body is called the "temple of the Holy Spirit." I Corinthians 6:19, for example, contains a clear statement on that point. There God tells us how He looks upon the body of a redeemed saint. He says, "Don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God. You are not your own since you were bought with a price, so glorify God in your body."

Not only is the body called the temple of the Holy Spirit, but it becomes a means by which a Christian is capable of glorifying God. Christ died not just for the Christian's soul, as some seem to think, but also for his body which was included in the price that He paid. Since the redemption of the body is part of redemption Paul says, "You're not your own." That means that the body, which God calls His, is now to be used for God to do good. The believer has become a slave of Christ in order to be free to do good. The will of the slave is the will of another. Christian - slave of Christ - God wants to be glorified through your body. All of this is basic to our consideration of the mind-body problem.

Romans 8:11 is an interesting passage because in this verse Paul is speaking about something that happens to the body right now that he calls a spiritual resurrection of the body:

"Moreover, if the spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, this one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who dwells within you."

This is a resurrection of the body to newness of life here. Paul speaks of a new ability - the ability to live for

Jesus Christ that body receives here and now. Romans 12 makes it clear how God has made it possible to present our bodies to God to honor Him.

But the body is also viewed as a problem in the Bible, and it is a problem. Remember the problem that Paul had with his body? Remember how he talks about it in Romans 6 and 7, in particular, how he says that he finds this body hindering him from doing the things that he wants? He finds his body going the wrong direction. All through the New Testament, we read in Paul, and Peter, and in others as well, that even this redeemed body has desires of its own, that are not always the same as the desires of the Spirit. The body wants to do things; it has its own agenda, you might even say. The body wants to go places and act in certain ways, and respond by certain forms of action. This body, though it has the potential to glorify God, doesn't always, and becomes a problem. Paul seems upset with his body. He calls it a "body of death," and, in near desperation, asks, "who will free me from this body of death ?" He gladly affirms: Jesus Christ will do that. And in the 8th chapter he talks about how the Spirit of Christ does.

But, clearly, the body becomes a serious problem for the believer. And, if your body isn't a problem for you, then maybe you're not really a believer. Every believer struggles with this problem. Every person who has ever come to faith in Jesus Christ knows that there are things he wants to do for Christ and yet the body gets in the way. There are things he wants to stop doing that he knows are wrong, and yet the body wants to keep on doing them. That struggle is the whole point of Romans 6 and 7. What's behind the struggle?

The problem is that our bodies have been wrongly programmed by the nature with which we were born. We're born into this world sinners, with a sinful nature that will sin - a nature that was warped and twisted from the day of conception. No child could ever die, no child could ever have a defect, no child could ever be aborted if that child was not considered a sinner, because "the wages of sin is death." And that sin is what has also led to all the distortions and impairments of the body. Thus, from the very beginning you have a body condemned by God. Every person, body and soul, is condemned by God for his sin. The effects of sin begin to operate from the very earliest moment in a child's life. Because that child as a sinner has a corrupt nature he will go on sinning until such a time as Jesus Christ changes his nature, until the Holy Spirit comes in and regenerates him and gives him a new nature. The new, regenerate person desires and wants to do the things of God. But, during the whole time from the very earliest days on through the whole period before he is regenerated and, perhaps, even for a time afterwards that sinful nature programs his body. Because it's orientation is away from God it habituates the body, so that when adverse things happen (people say something critical, problematic situations develop, pressures come), the body is taught to respond habitually to those circumstances, in sinful ways. This nature programs the body to respond wrongly.

If I had a wand to wave over you, so that you would lose every habit pattern you ever had, so that tomorrow you'd wake up with no habits -none, I mean zilch, zero habits -now, just think what that would be like. You wake up, and there you are with your eyes closed, and you have to think consciously of everything you will comfortably or smoothly do. These are the four characteristics of habit. You can't do anything automatically, unconsciously, comfortably or smoothly. You're going to be awkward in everything that you do. You're going to feel conspicuous about it; you'll feel uncomfortable.

So, you have to think carefully, "What do I do next? I'd better open my eyes. So, you get them open. Then, you think, "Now, how do I get out of this bed?" You're awkward like a little child that tumbles over the edge of his crib. You have to think, "Do I put the feet out, the hands out, or throw the whole body over at once?" You've got to make a conscious decision about such matters. Nothing is automatic. Nothing is unconscious. Nothing is comfortable. Nothing is smooth. You have no skills. That is, nothing is habitual. Then, you go through all the rituals of putting clothes on. For example, buttoning a shirt. You know now how to button a shirt, but remember when as a child you first learned how difficult it was to button something? You don't know whether to begin buttoning at the bottom and go to the top, the top and go to the bottom, or the middle and go both ways. Think about putting toothpaste on your

toothbrush. First, you've got to unscrew a cap. You don't have those skills. You finally get it unscrewed and then you've got to aim it directly at a small, narrow toothbrush. That's hard to do when you have no skills. So, if you get half of it on the brush you're doing well; the other half will go up your arm and wrist. How about getting the brush in your mouth, instead of up a nostril? On and on and on this goes. Why, you would not get to breakfast by midnight!

Almost everything you do involves habit. You live by habit. God you a great blessing when he gave you the habit-capacity so you wouldn't have to think consciously about everything you do and go through with the awkwardness of learning to do it as if for the first time, every time. So, He gave you skills and ability to do things without thinking, comfortably.

You have the capacity to act by habit, a blessed and wonderful ability from God. This capability, however, may be used for a blessing or a curse. You have learned to respond to life wrongly as a sinner. When somebody says something nasty to you, what is your immediate, your learned, your habitual response? What kind of habitual responses have you built in as a sinner over the years? Do you figure, "Tll get him ten times over?" Do you do good or do evil to those who do evil to you?

Romans 12 says that all sinful habits must change and you've got to learn to overcome evil with good. That change is not easy, because as a sinner, a little sinner, born a sinner, manifesting yourself as a sinner, right away you began to program to respond sinfully to sinful things done to you. You learned those things so well you do them unconsciously, automatically, comfortably, and skillfully. Those are the characteristics of habit.

As a Christian, however, you've got to change, and that's the problem that you have with the body. That was the problem Paul had with his body. He wanted to do things God's way, but the body had been programmed to do something else. The lie slipped out before he even realized he'd told it. Then he had to go back and deal with that issue. The nasty word was spoken before he even realized that it was out there. He struggled to relearn and replace those sinful patterns with new biblical ones.

We haven't time to go into that whole dynamic of the "put off' and the "put on" of Ephesians 4 and elsewhere in the Scriptures that talks about replacing habit patterns, but we must at least be aware that this sin-affected body is not the wonderful body that was originally created for Adam. It has become distorted because your soul was passed down
corrupted and guilty and, so, it would program the body wrongly. The brain, N.B., is part of the body, and it is the brain that is programmed to see to it that the rest of the body responds sinfully.

At death, you're going to receive a new body, if you are a believer. The new body is going to be like Christ's body. That's what we're told in Philippians 3:20,2 1:

> "Our citizenship is in the heavens from which country we await the coming of a saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our degraded bodies, making them conform to His glorious body, by the power that enables Him to subject all things to Himself."

Though it was created perfect in Adam this body has been degraded. It was created to glorify God, and did, until the Fall. It was created to be used for His honor but, now the body is used for God's dishonor, as we know. Think of what people do with their bodies, all the horrible things that bodies get involved in, all the wretched things that bodies are achieving in this world against God, rather than for God. The body has been degraded by sin.

But, the body of the believer is going to be transformed. It is even being transformed gradually now, but someday that transformation will be perfect. It will possess all the powers, all the new properties that Christ's glorified body now possesses. His body could no longer be subject to pain; it was a body that had powers that we don't even understand. It could pass through the wall of a sepulcher! I'm looking forward to that kind of a body. And, I think every physician, in particular, ought to look forward to that kind of a body after he or she sees how blighted bodies can become.

So, the body was made good, it became degraded, and it now, because of habits held over from his unsaved life, becomes a problem even to a believer. Someday, however, God is going to redeem the body fully, and Romans 8 talks about that hope in the latter part of the chapter.

I want to stop and consider an implication at this point. Begin to start asking yourself the question, "What is the Christian physician s goal in medicine?" The physician deals with the body. Is it your goal to heal? Is it your goal to ease pain? Is it your goal to make life more comfortable? We're not yet ready to answer the question but we can say this much now: In working with bodies you should certainly be more than a veterinarian. You should show respect for those bodies because those bodies have been made to glorify God. People are more than meat and bones. Any Christian physician who begins to look on bodies only as bones on which the meat hangs, has a very pagan view. What should be your goal in medicine and what should be your goal in treating the body? Serious questions arise, and we're going to look at some of them as we go along.

The redeemed body is an instrument for service by which a Christian may glorify and honor Christ. In Romans 6, the word "instrument" (also sometimes translated as a "weapon") frequently occurs. "Instrument" or "tool" is the proper translation of hoplon in the passage. The hoplon was the instrument or the weapon, with which the hoplite (Greek foot soldier) fought. It was his instrument, his tool for fighting. In Romans 6 and 7 the hoplon was probably some kind of tool that a slave would use, because all the way through this 6th chapter Paul has been talking about slaves and masters. He talks about sin as the master over us before we come to Christ, so that we are the very slaves of sin.

But, to those who have come to Christ, he says: "Don't present your bodily members to sin as instruments" - there it is - "of unrighteousness, but rather present yourselves to God as persons who have been resurrected from the dead and are living, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness (v. 13)." God wants the bodies of believers as instruments to perform righteousness in this world. Any physician who doesn't have that in the back of his mind as he is working on bodies misunderstands God's purpose for bodies. You must see the body as a tool that God wants used in His service.

Sin was your slave-master. You were born into that slavery to be used by sin. But, Christ redeemed and freed you from sin's dominion by the cross so that you could serve Him. Those very same members of your body - hands, feet, eyes, nose, brain - the members or organs of your body that once were instruments for sin, may now become instruments for righteousness. That is a critical point for you to keep in your mind as you think of bodies and what you as a physician do to them.

And yet, these are broken tools, abused tools, worn tools. The body isn't yet freed from the ravages of sin. It is a living-dying, warped tool, at best. That is what a body is. And, it is interesting that God is willing to use even such tools for His purposes. This requires something of a partnership, an interaction between man and God. We're actually thinking here more of a partnership and interaction than the word "tool" (which speaks of almost of something that is inanimate) would imply. This body alone, apart from the spirit, does not constitute a competent person. The body alone is a thing. Yet the brain, which is part of that body, is more than a storage bin. It is an active filing and processing and controlling agent, that distorts, relates, molds, shapes data that are received according to its own biases, according to its points of view, according to its perspectives and dispositions, as well as according to its physical condition. And, it's that physical condition of the members of the body (which includes brain) with which you are concerned. As you think of the mind-body problem you should be concerned about the bodily aspect of this body-mind issue because that is your perspective and your focus.

You, the "you" that people call the "you" and the you that you call yourself, is identified very closely with that body. Your body is acted upon by your mind, and the body itself responds by acting according to its predispositions. There is an interaction within you that makes you, you. At death, the body will be lifeless and mindless. Yet, you will continue to exist consciously when your body is dissolved. You've lost your tool. That's what you can say about death. At death, you will

become disassociated from your body: "The body without the Spirit is dead. (Jas. 2:26) However, at the present time the courts rightly consider the body to be you. Right now, police take pictures of the bodily you and hang them on the post office wall. They take this body that they call "you" and put handcuffs on it. They throw it behind bars and lock the doors.

And, then, when necessary, they take that body (which they call "you") and execute it in an electric chair. So, now, you are very closely and rightly identified with that body; it is an integral part of the "you" that you are.

But, let's now enlarge our previous implication, pausing once again. Your task as physician certainly brings you to the point where you must deal with sin's effects upon bodies. That is one thing that you are deeply involved in. Since bodies provide man with a means (tools, instrument) for expressing love for God and for one's neighbor, and thus for glorifying God, the highest goal of Christian medicine is not comfort, is not ease, is not healing. The highest goal of medicine is not being patient-centered at all. It is rather to enable a man to use his body to honor God as an instrument of righteousness. That's the goal that a Christian physician should have. But, what if he's an unbeliever, what if he doesn't honor God? That's his, not your problem. You make it possible for him to do so. And, if, at such a time as he should be saved, then because of your efforts he will be in better condition to do so.

Medical help may even speed sanctification (the process of growing out of sin into righteousness) in the sense that it may enable persons to do and think better than they might otherwise. It may even be part of an evangelistic tool so that the person may be enabled to hear and believe the gospel which he could not do prior to medical help. Therefore, the implication for physicians is that when they repair broken bodies, they are not mere appliance repair men; they are doing spiritual work. Muse on this point the next time you feel cynicism creeping over you.

I'm sure there are many physicians who get to the place where they see blood and guts enough that it's hard to keep this view of things in mind. I'm sure there are many physicians who begin to work on hunks of flesh and body and bones, sawing them apart, sewing them together, cutting them up - and doing all the things you do to them - who find it hard to remember. But the goal is to enable the patient to honor God in his body. If you are only thinking of healing people, however, and if you are patient-centered, you're going to get discouraged. If you can't see service to God behind what you re doing, and you can't see that you are potentially enabling people both better to hear and to receive the teaching the Word of God for salvation and for sanctification and to, therefore, fulfill the mandate that God has given to them, then you have missed the major purpose of medical work.

Truly, Christian medical workers see beyond that body to what it can do in the service of Jesus Christ. And, unless you can put Him first, unless your medicine is God-centered, then your work is going to become discouraging, defeating, and grueling, worthless - nothing more.

II. Mind

Now, when the body, the brain, or some other organ is impaired, the mind is affected, and we'll get to what mind is in a little while. The body, we said, is like a damaged tool. That means it doesn't function properly. And so, the mind cannot use, or use to the full, that impaired part of that body. Wilder Penfield, the famous Canadian neurosurgeon, who worked for 30 years on brains, treating epilepsy, said that he observed mind acting independently of brain under controlled conditions that were reproducible at will. An interesting book called The Self and Its Brain (the title was changed from The Self and the Brain) by John Echols and Charles Popper, confirmed this view. Both authors are tremendously respected people, Echols being a Nobel prize winner as well as a renowned neurophysiologist. The body, what in you is acted on, by, and in concert with the mind - the body and that mind together - become an acting soul in the service of Jesus Christ. Your spirit uses your body to reach the world. The spirit doesn't directly reach the world. It uses the body to find out through the senses what's going on in this world, and having found out, uses the body as an instrument to do things to and in this world. We need a view of mind and body that begins to orient

us in this direction.

In regard to mind and the body there are three principle biblical terms: (1) now, the seat of consciousness or understanding, often contrasted with "flesh" as in Romans 7:23,25 and with dianoia, a compound word derived from nous meaning, "to think or be mindful of;" (2) phren, the second of those three words (and the phren family words:
phreneo meaning "to think or be mindful of," and phren, meaning basically "midriff," as that was where the thought process was considered to take place by Greeks who invented this word;) (3) leb, an Old Testament word (which is also a big New Testament word) for "heart," which covers all the New Testament terms as well. It is the only word in the Old Testament used to refer to the mind, and its use is larger than the mind itself.

The biblical word "heart" needs to be understood, and, maybe, we need to take a little while to understand it, because, in Western society "heart" has come to mean something quite different. When we look at a valentine, we see little cherry-cheeked cherubs with bows and arrows shooting little arrows into hearts. And, the meaning of heart in that context (one that comes out of the Roman background) in Western society is emotion, feeling. And, when we say, "I love you with all my heart," we are thinking of deep emotions that well up: oceans of emotions. That's not at all what the Bible is talking about when it uses the word "heart."

Whenever you read "heart" in the Bible, and think "emotion" or "feeling" you misread your Bible. You have poured a new content into the word that the Bible knows nothing about. When a preacher says, "Now, what we need is less head knowledge and more heart knowledge," he is making a totally non-biblical disjunction. Nowhere in the Bible is the head (the intellect) put over against the heart: Cf. "...as a man thinketh in his heart", "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God'" (You know why he's a fool, of course, because he's listening to one when he talks that way). This man is deciding things. Consequently, we read of the "thoughts and intents of the heart" in the Scriptures. So heart is not set over against the intellect, it includes the intellect.

"Heart" in the Bible, far from meaning emotion, is more often linked with the intellect than it is with the emotions. The word that is used for emotion in the Bible is "gut," "belly." Recall the passages that speak in the Bible about "bowels of compassion?" Think of the literal gut feeling you get in an old elevator. You don't feel it in your heart, you feel queasy down in the gut. Biblical writers understood that that's where the feelings, the emotions were principally experienced. "Heart," then, meant something else.

What does heart mean in the Bible? Well, if it isn't set over against the head, over against what is it set? It is set over against the lips:

"This people honors me with their lips but their heart is far from me." It is set over against the mouth:

Romans 10 says, "You must not only say with your mouth but you must believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead." So it is - heart and mouth, heart and lips. In the Psalms we read about the hands as over against the heart. In 1 Samuel 16:7 we read that man looks on the outward appearance but God looks on the heart - the outward appearance as contrasted with the heart. Lips, hands, mouth, outward appearance are set over against heart. What does "heart" mean? "Heart" means the inner you, the life you live inside of yourself that nobody knows anything else about except God and you. In Acts when the disciples pray they pray to God as the "Heart-knower."

When we think of "heart," there, we ought to be thinking about that inner life of the individual that motivates all that he does and all that he is and all that he thinks. Listen to what Jesus says about the heart in Matthew 15:18: "From the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual sins, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemy." This is the source of evil and difficulty in our life. This word "heart," this phren -this leb, this kardia - is also used for "mind" in the Bible, but is bigger

than "mind." And, the reason it is used for "mind" in the New Testament as well as these other words for "mind" is because it was the only term they had to use for "mind in the Old Testament. Much Old Testament

vocabulary and though comes over into the New, as well. Remember, Solomon wrote, "keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Out of it pour all the streams of your life - every aspect of your life begins, and is motivated by, is centered in, and is initiated by the heart. The heart is critical in Scripture. We must understand it.

What is the relationship between mind and spirit and soul? At this point I want to draw a distinction. The real problem is not mind - body. The problem, really, is a spirit - body problem. I don't want to talk so much about a mind-body problem after this but I want to talk about this spirit-body problem, because, mind is not the only aspect of the problem and it is part of the larger spirit/body problem.

In Matthew 22 is very interesting because of how Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:3. He says, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." Jesus added the word "mind." "Mind" was not in the Hebrew passage, because, obviously, there was no separate word, as I said, in the Old Testament for mind. "Heart" covered it all. But, Jesus added the word "mind," so, that we understand clearly that mind was not excluded in loving God, but that with all that you are, and all that you have, you must love God. John Calvin says that "mind" was added here by Jesus so that "soul" and "heart" would be understood by this new word which had come on the scene in the meanwhile. Jesus didn't want people who had the word mind" as part of their vocabulary to misunderstand Him. Well, that may be so, but He certainly wants you to know that with all you are and all you have you are to love God.

The truth is, there are quite a few terms used in the Bible that need to be understood and related to each other. These various terms get their meaning from this mind-body or spirit-body relationship. That's why we encounter various terms like "soul," "spirit," "heart," and "mind." The two terms, spirit and body, for example, stand on their own. The spirit is the immaterial entity that you are, thought of as out of relationship with the body. That is a most important point about its use. For example, in Luke 24:39, Jesus says, "A spirit has not flesh and bones as you see Me have." "Body" means that material entity you are that is not spirit. The interesting thing about "spirit" is that God is called a Spirit in John 4:24. He is never called a soul. And, the Holy Spirit is called the Holy Spirit, and never the Holy Soul. I don't know whether you ever thought of that or not. He is always called the Holy Spirit. The reason for that is because "soul" is the same immaterial
you as spirit or 'heart" but in union with and animating the body. The spirit in your body becomes soul. The spirit out of your body is called "spirit." God doesn't have a body so He can't be called "soul" but He can be called "spirit." The Holy Spirit doesn't have a body so He can't be called Holy Soul, but He can be called Holy Spirit. The spirit, then, is the same entity as the soul, but thought of as out of relationship to the body.

That the immaterial entity, when in relationship with the body, is called "soul," is clear from the creation account. Remember, God breathed into Adam's body that He had shaped from clay the breath of life. And, as a result, man became a living soul. So, the spirit or breath is breathed in and man became an animated being, a living soul. But, then James says, when, at death, the soul is severed from the body, the body is dead. The immaterial you (now called spirit) departs from the body, the body is dead.

"Heart" is also the immaterial "you." It is one-and-the-same with spirit or soul. It is, however, viewed as within you - something that can't be seen or gotten to except by God and, to some extent, by you. Heart is your inner self contrasted with the lips, the hands, the outward appearance. It's the immaterial "you" thought of as inner "you," not outer "you," not the "you" that people can see. Not bodily "you," but immaterial "you" in that body. That's what "heart" means. And, "mind," once more is the same immaterial "you or person self-consciously thinking, willing, remembering, reasoning.
The union of "mind" or spirit with the body forms a functioning unit oriented toward the material world. When the spirit, this immaterial me, is within this body that I also am, then I am oriented towards the material world, spirit and body. Not to say I don't believe that there is a God and an immaterial world, but I'm not really participating in what goes on in that immaterial world. I am participating almost 100% in what goes on in this world. Though I am in contact with that other

world, my present orientation is towards the physical world. This union of body and spirit, rather than called "dichotomy," as some people call it (meaning "to cut into two"), I would rather call "duplexity," (which means two things folded together, two things brought together). Dichotomy speaks of taking the two apart, and we might call that what happens at death (you are dichotomized), but what you are now is a duplex person. The spirit and the body are so united that should we under ordinary circumstances - and I'll explain that exception later - separate the one from the other, you would die, says James.

These two elements, then, are normally inseparable except at death. The only place where "mind" - nous - is set over against spirit that I can find is 1 Cor. 14:14-15, where it is talking about praying, not just with the spirit but also with the mind. Probably, he is here saying that the Corinthians thought the human spirit is under control of the spiritual gifts rather than the gifts under the control of the spirit. That is wrong. What he teaches is that there must be no mindless use of the gifts. That is forbidden in I Cor. 14:32. Yet, that is precisely today what many people applaud. "I put my mind in neutral and let things go." No. He says the mind ought always be under your control. "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."

It might be correct to say that the spirit has a mind as the body has a brain. I want to examine that statement a little further, but that's probably an accurate statement. At any rate, this duplexity, functioning in man, this body/spirit thing called "soul," has been scientifically observed, which is unnecessary for faith, but, nevertheless, very interesting. I want to close with some quotations from the work of Penfield, and Echols, and some others just to add that dimension to what we are saying here. Remember, Penfield worked for thirty years cutting the skull cap off and prodding around with electrodes in people's brains observing what happens. In a now-famous paper he says,

"When the neurosurgeon applies an electrode to the motor area of the patient's cerebral cortex, causing the opposite hand to move, and when he asks the patient why he moved the hand, the response is, 'I didn't do it, you made me do it.' It may be said that the patient thinks of himself as having an existence separate from his body."

He explains: "I didn't do it, you made me do it by prodding my body."

Once when I warned a patient of my intention to stimulate the motor area of the cortex, and challenged him to keep his hand from moving when the electrode was applied, he seized it with the other hand and struggled to hold it still. Thus, one hand, under the control of the right hemisphere, driven by an electrode and the other hand which is controlled through the left hemisphere were caused to struggle against each other. Behind the brain action of one hemisphere was the patient's mind. Behind the action of the other hemisphere was the electrode."

"So, we concluded, there are, as you see, many demonstrable mechanisms in the brain. They work for the purposes of the mind automatically when called upon, but, what agency is it that calls upon these mechanisms, choosing one rather than another? Is it another mechanism? Or, is there in the mind something of different essence. To declare that these two are one does not make them so, but it does block the progress of research."

That's part of what Penfield had to say. Let me give you one other comment of his, from another section of his paper that I think you will find interesting. He records one such occasion in which a young South African patient lying on the operating table exclaimed when he realized what was happening and it was astonishing to him to realize that he was laughing with his cousins on a farm in South Africa, while he was also fully conscious of being in the operating room in Montreal. Pen-field observed the mind of the patient was as independent of the reflex action as was the mind of the surgeon who listened and strove to understand. "Thus," he says, "my argument favors independence of mind action." As Penfield put it, "if we liken the brain to a computer, man has a computer, not is a computer.

"This discovery was totally unexpected, but it was in no way singular. It was repeated again and again for hundreds of patients, each of whom could identify the

scene recalled with ease, and virtually instantaneously. Patients could elaborate on what they saw and explain the circumstances, much as a TV viewer seeing a serial program might explain the circumstances to a watching companion who was ignorant of the previous events." He's sitting there eating popcorn
watching what is going on in his brain, in his mind's eye. "In such a situation there are clearly two elements - the viewer is not part of the TV program but an observer. Yet, he is more than an observer, insofar as the viewer can adjust the set, clarify the image, change the program, and, in recall situations, shut it off at will under normal circumstances by a shifting of attention, that is, tuning into another program.

"Here then, we have a dualism of object and subject, of brain and mind. It is no longer safe to view the mind as a computer, though the brain is indeed a computer of extraordinary refinement. But this computer has a programmer, and an operator who is using it as a tool of recall and of motor control. Epileptic subjects may sometimes experience times of total blackout as to consciousness, the mind apparently ceasing entirely to control the brain, providing that the brain has already been programmed, the subject becomes an automaton and completes the task in a state of total mindlessness. Patients may even complete a journey from work by car, provided that the journey is an habitual one, and that no unexpected interference occurs. Navigating the traffic and road turns is done by means of purely conditioned reflexes. Afterwards, nothing whatever of the journey will be recalled. The efficacy of the brain as a computer is, therefore, truly remarkable." Penfield observes that" the continual functions of the normally active mind were apparent in such journeys," but, he emphasized, that" it is the mind that must first program the computer brain since the computer is only a thing, and on its own has no ability to make totally new decisions for which it is not programmed."

"Kornhuber discovered the existence of electrical potentials generated in the cerebral cortex following the exercise of will to action and prior to the actual performance of motor activity. Between the conscious act of will and the activity resulting from it, he consistently observed a measurable interval lasting a few seconds or less. During this brief but highly significant interval there is a flurry of electrical potentials over a wide area that gradually centers or concentrates the signals which then bring about the movement willed. This takes the form of a developing specificity of the pattern impulse discharges until the pyramidal cells in the relevant cortex area are activated to bring about the desired movement. The delay between willing and willed movement is quite measurable. The nature of the will and the resulting willed action correspond. The problem remains, however, as to how the neuronal impulses are set in orderly action by the will. One has to assume," Echols believes, "that there is a bridge of some sort across the interface between the mental world and the physical world. It seems to warn the will is about to act upon the mechanism. No such warning signal or attention-getter seems to be involved when action is involuntary, but consciously willed action takes time to be set in motion. Echols wrote, "I woke up in life, as it were, to find myself existing as an embodied self with this body and brain." That's the way that he looked at it.

As Christians I think we need to do serious thinking about these matters.

This essay will be concluded in a subsequent issue.

Endnote

1. I've reluctantly refrained from any discussion of the Holy Spirit at work in the believer, not because that isn't important -I consider it utterly important - but because it was not in my assignment. And, where I do allude to the Holy Spirit it is only to throw light on the issue at hand. This omission, you should realize, somewhat oversimplifies everything I say. But, I've attempted in spite of this not to falsify the facts.