

1 Thessalonians: Standing Firm  
Lesson 8 “Spirit, Soul, and Body”

I. Review and Introduction - This church was founded on Paul’s second missionary journey after he left Philippi. Paul taught in Thessalonica for three Sabbaths and was then run out of town by unbelieving Jews. Paul then travelled to Berea and began to minister there, but the Jews from Thessalonica traveled there and ran him out of town there also.

A. Paul wrote *1 Thessalonians* about six months after he planted the church in Thessalonica to strengthen, comfort, and ground this church in truth.

B. We are going to close this series by focusing on arguably the most important New Covenant truth there is. We are going to talk about “Spirit, Soul, and Body.”

1. Why important? You cannot understand who you are in Christ and large portions of the New Testament unless you get a hold of this singular truth.

a. Example: **2 Corinthians 5:21** Some of you think being the righteousness of God is God’s goal for you, a position me or some holy person has achieved, but you can’t be the righteousness (really) of God because you have sin in your life.

b. At best you think God is calling those things that be not as though they are when He says that about you or He’s giving you a platitude He really doesn’t mean it. ex: me praising my boys art when they were little.

II. **1 Thessalonians 5:23-28 Spirit, Soul, and Body**

A. **1 Thessalonians 5:23**

1. *Verse 23* says we are a 3 part being. We are a spirit and have a soul that lives in a body. Many of us relate to ourselves as our body. **2 Peter** refers to our body as a tent. It’s not the real us the New Testament talks about. Others think we are a 2 part being. They know we are more than a body, but they combine the spirit and soul. This is technically not correct (**Hebrews 4:12**) and while sometimes its ok to do, other times this will leave you confused about your identity.

a. body - soma - the physical body.

b. spirit - pneuma - means a current of air or breath of God. Think about when God breathed into Adam and gave him his spirit. This is the part of us that is born again (becomes new at salvation).

c. soul - psyche - This is where we get the word psychology. It’s talking about our mental/emotional state. Psychology is the study of our mind and behavior.

2. So what does knowing all of this do for me? God establishes your position, your identity in Christ in the spirit the minute you get saved. That never changes.

The rest of the Christian life is learning to renew your mind (soul) to who you really are so you can live from that position.

a. **Ephesians 4:17-24** - This passage means we can be alienated from the life of God that is in us because of how we think. It also teaches us that learning is important. **Feeling like a Christian isn't automatic.** Paul then tells us to be renewed in the way we think and then to put on the new man in the way we do life (kind of like you have to intentionally put on clothes - it's not automatic). **He then says the new man was created in righteousness and true holiness. In the spirit we aren't trying to become anything - we are like Jesus point blank and period.**

b. **1 Peter 1:13- 15** The renewed mind leads to the outworking of the spirit of God so our conduct aligns with our position in Christ - holiness.

c. Common objection - but I don't feel like I am who the Bible says I am. Scientifically, what you have done is you have believed a lie so long you have created a neural pathway.

d. A neural pathway is a series of connected neurons that send signals from one part of the brain to another and they strongly affect our **emotions (sin is emotional)**. They are formed by experiences, what we think about, etc. They can be used for good or bad. Bad - men and pornography - when men watch pornography the first time it carves out a trail in the brain (like a running trail in the woods). The more they watch it, the more that trail gets broken in and the faster you can get from point A to B to get the sinful emotional response. This is how men get bound to pornography. This is also how people get stuck in depression.

e. How do psychologists say to overcome - not by not trying to focus on the negative (similar to focusing on the law), but to focus on positive things. ex: Don't think about how fat you are, think about what you want to look like. Don't think about how you've failed in a work situation, see yourself succeeding (**and feel the emotion of it**). **God created our emotions. They aren't to control us, we are to control them and use them for positive things.**

## B. 1 Thessalonians 5:24-28

1. **Verse 24** We have to reprogram our brains that God is faithful to His word. Adversity and the associated emotions will tell us otherwise.

2. **Verse 25** Paul asked for prayer in spite of his accomplishments - **Humility.**

3. **Verse 26** This verse needs to be made culturally relevant. Greeting each other with a kiss was a normal way of showing love and affection in that culture.

Today it would be a handshake and a hug. Point is make people feel celebrated.

4. **Verse 27** Paul ordered this letter be read to the whole church (probably because he only had 3 weeks with them initially to get them established in grace.

5. **Verse 28** Paul commends them to the Lord's grace/ability.

### III. Conclusion

A. Call Up Prayer Team

B. Pray Closing Prayer