

# 10 Practical Steps in Following Jesus

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## Step 7: Spirit, Soul and Body

Man is spirit, soul and body. We need to understand the function of each of these parts of our person and how they relate to each other.

### The Human Spirit

*“Flesh gives birth to flesh, but Spirit gives birth to spirit.”*

(John 3:6)

As we are born in the flesh, our human spirit is, to all intents and purposes, useless. It is inactive because we are spiritually dead; we do not have communication or fellowship with God. Our human spirit is not alive, because we have not been ‘born of the Spirit’.

Jesus said,

*“Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

(John 3:3)

Our spirit does not exercise any real influence upon us until this spiritual rebirth takes place. Then we can know God for ourselves, we are able to hear Him and speak to Him personally. Our body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit because God has come to live in us. Our spirit, therefore, can be defined as the God aware (God conscious) part of us or the place within us in which the Holy Spirit is able to reside.

### The Soul

The soul consists of 3 main areas of our life:

1. The *mind* – our thinking and intellectual process.

2. The *emotions* – our affections and feelings.

3. The *will* – our ability to choose and determine what we do.

The word Jesus used in His teaching can be translated either ‘soul’ or ‘life’. The soul is the non-physical part of the natural man, the person that he is, his personality and character. Until we are born again of the Spirit of God, our soul will run our life. We are used to assessing situations with our mind and reaching our own conclusions and we pay a lot of attention to our emotions and very often allow them to rule us.

### The Body

The physical body houses the soul and spirit. Whatever goes on in our soul determines what we do in the body. Our body reacts to the thoughts of our mind, it expresses the emotions and responds to the decisions of the will.

When we are born again our body becomes the dwelling place or temple of the Holy Spirit. This means that we can live under the direction of the Spirit of God. He breathes life into our human spirit and the whole direction and influence of our life is altered. Now, instead of being under the domination of our soul and body with all their negative power and influences, we can know God’s power working in us as He touches our spirit by His Spirit.

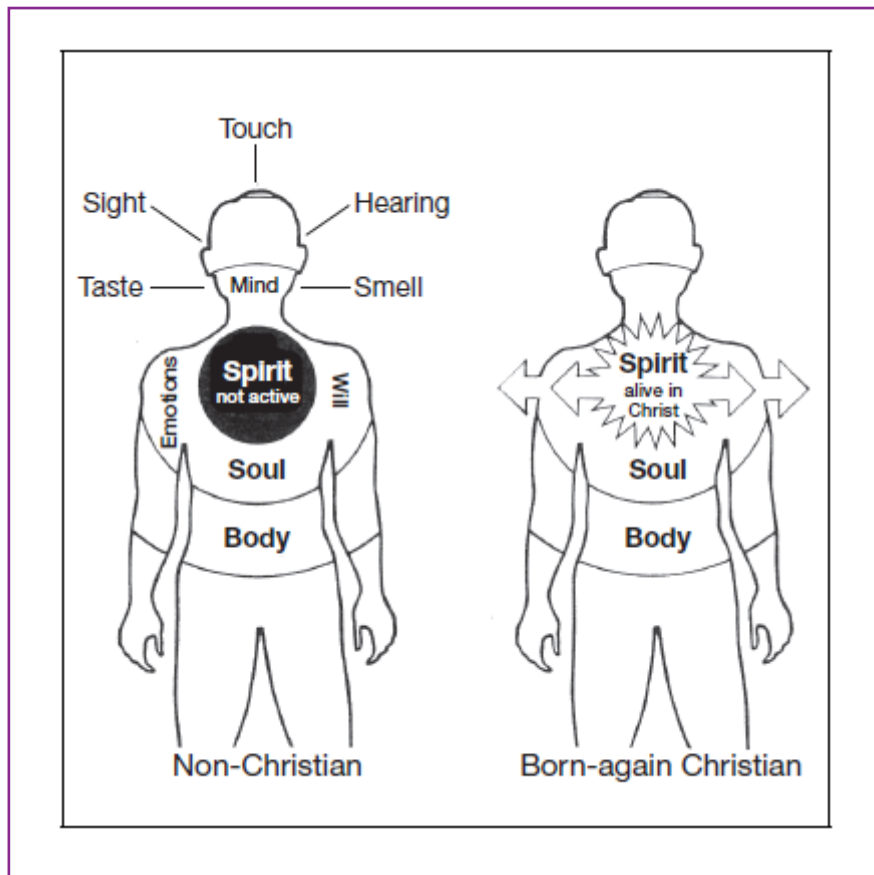
Our spirit can begin, therefore, to exercise its proper control over the soul, informing the mind, emotions and will of God’s purpose. The body can then be directed by the Spirit working through the soul, to accomplish the will and purpose of God.

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”*

(II Corinthians 5:17)

## The Renewal of your Mind

The five senses (i.e. touch, taste, sight, smell and hearing) all feed into the mind and are processed there like a computer. We begin to think and act according to what we input into our minds. The Bible encourages us to no longer feed into our minds as the world does but rather to have a change of input and therefore to allow the renewing of our mind.



*“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”*

(Romans 12:2)

The mind and the body are outlets for the Spirit of God who dwells in the true Christian. A mind that is not functioning as God wants it to will hinder the development of our spiritual life. We need to:

- Prepare our minds for God’s action (see I Peter 1:13).
- Take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ (see II Corinthians 10:5).
- Make sure our minds aren’t led astray from our sincere and pure devotion to Christ Jesus (see II Corinthians 11:3).
- Occupy our minds with godly thoughts (see Philippians 4:8,9; Titus 2:11-14) and the Word of God (see Hebrews 4:12,13; II Timothy 3:16,17).

In fact, we need to completely surrender our minds and actions over to God (see Romans 12:1). The Holy Spirit living within us wants to show us God’s way to live. We must choose whether we will obey Him or do what we ourselves want to do. Our minds, as new Christians, tend to think as they used to before knowing Christ Jesus. Now you are a Christian you need a change in thinking. This will require discipline and time. As you yield more of your mind over to God’s leading and less to your old desires and what your five senses tell you to do, then the more your mind will be as God wants it to be.

Spirit of God ← Mind → 5 senses, our old way of thinking, and satan

*The Influences On Our Mind*

## Questions and tips:

1. Does our mind need to be changed? (Romans 8:5-7; Ephesians 2:3; Ephesians 4:17,18)
2. Can you think of anything that you do or often think about that needs to change?
3. Will God help you to change? (I Thessalonians 5:23,24)
4. Is it important to yield our life to the control of God's Holy Spirit? (Romans 8:12-14; I Corinthians 2:9-16)

### Prayer

Almighty God, I thank you that you have made my spirit alive with your Holy Spirit. I know that I have much that needs to change in the way I think and in what I do. I give my life over into the control of your Holy Spirit who dwells in me. Change me as you know I need to be changed so that I may serve you better and live as you want me to live. Make me as you want me to be in body, soul and spirit. I ask this in Jesus' precious name. Amen.