



ANTHROPOLOGY & HAMARTIOLOGY: MAN & SIN THE NATURE OF MAN | SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

DEFINITIONS

Dichotomy: View that humans consist of ____ distinguishable aspects (material & immaterial)

Trichotomy: View that humans consist of _____ distinguishable aspects: body, soul, and spirit

MAN IS A UNIFIED MATERIAL AND IMMATERIAL BEING

Scripture distinguishes between the _____ body and the immaterial soul/spirit (Matthew 10:28; James 2:26).

At death, the immaterial person can exist temporarily apart from the body (Philippians 1:21–24), but this separation is unnatural and _____. God’s ultimate purpose for mankind is embodied life through the resurrection of the body (1 Corinthians 15:35–54).

Soul and spirit should not normally be understood as separate _____ of man. Scripture regularly uses the terms interchangeably or attributes similar activities to each (Luke 1:46–47).

Passages that distinguish between body, soul, and spirit do not necessarily teach that these are three separate parts (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Scripture can distinguish several aspects of the same person for emphasis without _____ the person into separate components (Mk. 12:30).

Therefore, man is best understood as a _____ person possessing distinguishable material and immaterial aspects.

THE BODY IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF HUMAN NATURE

Scripture consistently affirms the goodness and importance of embodied human existence:

- Creation — God created mankind as embodied beings and declared His creation “_____” (Genesis 1:27, 31; 2:7).
- Incarnation — The Son of God became truly human and took on _____ (Jn. 1:14).
- Redemption — Christ accomplished salvation through sacrificing His _____ (1 Pet. 2:24).
- Resurrection — God will raise and transform our bodies for everlasting life (Phil. 3:20–21).

The body is therefore not merely a temporary container for the soul or an inherently evil part of our existence. Embodied existence is part of God’s good _____ for humanity.

Since humans are unified persons, we should care for the whole person, seeing that physical, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and relational realities _____ one another (Rom. 12:1–2).

THE BIBLE DESCRIBES HUMAN NATURE IN SEVERAL WAYS

Term	Verses	Meaning/Emphasis	Notes
Body (Greek: <i>sōma</i>)	1 Cor. 6:19-20; 15:42-44	Physical/material aspect of human existence	Can sometimes represent the whole person (Rom. 12:1); our final hope includes the resurrection of the body
Flesh (Hebrew: <i>bāšār</i> / Greek: <i>sarx</i>)	Jn. 1:14; Rom. 8:5-8; Gal. 5:16-17	Physical existence or human frailty (especially in Paul, human life oriented toward sin and rebellion against God)	When Paul contrasts “flesh and Spirit,” he is contrasting opposing orientations or realms of life.
Soul (Hebrew: <i>nephesh</i> / Greek: <i>psychē</i>)	Matt. 10:28; Acts 2:41	Life, personhood, or the self (Can refer to the whole person or the immaterial person distinguished from the body)	Used of animals also (Gen. 1:20, 24), showing the word itself does not always mean an immaterial soul
Spirit (Hebrew: <i>ruach</i> / Greek: <i>pneuma</i>)	1 Cor. 2:11; Jas. 2:26	The immaterial person (often emphasizes our relationship with God)	Overlaps with “soul” in many contexts and is not a separate immaterial substance
Heart (Hebrew: <i>lēb/lēbāb</i> / Greek: <i>kardia</i>)	Prov. 4:23; Mk. 7:21-23; Rom. 10:9-10	The inner center of the person (including thought, desire, will, affection, and moral character)	Not just the emotions (a key term for understanding the whole person)
Mind (Greek: <i>nous</i>)	Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 2:16	Understanding, thought, discernment, and judgment	The mind must be renewed (Rom 12:2), which affects the whole person, not just intellect
Conscience (Greek: <i>syneidēsis</i>)	Rom. 2:14-15; 1 Tim. 4:2	Moral awareness that bears witness concerning our actions	Can be weak/defiled/seared (1 Cor. 8:7; Titus 1:15; 1 Tim. 4:2)

These terms describe overlapping aspects, capacities, or perspectives of the whole person rather than separate compartments within us. The _____ is especially important in Scripture as the directing center of the inner person: what we think, believe, desire, choose, love, and do flows from the heart (Prov. 4:23; Lk. 6:43-45).

HOW IS HUMAN NATURE PASSED FROM ONE GENERATION TO ANOTHER?

Christians have proposed three explanations for the origin of each person’s immaterial nature:

1. **Pre-existence:** The view that souls exist _____ to conception and are subsequently joined to physical bodies. Scripture provides no support for the pre-existence of human souls.
2. **Creationism:** The view that _____ directly creates each individual soul and joins it to the body produced through human generation.
3. **Traducianism:** The view that the whole human person—material and immaterial—is propagated through _____ generation.

_____ appears to best account for several biblical truths:

- The _____ of the human race — all mankind descends from Adam and Eve (Acts 17:26).
- Children proceed from their parents as _____ persons — Adam fathered Seth “in his own likeness, after his image” (Genesis 5:3).
- Human corruption is inherited through our descent from Adam (Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12).
- God directly created the first man and woman, but He established human procreation as the means by which subsequent human persons come into _____ (Gen. 1:28; 4:1).