

Embodied Shalom: An Intro to Theological Anthropology and the Theology of the Body

“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don’t let your heart be troubled or fearful. John 14:27

Embodied Shalom – Jesus will give peace for our whole, embodied selves.

To know and believe that in our bodies, his boundary lines for us are actually in pleasant places. Psalm 16:6

“Don't get bogged down in the analysis but use it to help you listen, trust, and obey our loving God.” -Chad Haynes

A good theology of human embodiment will help us live as whole people in a fractured world.

Theological Anthropology – theological anthropology is the study of what it means to be human by starting with God and seeking to understand God’s intentions for humankind.

Christian theological anthropology focuses especially on the Word of God—Jesus and the Christian Scriptures. They provide understanding both about who God is and who humans are in relation to God.

Doctrine of being human

1. Who are we?

1. We are God’s created creatures, made in his image.

Gen 1:26, 27, 31 (NLT)

Vs 26: Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us.

Vs. 27: So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Vs. 31: Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!

2. We are creatures who are dependent on our Creator, who are dependent on one another, and who are dependent on creation. (Gen 1:28, all of chapter 2)

Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”
Genesis 1:28

3. Lives of followers of Jesus from Colossians 3 – Christ is our life (vs 4), our life is hidden in him (vs 3), we are holy, chosen, and beloved (vs 12).

2. What are we?

Gnosticism – material (bad) vs spiritual (good)

Followers of Jesus *believe* in *holism*/goodness in what God has made.

Psychosomatic unity

Psycho- (from the Greek *psykhē*): Meaning "mind" or "soul" – Spiritual

Somatic (from the Greek *sōmatikos* or *sōma*): Meaning "bodily" or "of the body" – Physical

In Genesis 2:7, God forms man from physical dust and breathes life into him.

Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living *being*. Genesis 2:7

Nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) is an ancient Hebrew word commonly translated as "soul". However, in biblical contexts, it refers to an entire living, breathing, physical being.

A Whole Living Being: In the Bible, people do not *have* a *nephesh*; they *are* a *nephesh*. It encompasses a person's entire physical and emotional experience, including desires, emotions, and mind.

Created in God's image and likeness – psychosomatic unity.

We are a body, we don't have a body, we are a body with psycho (soul) somatic (body) unity – one life before God, body and spirit.

Questions: Why do you think this matters? What can be distorted if we view ourselves or others as only physical or spiritual? Why do you think this distortion affects us so much?

3. How then shall we live?

We must look to Jesus. He, too, has psychosomatic unity.

Jesus is fully human and fully divine and he is one person (hypostatic union). He is not divided. He did not separate his physical form from his spiritual form. He is whole, still in body, waiting to return to make all things new.

What are some things that Jesus did that showed his psychosomatic unity?

Everything he did involved both his body and his spirit!

What are the topics in this series about our bodies?

- Week One : Intro Doctrine of Humans
- Week Two: Our Physical Bodies - Very good indeed
- Week Three: Our Broken Bodies:
- Week Three (July 5): Sexuality
- Week Four (and maybe five?): Our Spiritual Bodies, 1 Corinthians 15:35-58
- Week Five: Our Worshiping Bodies
- Week Six: How then shall we live? Application and implications

We must not separate ourselves into physical and spiritual activities and actions.

Questions to ponder as we begin this journey:

Dancing at a party vs. engaging in musical worship: How does your body and spirit respond in both situations? Yes, there are cultural components here, but *when you dance are you aware of the Holy Spirit* and *when you worship are you aware of your body?*

Do you ever go through every part of your body with gratitude to God for how he made it and what it can do? Do you ever think your body is bad? Do you ever scoff at your spiritual life?

There are many ways we separate spiritual from physical. Can you name something?

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely. And may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will do it. 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24