

## Consciousness, Conversion, and Grace

What is Consciousness? The Soul?

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### Starting Points

- A look at the Christian Scriptures  
 1Thess 4:23

“May God . . . make you holy in every part, and keep you sound in *spirit, soul, and body* . . .”

*Luke 1:46*

“My *soul* magnifies the Lord, my *spirit* rejoices in God my savior . . .”

### Current Spiritual Literature

- Terms Used in Popular Spirituality:

“Body, mind, and spirit . . .”

- Question: Where are the *emotions* in this triad? In the body? In the mind?
- The terms are *ambiguous* . . . in need of clarification.

### The Starting Place: Anthropology

- What is your view of the human being?
- What is human consciousness?
- How do humans process data?
- What is “knowing?”
- What is “truth” and how do we get to it?
- What motivates “choice?”
- What does “energy” have to do with all of this?

## The Human Person

If “body, mind, and spirit” is an inadequate triad, what might an adequate human anthropology look like?

What are the dimensions of the human being that must be accounted for?

## Organism, Psyche, and Spirit

- Adequate to humanness as empirically experienced?”
- Accessible to the natural sciences and medicine?
- Accessible to the human sciences and psychology?
- Open to a deepened understanding of “spirituality?”

## Organism

- Skeletal system
- Neurological system
- Circulatory system
- Respiratory system
- Lymphatic system
- Reproductive system
- Digestive system
- Endocrine system, etc.

## Psyche

- The human energy field
- The human component of synergy
- Synergy as orchestrator of the organism’s unfolding
- The meaning of “form”
- Psychic energy as implicitly spiritual (open to something beyond the human)
- Psychic energy as ground of consciousness
- Psychic “memory”

## The Operations of the Psyche

- Unconscious storage and imprinting
- Conscious Operations:
  - Imaging
  - imagining
  - fantasy
  - feeling
  - emotion

## Emotions

- Spontaneous
 

love	↔	hate
desire	↔	aversion
joy	↔	sadness
- Considered
 

courage	↔	fear
hope	↔	despair
	↔	anger

## The Human Spirit

- Natural operations of cognition and volition
- Natural openness to knowing what is beyond empirical observation (sense knowledge/science)
- Consciousness capable of natural **faith** (based on the trustworthiness of a source of information)
- Consciousness capable of **hope** in what is possible but not yet realized
- Consciousness capable of a **compassion** beyond narcissistic self-interest
- Limited to anthropological operation/relationship only
- Wounded by **emotional anxiety**, cognition prone to **bias**, and **choice paralyzed** by indecision

## The Operations of Human Consciousness

- Experience** of Data
  - Data of sense
  - Data of consciousness
- Understanding** of the Data Experienced
- Judgment** that the Understanding is Correct
- Decision** based on the *Value* of the Judgment of Fact

## The "Soul"

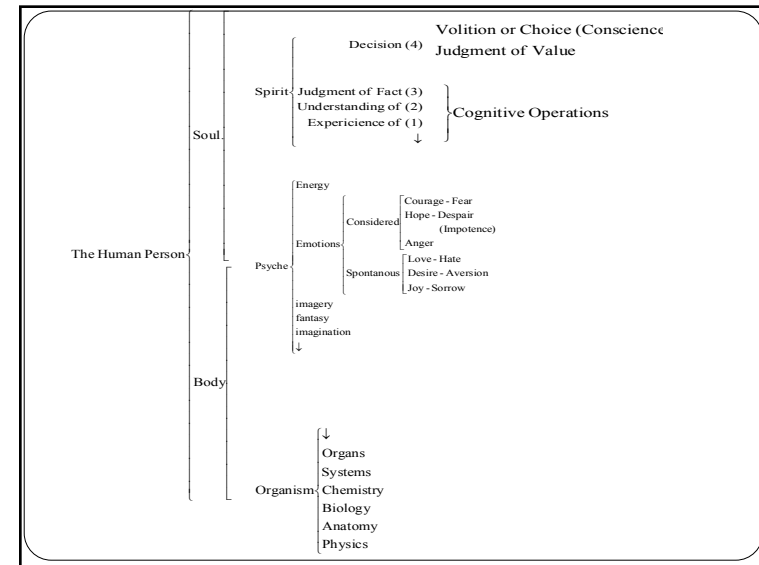
- The Synergy as "**form**" of human unfolding
- "Being" as coming from **outside the human**, yet in tandem with it
- Synergistic energy as **source** of psychic energy and consciousness
- "Soul" as psychic energy and spirit functions
- "Body" as psychic energy and organism's functions
- Soul as wounded is mortal and would die
- Original sin as this wounding, the loss of relationship with the Divine component of the synergy
- Redemption as regaining the relationship with the Divine, the source of immortality

## Religious Experience

- Being grasped by religious Love
- A **new creation**
- Healing begins of anxious psyche, darkened cognition, paralyzed will
- **Hope**, now informed by religious Love, longs for deepened union with the Holy
- **Faith**, now informed by religious Love, seeks to know the Holy
- **Human love**, now informed by religious love, becomes charity, a Spirit-impregnated loving

## Conclusions

- The conception of a human being is the result of the synergistic operation of the Divine in tandem with the instrumentality of the human parents.
- This divine-human synergy orchestrates the dynamism of human unfolding.
- Original sin has destroyed the relationship of this synergy, locking the human development within itself alone, and subject to death.
- Religious Love restores this relationship, thus opening the human once again to possibility beyond its limitations, to eternal life.
- The human, with its freedom opened once more to this possibility, can now choose to deepen this relationship.
- This relationship intensified is called *holiness*. It is the destiny of every human being.



## Questions for Discussion

- What are the functions of the human psyche?
- Of the human spirit?
- What are the spontaneous emotions?
- The considered emotions?

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