

Tripartite (theology)

For other uses, see [Tripartite \(disambiguation\)](#).

be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (ASV)

In Christian theology, the **tripartite** view of man (trichotomy) holds that man is a composite of three distinct components: **body**, **soul** and **spirit**. It is in contrast to the **bipartite** view (dichotomy), where soul and spirit are taken as different terms for the same entity.

Proponents of the tripartite view claim that this verse spells out clearly the three components of the human, emphasized by the descriptors of “whole” and “completely.”^{[11][12]} Opponents argue that spirit and soul are merely a repetition of synonyms, a common form used elsewhere in scripture to add the idea completeness.

1 Scriptural Basis

Hebrews 4:12

The primary proof texts for this position are as follows:

“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” (NIV)

Genesis 2:7

“Then the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (JPS Tanakh)

Proponents of the tripartite view claim that this verse spells out that there is a clear difference between soul and spirit,^{[13][14][15]} though they may be so intertwined and similar that they would be hard to separate without scriptural clarity. Opponents argue that there is no real separation here (though there must be some difference, at least in emphasis, if two different words are used), but the two are only used as a metaphor of things hard to differentiate, like the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Trichotomists see in Genesis 2:7 the first implications of the constituents of man’s nature.^[1] Delitzsch, commenting on this passage, says, “We cannot consider with sufficient care Gen. 2:7; for this one verse is of such deep significance that interpretation can never exhaust it: it is the foundation of all true anthropology and psychology.”^[2] John Bickford Heard refers to Genesis 2:7 as a revelation of the material cause, the formal or efficient cause, and the final cause of man’s threefold nature.^[3] The material cause- the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground. The formal or efficient cause- God breathed into his nostrils the breath (**neshamah**) of life. The final cause- man became a living soul (**nephesh**). The question is whether Genesis 2:7 refers to two or to three distinct facts and thus whether Genesis 2:7 describes two or three distinct parts of man’s constitution. Trichotomists believe that God’s breath of life, when breathed into man’s body of dust, became man’s human spirit.^{[4][5][6]} Proverbs 20:27 uses the same Hebrew word (**neshamah**) for the spirit of man, indicating that God’s breathe of life and man’s spirit are closely related.^[7] George Boardman describes the Divine Pneuma and the human pneuma as “constitutionally akin”^[8] while Heard ascribes to them the same nature.^[9] For Michael Schmaus^[10] and most trichotomists, the human spirit is the focal point of the image of God.

2 Historical Development

1 Thessalonians 5:23

“And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body

2.1 Old Testament

The Old Testament consistently uses three primary words to describe the parts of man: **basar** (flesh), which refers to the external, material aspect of man (mostly in emphasizing human frailty); **nephesh**, which refers to the soul as well as the whole person or life; and **ruach** which is used to refer to the human spirit (**ruach** can mean “wind”, “breath”, or “spirit” depending on the context; cf. Ezek. 37:1-14 where **ruach** is translated as all three). In the Old Testament **basar** occurs 266 times, **nephesh** occurs 754 times, and **ruach** occurs 378 times with at least 100 times referring to the human spirit.^[16]

According to trichotomists, the full anthropology of man and the proper distinction between his inward parts (Psa. 51:6) while latent in the Old Testament, do not receive a clear treatment until the New Testament. Genesis 2:7 “rather implies than asserts the trichotomy of spirit, soul,

and body”^[17] and must be “illuminated by the light of subsequent Scriptures”^[18] to reveal its full import. This corresponds with what many theologians call **progressive revelation**.^{[19][20][21]} As with Genesis 2:7, other verses in the Old Testament directly correlate man’s spirit (ruach) with God’s breath (neshamah) (Job 27:3; 32:8; 33:4; 34:14). However, the revelation of the human spirit is obscure in the Old Testament, as is the revelation of the Holy Spirit or the Trinity. Not until the New Testament is the nature of God fully and explicitly revealed and likewise not until the New Testament (especially the Epistles) is the nature of man fully and explicitly revealed.^{[22][23]}

Heard explains:

We have only another caution to make before entering on our task; it is that revelation being a progressive manifestation of the truth of God, the discovery of man’s nature must also be progressive. In the same way that the plurality of Persons in the Godhead, and their relation to each other, was only gradually unfolded in Scripture, so we may expect it to be with the trichotomy of man’s nature, spirit, soul, and body. As in the case of the doctrine of the Trinity it was not fully understood until the Spirit was given, so the distinction of Psyche and Pneuma is implied rather than taught when the race was still in its spiritual infancy....It would be out of harmony with the “analogy of the faith,” if the tripartite nature of man were fully described in those books of the Bible which only contain implied hints of the plurality of persons in the Godhead. All we shall see of the subject will confirm this view of the harmonious way in which doctrines and duties, the nature of God and the nature of man, are unfolded together.^[24]

The relation between body and soul itself wasn’t clear to the ancients, much less the relation between soul and spirit. The physiology and psychology of the Hebrew and the Archaic Greek world was speculative, and so, reasoning on imperfect data, they spoke of various physical organs as the seat of thought, feeling, and decision.^[25] The heart primarily was the seat of thought and feeling, the kidneys the seat of reflection (Psa. 16:7; 26:2; Prov. 23:6), and the bowels the seat of affection (Gen. 43:30; Phil. 1:8). It wasn’t until the Alexandrian physicians (e.g. Erasistratus and Herophilus) and the Classical Greek philosophers (e.g. Plato and Aristotle) that a more accurate understanding of man’s inward parts began to emerge.

2.2 Intertestamental Period

During the intertestamental period, two factors shaped and “enlarged the semantic domain of the Greek and He-

brew words for the parts of man”^[26] and set the stage for a more complete and accurate understanding of the nature of man. The first factor was Greek philosophy. The Greek philosophers, unlike the Greek poets,^[27] clearly distinguished the material from the immaterial part of man, defined the functions of the soul in more precise terms, and in general expanded the vocabulary for the parts of man. The second factor was the translation of the Septuagint. The translators of the Septuagint incorporated the linguistic developments of the Greek philosophers into the biblical revelation when they translated the Hebrew into Greek.

Good explains:

Although the classical Greek writers did not arrive at the same realization as the New Testament writers, their use of certain key words in Greek gave the New Testament writers a greater and more precise vocabulary to work with in describing the parts of man. After Plato and Aristotle, there was a richer array of words to describe the inward parts of man, particularly the mind (e.g., nous, noëma, di-anoia, and phronëma).^[28]

Dichotomists often argue against the tripartite view of man by discrediting it through its apparent connection with Platonism.^{[29][30]} However, Plato and the Greek philosophers, strictly speaking, were dichotomists.^[31] Plato did divide man into three parts,^[32] but his trichotomy was different from Paul’s trichotomy in essence, function, and primacy. Plato’s divisions were a tripartite division of the soul (See Plato’s tripartite theory of soul). He conceived of man’s soul as consisting of an appetitive, irascible (spirited), and rational element.^[33] In Timaeus 30 he also divided man into nous (mind), psychë (soul), and söma (body), with nous being the noblest part of the soul. When Plato does speak of spirit (thumos not the pneuma of Paul) he means something essentially different from Paul.^[34] The three parts of man are not equivalent for Plato and Paul and the master faculty for Plato (nous) is a subordinate faculty for Paul. “To discredit trichotomy by a similarity with Platonism confuses similarity with source. One could likewise attribute the source of the dichotomist view with Greek dichotomy (mater and spirit); some writers have argued for such a connection.”^[35]

2.3 New Testament

Trichotomists believe that a tripartite view of man is clearly taught throughout the New Testament (see the Scriptural Basis section above). The writers of the New Testament, like the writers of the Old Testament, consistently use three primary words to describe the components of man’s nature: sarx, used 151 times (and söma about 129 times), refers to the physical aspect of humanity; psychë, used 105 times, refers to the psycho-

aspect of humanity; and *pneuma*, used 385 times total in the New Testament, refers to the human spirit in approximately 80 of those instances.^[36]

In the New Testament, finer distinctions can be made between the functions and relations of man's inward parts.^[37]

A full treatment of man's nature must consider the New Testament use of such words as flesh, body, spirit, soul, heart, mind, and conscience. For instance, dichotomists often dismiss the distinction between soul and spirit in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 as a piling up of terms for emphasis, that spirit and soul is "rhetorical tautology".^[38] They claim that if 1 Thessalonians 5:23 proves that man is composed of three parts, then Mark 12:30 must prove that man is made of four parts since Jesus enumerates heart, soul, mind, strength. However, trichotomists see only three parts here based on their understanding of how the Bible uses the terms heart, soul, and mind. The heart is a composition of the soul plus the conscience,^[39] and the mind is the leading part of the soul. Thus, Mark 12:30 is well within the parameters of a tripartite view of man.

2.4 Early Church

The tripartite view of man was considered an orthodox interpretation in the first three centuries of the church. Many of the early church fathers (see Supporters of a Tripartite View chart) taught that man is made up of body, soul, and spirit. Irenaeus, Tatian, Melito, Didymus of Alexandria, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, and Basil of Caesarea, all held to the distinction firmly.^{[40][41][42]}

However, there arose, primarily, three historical errors, the fear of which have caused a "prejudice against trichotomy": the pseudo-Gnostic view, the Apollinarian error, and the semi-Pelagian error. "But", Delitzsch argues, "in the face of all these errors, its opponents must confess that man may be regarded trichotomically, without in the least degree implying the adoption of such erroneous views."^[43]

2.5 The Apollinarian Error

In the 4th century, after Apollinaris of Laodicea employed it in a manner impinging on the perfect humanity of Jesus, the tripartite view of man was gradually discredited by association.^[44] Apart from this heretical doctrine, which was condemned at the First Council of Constantinople in A.D. 381, Apollinaris was an orthodox theologian and contemporary of Athanasius and Basil of Caesarea.

In *History of the Christian Church*, Philip Schaff remarks:

Apollinaris, therefore, taught the deity of Christ, but denied the completeness (teleiotes)

of his humanity, and, taking his departure from the Nicene postulate of the homoousion, ran into the Arian heresy, which likewise put the divine Logos in the place of the human spirit in Christ.^[45]

The fact that an early heresy called Apollinarianism emerged is itself witness that the early church held the tripartite view of man.^[46] This heresy taught that in Christ the human spirit was replaced by pure, divine Logos. If the early church taught that man consisted only of body and soul, this heresy never could have gained traction. Some theologians believe that Apollinaris himself, however, confused the Pauline trichotomy with the Platonic trichotomy by confounding the *pneuma* (*ru'ah*) with the *nous*.^[47]

Heard explains:

The Greek Fathers, generally speaking, understood the psychology of Scripture aright; but unfortunately confounding the Platonic Logos or Nous with the Pneuma of the New Testament, they either distinguished the pneumatic and psychical as the intellectual and the carnal man respectively (which was the root error of the Gnostics), or confounded in a semi-panteistic way the human Pneuma with the divine, which, in the case of Origen and Apollinaris, led to distinct heresies, which the Church afterwards formally condemned. The consequence of this was, that in the reaction against these errors, the Latin Church generally, as guided by Augustine and Jerome, rejected altogether the distinction between Psyche and Pneuma, for which the Latin tongue was not flexible enough to find equivalents, and so the usual dichotomy of man into body and soul only became the prevailing view throughout the West.^[48]

2.6 The Semi-Pelagian Error

After Apollinarianism was condemned at Constantinople in A.D. 381, another heresy tarnished the Pauline distinction of soul and spirit. The Semi-Pelagians, after Pelagius, used the distinction to teach that "the spirit is exempted from the original sin which affected the body and soul"^[49] and that therefore, human nature is essentially good and retains genuine freedom in the will to initiate salvation. Contrary to Pelagius' view of human nature, Augustine taught that, because of original sin, the human nature we receive at birth has been "wounded, hurt, damaged, destroyed"^[50] and that, therefore, man is incapable of doing or desiring good apart from the sovereignty of grace. In maintaining the doctrine of original sin against the Pelagian party, Augustine ultimately held to the dichotomist conception of man and thought it safer to pass

by the distinction of soul and spirit as an “unprofitable distinction”.^[51]

Heard, however, argues that the distinction of soul and spirit “so far from making void the doctrine of original sin, actually confirms and explains it”.^[52]

Had Augustine but recognized the trichotomy, and taught that the ruach, or pneuma, or spiritus—i.e. the inspired and Godlike part of man—was deadened by the fall, and that in that state of spiritual injury a propagation of soul and body from Adam to his posterity must ex traduce carry with it a defective, and hence a diseased constitution, his refutation of Pelagius would have been sufficiently convincing, without hurrying him into an exaggeration in the opposite extreme...^[53]

Augustine’s immense influence on the history of Western Christian thought, in form and content, swayed decisively the decision for the dichotomous view of man. Heard says, “the authority of Augustine decided the course of the Western Church in rejecting the distinction as mystical, and tending to deprave the doctrine of man’s fall and corruption.”^[54] George S. Hendry in a chapter entitled, *The Holy Spirit and the Human Spirit*, concludes that “the denial of a created spirit in man, both in ancient and in modern theology, is bound up with a one-sided, Augustinian conception of grace.”^[55]

Interest in the human spirit waned in the mediaeval church, “whose tendencies were scholastic rather than exegetical, and whose philosophy was thoroughly Aristotelian.”^[56]

2.7 Reformation

With the Reformers, the rejection of trichotomy stems from an apparent incompatibility with their doctrine of sovereign grace, following Augustine. Since Plato, the conception of the human spirit involved an aspiration (eros) for the beautiful, good, and eternal. Early Christians similarly expressed this longing of the human spirit as a longing for the divine Spirit of God and thus established a correlation between philosophy and theology.^[57] This insatiable longing was seen as the “index of an ontological orientation of the creature toward the Creator.”^[58] Augustine famously expressed this longing in his *Confessions* when he said, “Thou has made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee (Augustine, *Confessions*, p. 3.)” For Aquinas, “it is natural to ascribe the desire of the finite for the infinite to the human spirit.”^[59] Luther identifies the human spirit as “the highest, deepest, noblest part of man, by which he is able to grasp incomprehensible, invisible, and eternal things.”^[60] “It soon came to be felt, however, that such a view could not be held in conjunction with the main

emphasis of the Reformation.”^[61] The longing for God, even though unconscious, obscure or misinterpreted, in unregenerated man clashed with the Reformers’ understanding of total depravity. They reasoned that since man is spiritually dead, he is totally passive and cannot even aspire for God. Thus “man was to all intents and purposes ‘de-spirited’.”^[62] However, this reduced man to an inanimate object, like a stone or tree, and severely undermined man’s humanity. Man was “a kind of unfeeling and inept material that had to be moved from one place to another.”^[63] The doctrine of sola gratia, under the influence of Augustine’s understanding of grace, undermined human freedom by stressing that grace is not merely indispensable but irresistible. “Fundamentally, the objection was that Augustine had resolved the paradox of inevitability and responsibility at the expense of responsibility, and that he glorified grace by belittling nature and free will.”^[64] Hendry, a Reformed theologian, and other trichotomists do not see any necessary conflict between man possessing a distinct, created human spirit and the sovereignty of grace, so long as “the nature of spirit and its activity be properly understood.”^[65]

Among the Reformers, Luther stands out, possibly, as a major exception to the prevailing dichotomist view. Pelikan has noted that in Luther’s writings there is support for the “trichotomist idea of human nature as made up of body, soul, and spirit; but there are also places in his writings which seem to speak for the dichotomist idea of man’s material and nonmaterial nature as the two parts of his being.”^[66] In his *Biblical Psychology*, Delitzsch also ascribes the trichotomous view to Luther, in an appendix entitled “Luther’s Trichotomy” where he quotes at length Luther’s commentary on the Magnificat.

Luther writes:

Scripture divides man into three parts, as says St Paul (1 Thess. v. 23)... And every one of these three, together with the entire man, is also divided in another way into two portions, which are there called Spirit and Flesh. Which division is not natural, but attributive; i.e. nature has three portions spirit, soul, and body... In the tabernacle fashioned by Moses there were three separate compartments. The first was called the holy of holies: here was God’s dwelling place, and in it there was no light. The second was called the holy place; here stood a candle-stick with seven arms and seven lamps. The third was called the outer court; this lay under the open sky and in the full light of the sun. In this tabernacle we have a figure of the Christian man. His spirit is the holy of holies, where God dwells in the darkness of faith, where no light is; for he believes that which he neither sees nor feels nor comprehends. His soul is the holy place, with its seven lamps, that is, all manner of reason, discrimi-

nation, knowledge, and understanding of visible and bodily things. His body is the forecourt, open to all, so that men may see his works and manner of life.^[67]

Others, including John Bickford Heard, George Boardman, James Stalker, Watchman Nee, and Witness Lee have used the tabernacle to illustrate the tripartite man.

At the turn of the 19th century in Germany, there was a major resurgence of interest in the tripartite view of man (see chart). Hendry accounts the initial thrust of this resurgence to philosophical concerns. “The development of the philosophy of spirit in post-Kantian idealism, originating in Germany, may be interpreted historically as a revolt against the suppression of the spirit in Protestant theology; for it was in its initial intention an affirmation, or reaffirmation, of the human spirit.”^[68]

3 Supporters of a Tripartite View

Many of the theologians below are cited by Louis Berkhof's *Systematic Theology*,^[69] Augustus H. Strong's *Systematic Theology*,^[70] Jan Jacob van Oosterzee's *Christian Dogmatics*,^[71] John Bickford Heard's *Tripartite Nature of Man*,^[72] and Henri de Lubac's *History and Spirit*.^[73]

A form of trichotomy is also held in Latter Day Saint theology. In the Doctrine and Covenants, a revelation of Joseph Smith Jr. states: “And the spirit and the body are the soul of man” (D&C 88:15).

4 See also

- Christian anthropology
- Christian psychology
- Monism
- Bipartite (theology)

5 Notes

[1] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 47-48. “It is referred to in Gen. 2:7, in such terms that we cannot fail to see that an exact system of psychology is here alluded to... We may amplify and illustrate the psychology of Gen. 2:7, but here is substantially, and in the fewest possible words, all that we know of the sources of man's nature and their union-point, the soul.”

[2] Delitzsch, *Biblical Psychology*, p. 90.

[3] Heard, *Tripartite Nature*, p. 41.

[4] Delitzsch, *Biblical Psychology*, p. 147. “He then breathed into this form the creature spirit, which, because it originated after the manner of breathing, may just as well be called His spirit as man's spirit, because it is His breath made into the spirit of man.”

[5] Lee, *The Spirit With Our Spirit*, p. 63. “The breath of life is not God Himself, God's life, or God's Spirit. But it is very close to God, very close to the life of God, and very close to the Spirit of God... The breath of life produced the spirit. Actually, it was the breath of life becoming the spirit.”

[6] Boardman, *Scriptural Anthropology*, p. 184.

[7] Hendry, *Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, p. 106. Although, this does not mean that man possesses a spark of divinity or that between God and fallen human beings there is some continuous element.

[8] Boardman, *Scriptural Anthropology*, p. 185.

[9] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 42-43. “The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives. We speak of the formal and efficient cause as one, not because we wish to confound the agent [the Lord God] with the instrument [the breath of life], but because the instrument is in this case of the same nature as the agent. The Lord God is the efficient cause—doubtless the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life. But the instrument He uses is the breath of lives. It is clear that the breath is here of the same nature as the Being who breathes it.”

[10] Hendry quoting Schmaus' *Katholische Dogmatik*, p. 332. “It is in his spirit that man is the image of God, that he bears the lineaments of God, that he is akin to God.”

[11] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 73-74. “The apostle had desired that the very God of peace should sanctify them wholly, *ολοτελεις*. The word *ολοτελής*, which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, is clearly contrasted with the following *ολοκληρον*, and the contrast is that between *totus* and *integer*, complete and entire. In the one case the apostle prays that their salvation may be *complete* as a whole (*totus*), in the other *entire* (*integer*) in every part. The complete sanctification of the believer thus suggests those parts of man's nature that the Divine Spirit is to enter and entirely (*entierement*, i.e. inwardly) sanctify by His indwelling power. If sanctification is to be complete as to the *end*, so it must be as to the *means*; if of the *whole*, so of the parts. The *τελος* in the first compound suggests the end, which is our whole sanctification; the *κληρος*, of the second, suggests the means, that we may be sanctified in every part. Sanctification thus rests on these two conditions, that the Holy Spirit shall possess each of the three parts of our nature, and possess them entirely.”

[12] Lee, Footnotes. *Recovery Version of the Holy Bible*. “Wholly: Or entirely, thoroughly, to the consummation. God sanctifies us wholly, so that no part of our being, of either our spirit or soul or body, will be left common or profane. Complete: God not only sanctifies us wholly but also preserves our spirit, soul, and body complete. *Wholly* is quantitative; *complete* is qualitative. Quantitatively, God sanctifies us wholly; qualitatively, God preserves us complete, i.e., He keeps our spirit, soul, and body perfect.”

- [13] Delitzsch, *Biblical Psychology*, p. 109. "And as for the essential condition of man, I certainly agree entirely with the view that the spirit and soul of man are distinguished as primary and secondary, but not with the view that spirit and soul are substantially one and the same... there occur to us two New Testament passages (viz. 1 Thess. v. 23 and Heb. iv. 12) which here claim special consideration, because they denominate, not only casually but designedly, the condition of man's being; and their logically rigid trichotomic mode of expression cannot be summarily set aside with the assertion, that in them is meant the condition of man's life, and especially of the Christian's life, not in relation to its three distinct elements, but assuming the existence of only two elements, only in reference to its three distinct relations."
- [14] Delitzsch quoting Eduard Karl August Riehm in *Biblical Psychology*, p. 111-112. "The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in naming (ch. iv. 12) ψυχη and πνευμα in juxtaposition, as composing the immaterial substance of human nature, announces a trichotomic view of the nature of man."
- [15] Ellicott, *Destiny of the Creature*, p. 107.
- [16] Good, 1997, p. 47.
- [17] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 40.
- [18] Boardman, *Scriptural Anthropology*, p. 327.
- [19] Boardman, *Scriptural Anthropology*, p. 327. "Since the course of Divine revelation has ever been marked by a progressive unfolding of what it had always germinally contained, it is reasonable to believe that the Pentateuch is to be explained by the Epistles, not the Epistles by the Pentateuch."
- [20] *New Scofield Reference Bible*, p. ix. "The Bible is a progressive unfolding of truth. Nothing is told all at once, and once for all. The law is, 'first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn.' Without the possibility of collusion, often with centuries between, one writer of Scripture takes up an earlier revelation, adds to it, lays down the pen, and in due time another man moved by the Holy Spirit, and another, and another, add new details till the whole is complete."
- [21] Hodge, *Systematic Theology Abridged*, p. 168. "The progressive character of divine revelation is recognized in relation to all the great doctrines of the Bible. ... What at first is only obscurely intimated is gradually unfolded in subsequent parts of the sacred volume until the truth is revealed in its fulness."
- [22] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 68. "It would have been contrary to the proportion of faith that there should have been a complete psychology before there was a complete theology. The Holy Ghost was not given, for Jesus was not yet glorified; and as the sphere of the Spirit's operation is in the pneuma, witnessing to our spirits that we are the sons of God, it is only what we might expect that the intimations of the existence of the one should be as enigmatic as those of the other. Till the person of the Holy Ghost was explicitly taught, His sphere of operation was not disclosed."
- [23] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 69. "If this be so, then we are prepared to expect the same reticence of the Old Testament with regard to the spirit of man as with regard to the personality of the blessed Spirit of God. The psychology of the Old Testament is incomplete, even as its theology is, and in the same degree. The deeper insight given in our dispensation into the operations of the Godhead correspond to and prepare the way for a deeper insight into the operations of our own inner nature."
- [24] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 39.
- [25] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 50-56.
- [26] Good, 1998, p. 50.
- [27] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 27-36. Heard goes into a lengthy discussion on the differences in view between the Greek philosophers and poets.
- [28] (Good, 1998, p. 50.
- [29] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, p. 191.
- [30] Marais, *Psychology*, 4:2496. Online. <http://www.internationalstandardbible.com/P/psychology.html>
- [31] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 65.
- [32] "Plato openly put forward a challenging theory according to which he allocates to the psyche a tripartite structure, according to different goal directed actions (both rational and irrational); these are not oriented only towards good, but towards honor or pleasure as well." Calian, George. *Plato's Psychology of Action and the Origin of Agency*. Affectivity, Agency (2012), p. 12
- [33] Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 16.
- [34] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 66.
- [35] Woodward, ch 5. Online. <http://www.gracenotebook.com/pub/2,id,89,sv,1.html>
- [36] Good, 1997, p. 47.
- [37] Delitzsch, *Biblical Psychology*, p. 208. "In the New Testament, especially in the Pauline writings, the psychological mode of expression is much sharper and profounder."
- [38] Ellicott, *Destiny of the Creature*, p. 105.
- [39] Lee, *Knowledge of Life*, p. 117.
- [40] Boardman, *Scriptural Anthropology*, p. 189.
- [41] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 5.
- [42] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, p. 191.
- [43] Delitzsch, *Biblical Psychology*, p. 106.
- [44] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 5. "With the error of Apollinaris, who denied to Christ a human pneuma, the reaction came, and the trichotomy fell into disfavor, and was neglected even in the East."
- [45] Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 711.
- [46] Pester, 1996, p. 44.

- [47] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 65.
- [48] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. ix.
- [49] Delitzsch, *Biblical Psychology*, p. 106.
- [50] Pelikan, *Emergence of the Catholic Tradition*, p. 300.
- [51] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 6.
- [52] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 13.
- [53] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 7.
- [54] Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 12.
- [55] Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, p. 113.
- [56] Boardman, *Scriptural Anthropology*, p. 189.
- [57] Modern day exegetes have interpreted Eccl. 3:11 and Hag. 2:7 along similar lines.
- [58] Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, p. 97.
- [59] Aquinas, Thomas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, III, 25
- [60] Luther, Martin. *Luther's Works*, ed., Jaroslav Pelikan. St. Louis: Concordia, 1956. Vol. 21, p. 303.
- [61] Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, p. 98.
- [62] Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, p. 99.
- [63] Pelikan quoting Faust, *Emergence of the Catholic Tradition*, p. 323
- [64] Pelikan quoting Faust, *Emergence of the Catholic Tradition*, p. 320
- [65] Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, p. 114.
- [66] Pelikan, *Luther's Works* Vol. 21, p. 303.
- [67] Delitzsch quoting Luther, *Biblical Psychology*, p. 460-462.
- [68] Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, p. 101.
- [69] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, p. 191-192.
- [70] Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 484.
- [71] Van Oosterzee, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 366.
- [72] Heard, *The Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. x.
- [73] de Lubac, *History and Spirit*, p. 178-179.
- [74] Justin, 'Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol 1, p. 298. "For the body is the house of the soul; and the soul the house of the spirit." [Online](#).
- [75] Tatian, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol 2, p. 70. "We recognize two varieties of spirit, one of which is called the soul, but the other is greater than the soul, an image and likeness of God: both existed in the first men, that in one sense they might be material, and in another superior to matter."
- [76] Bercot, *Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*, p. 627.
- [77] Origen, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 4, p. 289. "It appears that the soul is something intermediate between the weak flesh and the willing spirit." Vol. 4, p. 359. "For as man is said to consist of body, and soul, and spirit, so also does sacred Scripture, which has been granted by the divine bounty for the salvation of man."
- [78] de Lubac, *History and Spirit*, p.172-181. Lubac offers a lengthy analysis of the source of Origen's anthropological trichotomy.
- [79] Irenaeus, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, p. 532. "For that flesh which has been moulded is not a perfect man in itself, but the body of a man, and part of a man. Neither is the soul itself, considered apart by itself, the man; but it is the soul of a man, and part of a man. Neither is the spirit a man, for it is called the spirit, and not a man; but the commingling and union of all these constitutes the perfect man." p. 534. "There are three things out of which, as I have shown, the complete man is composed- flesh, soul, and spirit. One of these does indeed preserve and fashion [the man]- this is the spirit; while as to another it is united and formed- that is the flesh; then [comes] that which is between these two- that is the soul, which sometimes indeed, when it follows the spirit, is raised up by it, but sometimes it sympathizes with the flesh, and falls into carnal lusts."
- [80] *Patrologia Graeca* 23:1267D. [Online](#).
- [81] *Eccl.T.* 124.19-28, 337.8-24
- [82] *Patrologia Graeca* 39:1256B, 1324A, 1400A, 1577C. [Online](#).
- [83] Layton, *Didymus the Blind*, p. 186, note 31
- [84] Basil, *Homily* 21, no. 5. (*Patrologia Graeca* 31:549A).
- [85] *Patrologia Graeca* 37:452.
- [86] *On the Making of Man*. [Online](#).
- [87] Climacus, *Ladder of Divine Ascent*. "I called with my whole heart, says the Psalmist, that is, with body, soul, and spirit. For where the two last are gathered together, there God is in the midst of them" (28.61)
- [88] Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, ed., Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1956), 21:303-304.
- [89] Neander, *History of the Planting and Training of the Christian Church*, p. 394-395. [Online](#).
- [90] Olshausen, *Opuscula Theologica*, p. 134.
- [91] Usteri, *Entwicklung Des Paulinischen Lehrbegriffes*, p. 384.
- [92] Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God*, p. 210
- [93] Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, on 1 Thes 5:23.
- [94] Beck, *Outlines of Biblical Psychology*, p. 31.

- [95] Alford, *New Testament for English Readers*, Vol 2, p. 936-937. "Sensual- we have no English word for the quality here implied in the Greek word psychikos; and our biblical psychology is, by this defect, entirely at fault. The psyche is the center of the personal being, the 'I' of each individual. It is in each man bound to the spirit, man's higher part, and to the body, man's lower part; drawn upwards by the one, downwards by the other. He who gives himself up to the lower appetites, is fleshly; he who by communion of his spirit with God's Spirit is employed in the higher aims of his being, is spiritual. He who rests midway, thinking only of self and self's interests, is the psychikos, the selfish man, the man in whom the spirit is sunk and degraded into subordination to the subordinate psyche... Not having spirit- not directly the Holy Spirit of God, but the higher spiritual life of man's spirit in communion with the Holy Spirit. These men have not indeed ceased to have a spirit, as a part of their own tripartite nature: but they have ceased to possess it in any worthy sense: it is degraded beneath and under the power of the psyche, the personal life, so as to have no real vitality of its own.
- [96] The Holy Bible According to the Authorized Version (A.D. 1611): With an Explanatory & Critical Commentary & a Revision of the Translation, by Bishops & Other Clergy of the Anglican Church. Vol. 3. New York: Scribner, Armstrong &, 1881. pp. 258, 330-331, 729-730. Online.
- [97] The article on Resurrection is where the support lies. It is written by Rev. Daniel Raynes Goodwin, but as Smith is the general editor, he seems to condone this view. *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*. Rev. and edited by H.B. Hackett & Ezra Abbot, Vol. 4. 1870, p. 2712 Online.
- [98] Ellicott, *Destiny of the Creature*, p. 106-125.
- [99] *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary*, On 1 Thes. 5:23, Jude 19
- [100] Boardman, *Baptist Quarterly Vol. 1*, Online.
- [101] Murray, *The Spirit of Christ*, pp 159-160, 193.
- [102] Heard, *The Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 62-114.
- [103] Laidlaw, *The Biblical Doctrine of Man*, p. 67
- [104] Cremer, *Biblico-theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek*, p. 503-510, 582-586.
- [105] Scofield Reference Bible, Note on 1 Thes. 5:23. Online.
- [106] Pember, *Earth's Earliest Ages*, p. 74-77.
- [107] Stalker, *Christian Psychology*, p. 47-65.
- [108] Larkin, *Dispensational Truth or God's Plan and Purpose in the Ages*, p. 97-98. Online.
- [109] McDonough, *God's Plan of Redemption*, p. 16-17. "The terms 'inner man' and 'outer man', or their equivalents, are employed in modern psychology, but the psychology of the Bible is more analytical inasmuch as it indicates a subdivision of the invisible part of man, thus teaching us that man is not dichotomous but is a trichotomous being.
- [110] Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, p. 180-187
- [111] Online.
- [112] Lang, *Firstfruits and Harvest*, Ch 5. "This threefold composition of man is implied everywhere in the Word of God, and sometimes is distinctly stated." Online.
- [113] Roberts, *War on The Saints*, p. 209. "Christ wrought out for man upon Calvary's Cross salvation of spirit, soul, and body, from the dominion of sin and Satan; but that full salvation is wrought out in the believer through the central action of the will, as he deliberately chooses the will of God for each department of his tripartite nature."
- [114] Laidlaw, *The Biblical Doctrine of Man*, p. 67.
- [115] Pink, *Regeneration*, Ch 2. Online.
- [116] Pink, *Gleanings in Genesis*, p. 107. "Is it not clear then that the ark divided into three stories more than hints at our threefold salvation in Christ? The salvation which we have in Christ is a threefold one, and that in a double sense. It is a salvation which embraces each part of our threefold constitution, making provision for the redemption of our spirit, and soul, and body (1 Thes. 5:23); and further, our salvation is a three tense salvation—we have been saved from the penalty of sin, are being saved from the power of sin, we shall yet be saved from the presence of sin."
- [117] Lockyer, *All the Doctrines of the Bible*, p. 143-145.
- [118] Paxson, *Life on the Highest Plane*, p. 24-28. On p. 26—"Man, then, is a trinity; spirit, soul, and body are the integral parts of his triune being." Online.
- [119] Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, Ch. 5.
- [120] Cambron, *Bible Doctrines*, p. 20, 62-63, 120-134.
- [121] Sumrall, *Spirit, Soul and Body* (Springdale: Whitaker-House, 1995).
- [122] Man and his Nature, part 1. Online.
- [123] Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, p. 260. "Quite clearly then, the spirit is distinct from the soul, or else these verses add up to tautological nonsense. We therefore conclude that man is not dichotomous (to use the technical theological term) but trichotomous."
- [124] Fitzwater, *Christian Theology A Systematic Presentation*, p. 309.

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7 External links

- [The Tripartite Makeup of Man \(wholereason.com\)](http://wholereason.com)
- [Tripartite Man \(tripartiteman.org\)](http://tripartiteman.org)
- [Spirit, Soul and Body - the Tripartite nature of Man \(christian-faith.com\)](http://christian-faith.com)
- [The Collected Works of Watchman Nee](#)
- [Doctrine & Covenants 88:15](#)

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