

BIBLE CHALLENGE 2019

Week 16: April 14-20

What are Humans Made Out Of?

Read: Genesis 1:27-29; 2:7,21-23; 27:19; Exodus 31:14; Deuteronomy 4:29; 6:5; Job 27:3; 32:8; 33:4; Psalm 7:2; 8:3-6; 10:3; 31:9; 109:24; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Isaiah 42:5; 49:1; 53:12; Matthew 10:28; 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27; Acts 17:26-28; Romans 6:12; 1 Corinthians 6:18-19; 11:2-16; 15:15, 38-49; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 8:12; Philippians 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Timothy 2:13-15; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 2:11. Read Psalm 139 in full.

Let's see, boys are made of "snips and snails and puppy-dog tails" and little girls are made of "sugar and spice and everything nice." At least, that's what the old nursery rhyme says. The Bible, though, presents a different story.

Formed from Dust and Spirit:

When we look at the creation of Adam, we discover that God formed Adam from the dust of the ground and then breathed life into him. We should note up front that Adam's name, in Hebrew, means "dirt" or "ground." In addition, the Bible closely connects the idea of the Breath and the Spirit of God (in fact, the Hebrew word for spirit also refers to wind or air).

When God set forth to create Eve, he took her from the side of Adam (typically associated with a lower rib) and formed her. The implication here ought to be clear — she is made from the same stuff as Adam, though she is made through Adam as Adam is her covenant Head. Though the passage in Genesis 2 does not explicitly state that God breathed life into the newly created Eve, it was implied as she was formed from Adam's living flesh.

Two or Three Parts?

The real question that theologians struggle with is over whether humans have two or three parts to our person. Do we simply have a body (the fleshly part to us) and spirit (the spiritual side of us) or do we have a body, a *mind*, and a spirit?

Where this becomes very interesting is where Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy 6:5:

In Hebrew, the passage reads:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, all of your soul, and with all of your abundance"
(our English Bibles typically translate this last word as "strength").

Then later, as Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:5, found in Mark 12:30, Jesus says:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, with all of your soul, with all of your mind, and all of your strength."

So, we know that Jesus did not make a mistake when he quoted scripture, so was he expanding on what Moses wrote in Deuteronomy or is he adapting what Moses said to a more Greek, or Hellenized, understanding? We should note to begin with that the last item in each list (abundance or strength) is understood as pertaining to those outside of your person.

That leaves you with the question of whether there are two or three parts to a human. And, there should be no surprise that theologians have given each position a name. The view that we are made of two parts is called "Dichotomy." The view that we are made up of three parts is called "Trichotomy." And though the "Trichotomist" position seems to be the majority view, the debate ensues.

Now, rather than entering into the ongoing debate as to position, let's look at the parts themselves:

The Heart

In both Jesus' and Moses' statements, we are told that we are to love God with our whole heart. That much, we all can agree upon. In the Jewish context, the heart was the seat of the personality

and intellect, not the seat of the passions as we typically use the term today. For the Jew, the seat of the passions was the bowels. That may sound a little bit odd to our western ears, but we still use the Jewish figure of speech some when we say, "I hate you with all my guts!" Hopefully none of us have said that recently or there is a different conversation that we need to be having.

Anyway, When Moses spoke of the heart, he was talking about your personality, your intellect, your creative gifts, your imagination, etc... Essentially these referred to any kind of spiritual attributes that you had. By Jesus' day, the Greek mind had begun using the "heart" to refer to the passions and the loves, but Jesus was not speaking to a Greek audience; it was a Hebrew one that was being influenced by Greek culture. Thus, there was probably a little of both things understood by his audience.

Soul

In English, when we see the word "soul," we most commonly think of the spiritual side of things — something is said to be "good for your soul" when it benefits your mind and heart, not so much your body. For the Hebrew person, though, things were understood differently. For them, the "soul" represented the totality of their lives and the word itself is often translated as "life" or "body" instead of as "soul." Thus, it includes the physical along with the other aspects of the person.

Mind

Mind is distinctly a Greek category, but we find it all over in the New Testament (reminding us of the influence on the known world by Jesus' day and age. The mind is the part of your person which reasons, thinks, and to some extent, understands the world around you.

Body

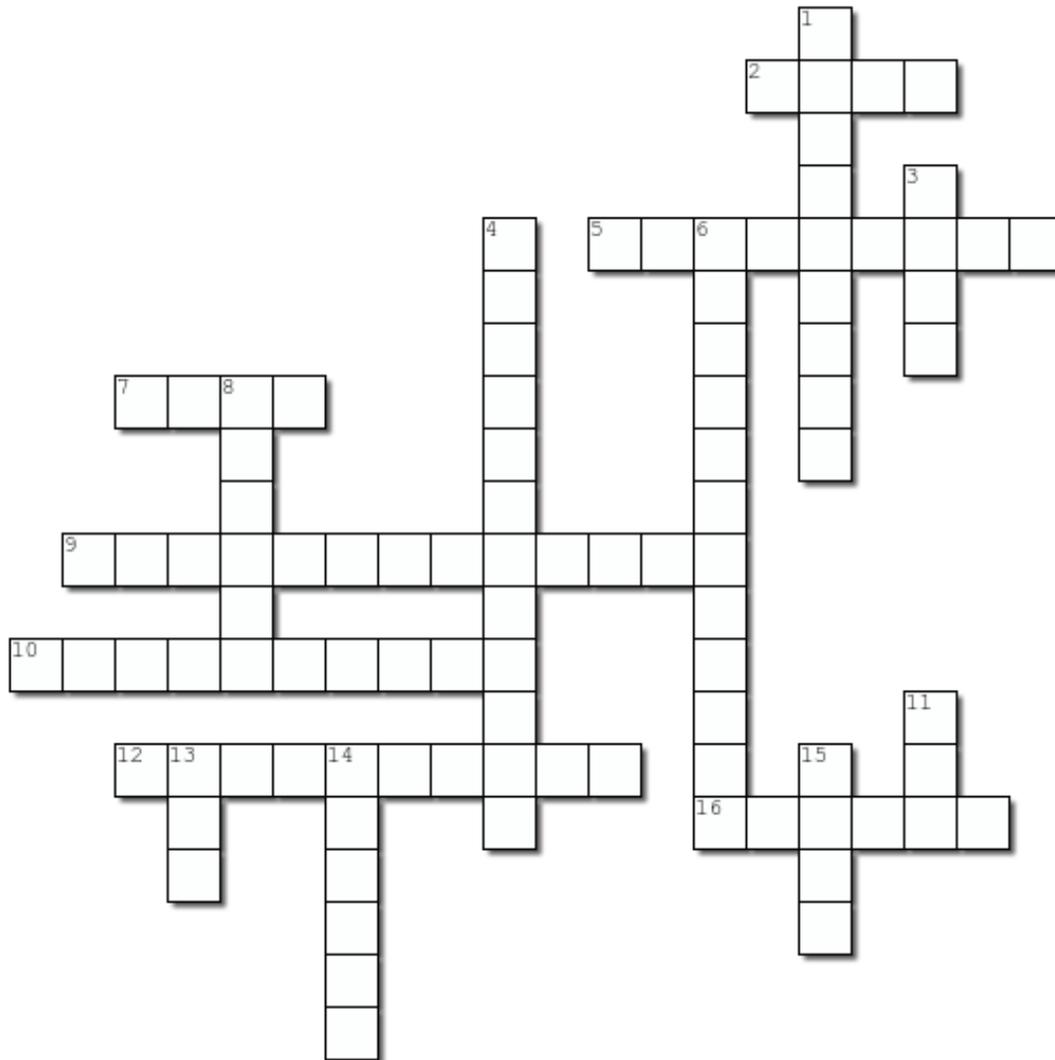
Finally, we arrive at a word that was used in Jesus' day in exactly the same way as we use in our own. Our body is the fleshly part of our being — eyes, nose, fingers, and toes kinds of things. There are aspects of the body that make is remarkably similar to one another (fingers and toes and eyes, etc...) but also makes us appear very different (pigment of the melanin in our skin or in our eyes, the texture of our hair, the shapes of our noses, etc...).

It is important to point out that Jesus' sacrificial death was meant to redeem not just the spiritual part of us but the physical part of us as well. Too many Americans have adopted the Gnostic mindset that the physical side of our being is bad and the spiritual side of our being is good and thus what is important, when it comes to redemption, is spending eternity in a spiritual heaven. The Bible does not teach this, though. It teaches that eternity will be spent in a New Heavens and a New Earth — remade physical stuff as well as the spiritual.

One Body, Many Parts

While there are reasons for arguing that humans have two versus three parts or vice versa, the thrust of these passages is that the totality of the person (both physical and spiritual) was created by God and is to be used to glorify God by loving him with your whole being. If we can get that right, we can work through all of the other in meaningful ways. If we don't get that right, we have a bigger problem with which to deal.

Week 16: What are People Made Of?



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Across

2. Solomon speaks of the ____ going back to the earth at a man's death with the Spirit going to God.
5. The view that people are made up of two parts: flesh and soul.
7. 'Do not ____ those who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul...'
9. '____ he created them.' (3 words)
10. The breath of God is often associated with the work of the ____ (2 words).
12. The view that people are made up of three parts: body, mind, and soul.
16. Adam means this in Hebrew.

Down

1. Woman was made for man and as such she has a symbol of authority on her head.
3. You shall ____ the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, and strength.
4. In this, what is sown in perishable seed is raised in imperishable fullness.
6. Paul writes that while woman was deceived by the serpent, not Adam, she is saved by this...
8. God made man just a little lower than these heavenly beings.
11. Let this not reign in your mortal bodies lest you obey its passions.
13. What did God take from Adam to form Eve?
14. The first man came from dust but the second man came from ____.
15. If a man works on the Sabbath, Exodus tells us that his life is to be cut off from the people...another word for that is ____.