Pillars of the Truth

Article #6

***The Spirit Is the Main Part of Man***

Gus Nichols

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We used to sing: Each one in life is building a temple of his own. Choose well the

foundation, wisely the corner-stone. For earth’s mightiest works shall perish and decay; The

piles of brick and granite, the years shall sweep away. But **souls** live on forever—in joy, or

misery. And **character** is destined to last eternally.

We are right now building character. The **soul** is somewhat like a great skyscraper, and the body is like the scaffolding round about it. During this lifetime we are working, not on the

scaffolding—not polishing and painting up the old scaffolding round about—but we are working

on the **skyscraper**! We are working on **character**. We are working to build **great** *souls*, of our

**souls**! The *soul* is to grow and develop, and become mature, in God’s sight.

**Souls** don’t die: “fear not them which kill the **body**,” said Jesus, “but are not able to kill the **soul**” (Mat. 10:28). They may put the **body** in a furnace, and burn it into ashes; but the **soul** does not burn into ashes! At death, it leaves that body, and “return unto God who gave it” (Ecc. 12:7). “Absent from the body,” said Paul, it is “present with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:6). “We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord” (v. 8). “For to me to live *is* Christ”—benefitting to the cause of Christ; “to die *is* gain” (Phi. 1:21).

To a Christian, death is not a great tragedy: “to die *is* **gain**.’” “What I shall choose, I wot

not” (I don’t know); “for I am in a strait” (spelled S-T-R-A-I-T, meaning in a difficult, position;

it does not mean, not crooked; but it means a difficult, or a perplexed, state or position): “I am

in a strait betwixt two”—two desires. What are they? He said one of them was to “depart, and

be with Christ.” Well, what do you think about that option, Paul? He says, “It is far better.” In

the American Standard Version, he says it “is very far better.” So, it is not just “better,” but it

is “far better.’” And, it is not just “better,” or “far better:” it is “very far better” than the other

choice.’

Paul said there are two alternatives; what is the other one? “To abide in the flesh, which is more needful to you.” But the first is “better,” “far better,” and “very far better” than to “abide

in the flesh,” and be a great Apostle, be a great preacher of the gospel unto the civilized world

of his day.’

You have a **soul** that is not going to die. Your heart or spirit is not going to get any change at all—not now, nor forever—except that change it gets in conversion, and in Christian growthand development. That is all!

But someone may say, “O, we’ll get a great change in the resurrection!” Bless your heart,

there is not a verse in the Bible that even *hints* at the idea that the **spirit** will be resurrected! For

it does not die! It does not go to the graveyard! Solomon said, “Or ever the silver cord be loosed,

or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at

the cistern. Then”—that’s **death!**—“**Then** shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the

spirit shall return unto God who gave it” (Ecc. 12:6-7).

So, all the change the soul, or spirit, of man will ever get will have to be obtained right here in this life, in conversion. “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out” (Acts 3:19). God thus proposes to blot out our sins, *provided* we meet the terms, meet the conditions. His stipulated conditions are not for the purpose of **paying for salvation**! These conditions do not **earn** salvation! Salvation is “by grace” (Eph. 2:8-9)! But the conditions are for the purpose of making *us* better, and getting *us* fit for heaven.

Now, if there were nothing to be done, other than for God to just raise bodies from the grave and pop them into heaven, then he would be populating heaven with sinners!

The **body** can’t live until the **spirit** gets back into it. James says, “the **body** without the

**spirit** is dead” (Jam. 2:26). It is found “dead” when the **spirit** leaves it; and it will *stay* “dead”

until the **spirit** comes back into it. This is why, “them also which sleep in Jesus will God **bring**

**with him**” (1 The. 4:14). Paul wrote about “the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ **with all his**

**saints**” (1 The. 3:13). And Jude quotes: “Behold, the Lord cometh **with ten thousands of his**

**saints**” (Jude 14). He must bring these **spirits** back before there can be a resurrection of the

body! But, when one’s **spirit** enters into the body, it will be that same **spirit** that left that body

down here.

The **spirit** is the intelligent part of man (1 Cor. 2:11). That is the part that must be

“converted.” Remember Jesus’ statement: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh” but He told

Nicodemus (who thought only of a **natural** birth) that He was not talking about that kind of a

birth. Jesus then said, “that which is born of the Spirit”—of the Holy Spirit, in other words—“is

S-P-I-R-I-T. “ It is the *spirit* of man that is born again! Materialists tell us that the **spirit** of man

is no part of the “man.” Well, if that were so, then it follows that (1) that which is no part of

“man” gets the new birth—and (2) the “man” is not born again; Yet, Jesus said, “Except a **man**

be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). Jesus also said that it is the **spirit**

that gets the new birth. If the **spirit** is no part of “man” and yet the “man” must be born again,

then when he gets the birth of the **spirit**, the “man” still is not born again! But that isn’t so! The

**spirit** is the main part of “man.”

God has promised “eternal life” in the “world to come” for those who obey Him (Mark

10:30). He will raise our bodies from the graves (John 5:28-29), and take us to heaven. When

the clods begin to fall on the casket of one of my loved ones, I’m not going to feel like an

infidel; I am going to say, “The God who holds this whole earth up in space (Job 26:7), can take

care of this little job, the resurrection!” Just as surely as a grain of corn can rot and perish, go

back to dust—and yet a new life come up out of it, God an also raise us from the dead, and can

“change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Phi. 3:21).