

Containers for Christ:

What Difference Does It Make to Have Christ Living In Us?

Body - This is the part of you with which you interact with the external world.

1. The Body receives information and external stimuli from the world, and sends that information and stimuli to the soul.
2. Additionally, the Body has its own set of desires and needs which it transmits to the soul.
3. The Body is also our means of influencing and affecting our physical surroundings.

Soul – This is the seat of your thoughts, will and emotions: you make decisions with your soul. The soul is affected by input from both the Body and the Spirit.

1. When your spirit is dead, the only source of input which the Soul receives is from what the Body, or the flesh, receives. All of your decisions are influenced solely by what your five (5) senses tell you, your physical and/or emotional state, and what your carnal mind has come to believe is the truth from past experience.
2. When your spirit is alive, you now have another influence on the Soul – the desires and leading of the Holy Spirit. Now you have a choice whether to follow the cravings of your flesh or to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit speaking to your spirit.

Spirit – This contains the essence of who God created you to be. You cannot become all God intends for you to become while your spirit is dead, and we are all spiritually “still-born.” The spirit is also the part of you that can interact with the spiritual realm. It can hear from God, understand what the Holy Spirit is saying, and desires to please God.

The unsaved, natural man receives stimuli and information from his surrounding world and sends that information to the soul (mind, will and emotions). The soul reacts accordingly, and instructs the body to do something in response.

Take, for example, a man driving down the highway and someone not only cuts him off but curses him as he goes by. The natural man sees this through his sense, sends this information to his mind, emotions and will, and the soul processes the data. His mind says, “I will not be treated that way! I didn’t deserve that treatment! That person needs to be taught a lesson...” The emotions get hot and say, “That makes me so mad! I’m gonna kill that guy!” And his will decides to step on the gas, get closer to him and curse him back, with added hand movements.

The spiritual, born-again man receives stimuli and information from his surrounding world AND information and guidance from the indwelling Spirit of God. The spiritual man then must make a choice whether or not to let his body react to the stimuli from the world or to the leading of the Spirit of God.

This man is cut off and cursed by the same man on the highway. He processes the same thoughts and emotions as the natural man. However, simultaneously, he hears in his spirit the Holy Spirit saying, “Forgive him, for he knows not what he does. He doesn’t

know any better. He doesn't know the Lord. He needs someone to show him the love of the Lord. Bless those that persecute you and pray for those that revile you. Do not return evil for evil, but return blessing for evil..." Now, the man has to MAKE A CHOICE whether he will obey his natural inclination to kill the guy or his spiritual inclination, which would be to pray for the salvation of that person. That decision will determine how his Body responds.

Read Romans 7:14 – 8:10.

¹⁴We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. ¹⁹For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ²⁰For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²¹Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

²²So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²³For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²⁴but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. ²⁵What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁶Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

¹Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ²because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, ⁴God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. ⁵And so he condemned sin in sinful man, ⁶in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

⁷Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. ⁸The mind of sinful man ⁹is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; ¹⁰the sinful mind ¹¹is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. ¹²Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

¹³You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. ¹⁴But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.

In Romans 7:14 – 8:1, what is Paul describing? *I want to do good things, but there is something inside of me that wants to do bad things. In my mind I want to serve God, but in my flesh I want to serve myself.*

Can you relate? Give an example.

In Romans 8:5 – 8:10, describe the difference between the mind that is controlled by the flesh and the mind that is controlled by the Spirit. *The mind controlled by the flesh is an enemy against God and His Spirit. It cannot please God and doesn't want to. It brings death. The mind controlled by the Spirit brings life and peace.*

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Read 2 Cor 4:6-11.

⁶For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness,"^o made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

⁷But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. ⁸We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ¹⁰We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. ¹¹For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body.

What does "earthen vessels" or "jars of clay" represent? Why?

Our bodies, which are basically made up of the same minerals you find in the dust of the ground.

What is supposed to be revealed in our body? *The life of Jesus, which is His Spirit.*

Read Col. 1:27.

²⁷To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

What is the hope of glory? *Christ in you.*

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit would settle **upon** people, but never reside **within** people.

Read John 14:16,17.

And I will ask the Father, and **he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth.** The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and **will be in you.**

What does Jesus say will happen after he goes away? *He will send the Holy Spirit to live inside of you. He used to be with you, but now will be in you.*

So what is the main difference between you today and you the day before you were saved?

- 1) *The Holy Spirit indwells me*
- 2) *My spirit is alive, not dead*
- 3) *I have a new nature*
- 4) *The old nature is crucified*

And how do we allow the Holy Spirit to make a difference in our everyday lives (our external actions)?

Read Colossians 3:16.

Let the word of Christ dwell in your richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God..

What will the Word of God do for you? Read Romans 12:2.

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

It will renew your mind so you can know which voice in your head is God's voice, so you can know and obey His will for your life.