



## **Spiritual Realities - Vol 3: Escaping Dualism**

### **Description**

Understanding how God created you to live as a whole human being; redeeming the soul, knowing God's will, sanctifying "soul power" and finding freedom as a child of God. This book will set you free!

### **Introduction**

In Volumes I and II we presented foundational principles concerning the nature of man and how he relates to the spiritual world. Before we go on to learn spiritual dynamics and discuss supernatural phenomena we must develop the truths in this volume.

In the following pages we will uproot some false teachings concerning the nature of man. All Christians today, whether they realize it or not, have been influenced to some degree by these crippling, wrong doctrines. When people see the truth in these respects, their eyes are suddenly opened up and they realize why they have not been experiencing the freedom that God promised to them. As we expose these false teachings we hope to show a more Biblical view of man that helps Christians live more successfully in this world, using the authority and provisions of God.

### **Preview Chapter**

#### **CHAPTER 1**

#### **Dividing Asunder Correctly**

Let's jump right into exposing a false teaching common in some Christian circles today. The issue here pertains to the nature of man. You may or may not be familiar with the following doctrine, however, all of Christianity has been, to some degree, negatively influenced by it.

This doctrinal error begins with a misinterpretation of Hebrews 4:12. The King James Version of the Bible words this verse as follows:

For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (KJV).

From this verse a teaching is sometimes brought forth which shows the sword, which is the Word of God, being dropped between the soul and the spirit of man, dividing these two parts of man's being one from the other.

Once this division is made in the minds of Christians, a "dualistic" way of thinking is developed. The word dualistic simply means "two-sided" or "two-fold." When we apply this word to our present context, we refer to how some people divide the spiritual from the natural, viewing the spiritual as good and holy, and the natural as evil. When we talk about man's being, the dualist thinks positively about man's spirit and negatively about his soul and body. Hebrews 4:12 is the Bible verse most often used to support this way of thinking. Those who embrace it, gradually develop an entire philosophy of life where everything falls on one side of the sword or the other. In time, everything which is spiritual is thought of as good and everything which is natural, as evil.

Dualism may sound reasonable to many of my readers at this point, but I hope you will follow with me to see how subtly destructive this way of thinking becomes. Many Christians today have been completely indoctrinated into this philosophy, while others have been pulled in gradually without considering the implications. Some have been taught dualistic perspectives even though Hebrews 4:12 was never used as the specific Scripture to promote it. To whatever extent a person has embraced dualistic patterns of thought, we want you to see some of the negative results in people's lives. But first we must show you how it has no basis in Scripture.

To cut at the very heart of this false doctrine, we need to see what the original manuscripts of the New Testament, which were written in the Greek language, literally say in Hebrews 4:12. Where we are told that the Word of God pierces even unto the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, the Greek word for spirit here is pneumatos. The first half of this word, pneuma, means spirit. The ending on this Greek word is, atos, which indicates possession. The word pneumatos therefore, is not to be translated spirit, but rather of the spirit.

This small distinction, which was overlooked by the translators of the King James Bible and a few other versions, has profound implications when we consider exactly how the Word of God divides. The correct interpretation of Hebrews 4:12 must indicate that the Word of God pierces even to the dividing asunder of the soul and of the spirit, of the joints and of the marrow. The passage does not say that the soul and spirit are divided one from another. It says that both of them are divided. The soul is divided and the spirit is divided.

In our diagram of man's three-part nature, the sword must cut horizontally into man, rather than vertically between the soul and spirit. The Greek literally tells us in Hebrews 4:12, that the Word of God pierces even to the depth of our soul and into the depth of our spirit in such a way that they themselves are divided.

Any serious study in the original Greek Bible will confirm this. Let me quote from the Greek New Testament scholar Wuest in his Word Studies in the Greek New Testament:

Piercing is the translation of "diikneomai" which means "to go through". The words "the dividing asunder of soul and spirit" do not mean, "the dividing asunder of the soul from spirit". Nor is it "the dividing asunder of the joints from the marrow". The case in Greek is the genitive of description, defining the action in the verb in this case. It is a going through the soul, a going through the spirit. Joints and marrow are not in contact with one another and cannot therefore be said to be divided asunder. The preposition prefixed to the verb is "dia" which means "through," in the sense of "the sword pierced through the heart." The dividing asunder here is not that of one thing from another, but of one thing in itself by the action of something separating its constituent elements from one another by piercing it.

Wuest, the Greek scholar who provides us with this, is a dichotomist in his thinking; however, it is critical that we take note as to what the Bible actually says in Hebrews 4:12. Although the Greek Bible is clear concerning this, some Christian teachers today deny scholarly studies of the Greek language by continuing to teach that the soul should be divided from the spirit.

The understanding of Hebrews 4:12, which sees the soul and spirit being pierced within rather than divided from one another, is consistent with the rest of the Bible. The very next verse, Hebrews 4:13, goes on to tell us,

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

This verse gives us a contextual understanding of how God is able to see into the depths of a man's being, even into his spirit.

Similarly, in other passages we are told that the Word of God "pierces into," rather than separates the soul from the spirit. For example, when Peter preached on Pentecost Day, we are told that the word "pierced to the heart" (Acts 2:37). The Word of God has to penetrate into the spirit of the non-Christian; otherwise, the seed could never be planted within and salvation would be impossible. Even in the Christian's life there must be an ongoing planting of the Word of God within his spirit and his soul. We must, therefore, think of the Sword of God going into the person rather dividing him in half. Nowhere in the Bible is there any passage which indicates that the soul and the spirit should be divided one from the other.

Why is this so important? In the following chapters we will show you implications that dramatically shift the way Christians live.

## **Back Cover**

### **Writing for the 21st Century**

Harold R. Eberle has become known internationally as a teacher to the Body of Christ. Having traveled extensively and authoring several books, he has influenced leaders' lives all over the world. His passion is for the maturation of the Church.

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