

# **THE TRIUNE-GOD-SPIRITUALITY: THE THEOLOGY OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE WRITINGS OF PAUL**

By Chul-Hae Kim<sup>1</sup>

## **HOW WE UNDERSTAND THE TERM “SPIRITUALITY”**

The term “spiritual” or “spirituality” is one of the most frequently used words in the domain of Christianity with vague definitions almost in all areas of the Christian realm. There is no consensus among the users of the term although it is used widely. Someone used this term in connection with “otherworldliness, asceticism, disconnected from ordinary human tasks.”<sup>2</sup> This view is common in the Catholic tradition and those influenced by it. Stephen Barton illustrates this tradition: “Spirituality is about prayer, meditation, confession, making retreats, and ascetical practices such as fasting.”<sup>3</sup> In contrast to this Catholic view focused on practices, Protestant tradition focused on joyful experience. The same author defines Protestant tradition on spirituality.

For others, perhaps from a more Protestant tradition, spirituality is basically about the joyful experience of justification and conversion along with their consequences for ethics and daily discipleship, and intimations of the cloister or the idea of priestly direction in the life of soul.<sup>4</sup>

Practical theology, which includes Christian education, Christian counseling, and preaching, spreads its discussion upon this

---

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Chul Hae Kim is Assistant Professor of New Testament at Torch Trinity Graduate School of Theology.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Merton in his private journal, quoted in Lawrence S Cunningham and Keith J. Egan, *Christian Spirituality: Themes from the Tradition* (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 5.

<sup>3</sup>Stephen C. Barton, *The Spirituality of the Gospels* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1992), 1. One of the representative ways of approaching spirituality in history can be found in George A. Lane’s book, *Christian Spirituality—an historical sketch* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1984). In this book Lane deals with the historical development of Christian spirituality in a sense of mysticism in the tradition of Roman Catholics.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.* He suggests his own definition of “spirituality”: “I use it [spirituality] in this book has to do with *the sense of the divine presence and living in the light of that presence*” (*Italics are original*).

definition.<sup>5</sup> The term of “spirituality” is not a monopoly of Christianity, either. Many other religions such as Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and African religions deal with spirituality on their bases.<sup>6</sup>

## “SPIRIT” IN THE BIBLE

### Definition of ‘Spiritual’

The Greek term pneumatikoj is from the noun pneuma, whose basic meaning is “pertaining to the spirit.”<sup>7</sup> This brings a basic discussion on the “spirit” itself. The basic meaning of pneuma is “wind” and “breath” both in Hebrew and in Greek. The concept of “life” was derived because breath is the sign of life. This concept had been developed even in the realm of interpersonal relations.<sup>8</sup> Important usages of pneuma in the Old Testament refer to the Spirit of God as the effective and creative divine power. The usages of the term pneuma in the Bible are either referring to the Spirit of God or the spirit of human being. The breath of Almighty God is in man, which is the clear connection of man’s spirit and the Spirit of God (Job 32:8; 33:4). From the very beginning of the Old Testament, the Spirit took part in giving life to human beings as the source (Gen 6:3; Job 27:3). Baumgartel points out four points in relation to God: (1) effective divine power, (2) specifically God’s creative power, (3) the inner nature of God, and (4) as a personal being.<sup>9</sup> Also, God endowed His power and spiritual, intellectual, and artistic abilities to human beings. All these four points and their relations with human beings are involved in the understanding of Paul on “spirituality.” Even in the New Testament it denotes the power of God as the source and nature.

Misunderstanding of this term in other religions, as well as within Christianity, in identifying the term as “mysticism,” either this-worldly or other-worldly, contains only a partial truth which is far from its abundant meaning. The best way to understand the term

---

<sup>5</sup>Cunningham and Egan approach from the latter view and the main theme of their book deals with spiritual journey, such as prayer, meditation and contemplation, asceticism, and other guidance on Christian life.

<sup>6</sup>For example, see Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, eds. *The Study of Spirituality* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 491-518.

<sup>7</sup>BAGD, 678.

<sup>8</sup>See F. Baumgartel, *TDNT*, vol. 6, 366f.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, 362ff.

“spirituality” correctly is through the usages of the term in the New Testament. Every book of the New Testament contains the concept of spirituality in its unique way. The focus of this study is not on the whole New Testament but is limited to the writings of Paul. The role of Paul on the formation of Christian theology is greater than anyone else in the history of Christianity. Modern critics have been raising questions as to the relationship of Paul and Jesus, calling Paul the founder and not Jesus. David Wenham correctly answers this idea, “He[Paul], more than anyone else, molded the church’s thinking about how the Palestinian stories and sayings of Jesus should be interpreted in the wider context of the Gentile world and the urbanized Roman Empire and in the post-Easter situation.”<sup>10</sup> Wenham suggests that, “instead of reading Paul’s letters in isolation from the Gospels, it will be important to read them in the light of the Gospels—not falling into naïve harmonization, but recognizing that Paul was above all motivated by a desire to follow Jesus.”<sup>11</sup> In this sense, Stephen Barton’s findings of the spirituality in the four Gospels are helpful. His study provides necessary and meaningful backgrounds for the study of the spirituality in the writings of Paul. He suggests that the spirituality in the Gospel of Matthew be “Something which is learned by being with Jesus, hearing his commandments, and doing them.”<sup>12</sup> In contrast to *the Christocentric approach* of spirituality in the Gospel of Matthew, he characterizes the approach of the Gospel of Mark as *Theistic or Theocentric spirituality*.<sup>13</sup> This contains the response of Jesus to God the father as the Son of God. Lucan understanding of spirituality in his Gospel is “a response to divine grace revealed in Christ.”<sup>14</sup> It is characterized with joy, repentance, conversion, and faith. Lucan understanding needs to be extended to the Book of Acts which adds one more important aspect of spirituality—that is, **the right response to the Holy Spirit**—and stresses the public dimension of faith.<sup>15</sup> I call this a *Pneumacentric approach*. Barton characterizes the Johannine

---

<sup>10</sup>David Wenham, *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 409.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 410.

<sup>12</sup>Barton, 9-34. He describes four points of Matthean spirituality: a sense of the divine presence, this presence of God experienced as fatherly, living in a spiritual relationship with God, and demanded single-minded commitment stressing active and practical interiority.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 40-44. In this sense, Barton says that “Christian spirituality is cruciform” (*Ibid.*, 49).

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, 71-91.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 92-104.

spirituality to be personal but corporate, thoroughly *christocentric*, historic, and *charismatic spirituality*.<sup>16</sup>

### **What is the Spirit in the Ministry of Jesus?**

To understand the spirituality, the nature, function, and purpose of the Holy Spirit, the Gospels have to be explained. The Holy Spirit had been promised through the words of John the Baptist. The coming of the Holy Spirit was prophesied in the Old Testament. In John's baptism, he declared that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Luke 3:15ff). The coming of the Holy Spirit is the crucial event in the procedure of God's redemption for human beings. This fact points out that, without the activities of the Holy Spirit, no activity of human salvation is possible. The Holy Spirit had worked in the activities of Jesus Christ, not just in the activities among the believers. In the life of Jesus many major events are connected with the activities of the Spirit, including the incarnation, the Baptism, the temptation, the exorcism, and his ministry. The Virgin Mary conceived Jesus through the Holy Spirit (Matt 1:18; Luke 1:35). In the scenes of His baptism by John the Baptist and in the temptation by the devil, the Holy Spirit was with Jesus, descending and guiding (Matt 3:16; Luke 3:22; Mark 1:12; Matt 4:1). In the public ministry of Jesus, both healings and performing miracles, Jesus did all things by the power of the Holy Spirit. This foreshadows a good example of Christ to believers for depending on the Spirit. As with the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the activities of Jesus Christ, the ministry of the Spirit in believers is crucial. This is the foundation of the believer's spirituality.

### **The Purpose of Sending the Holy Spirit**

Contrasting with the Synoptics, which show the relationship of Jesus and the Spirit in ministry, the Fourth Gospel explains the purpose of the coming of the Holy Spirit. The first major role of the Holy Spirit is the regeneration of believers. "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit" he cannot enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5). This idea is very important in the theology of Paul on "spirituality." The new birth is directly related to the Holy Spirit. In the process of regeneration, the

---

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 113-33.

power of the Holy Spirit for renewing or re-creating believers is necessary. This regeneration results in a contrast of flesh and spirit in the life of a believer (John 3:6). This idea is related to **the issue of the conflict of the spirit against the flesh** in Paul, which became one of the main issues in the Pauline theology of spirituality. Another declaration of John on the Spirit is related closely to the Pauline theology of spirituality. It is that of **the gifts of the Spirit**. Even though the Spirit Himself is the gift from God; one of the important roles of the Spirit is to share the divine gifts with believers. This is another issue of the Pauline theology of Spirituality concerning the process of keeping the spirituality of every believer. However, the role of the Spirit for the believer is to guide and protect, which reveals the deeper meaning of Pauline spirituality.

## PAULINE THEOLOGY OF SPIRITUALITY

As has been illustrated concerning the understanding of the concept, spirituality is more than a lifestyle; it is a significant theological term to be explained. That is the reason why theological study is needed in addition to exegetical study to understand the biblical concept of this term. The reason is that the term is involved in the full procedure of salvation, beginning with God the Creator and Redeemer ending with the human being, the created being and sinner to be redeemed. It also refers to Christian maturity, as is used by many Christian educators. Thus, to have a proper understanding of the term, a theological approach is needed in addition to the exegetical theology — especially from the various areas of systematic theology, such as anthropology and theology proper. Even the eschatology of Paul has to be related to the Pauline theology of spirituality. James D. G. Dunn calls Paul “the theologian of the Spirit,” who gives a more rounded and more integrated teaching on the Spirit than that found in any other literature.<sup>17</sup> It is correct when Gordon D. Fee says, “One reads Paul poorly who does not recognize that for him the presence of the Spirit, as an experienced and living reality, was the crucial matter for Christian life, from beginning to end.”<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup>James D. G. Dunn, *The Christ & The Spirit*, vol 2, *Pneumatology* (Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 12-13.

<sup>18</sup>Gordon Fee, *Paul the Spirit, and the People of God* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrikson Publishers, Inc., 1996), xiii. He even quotes (p. 8) the statement of S. Neil and N. T. Wright:

## ANTHROPOLOGY OF PAUL

### The Origin of Pauline Anthropology

The concept of “spirituality” in the Bible is related to the human being from the fact that either a human being is spiritual or not spiritual. The anthropology of Paul has to be explained to understand his concept of “spirituality.” To understand the anthropology of Paul, the origin of his theology must be dealt with first. Many scholars have suggested both Jewish and Hellenistic influences for the background of Pauline theology.<sup>19</sup> We cannot deny both influences, but another important factor for Pauline anthropology is more influential than these two. The third one is from the special and direct revelations of Jesus Christ to Paul. His anthropological understanding had developed into a deeper level by the new revelations from God. In this sense, as W. David Stacey points out, the Pauline view of man is more highly developed than before.<sup>20</sup> Especially, we need to pay special attention in reading the anthropological terms of Paul in his writings. Paul’s approach to anthropological terms was synthetic, not analytic.<sup>21</sup> Contrasting to the Greek understanding, Paul’s view is more Hebraic and does not see man as a combination of contrasted elements but as a unity of a number of different aspects. Paul uses some words with exactly the same meaning as their Old Testament equivalents, without change or development.<sup>22</sup> However, Paul uses anthropological terms in a loose concept. This makes it difficult to understand the exact concept of his terms. Thus, “no word in Paul’s anthropology is so precise that it does not somewhere overlap another, and, in some instances, words can be contrasted in one sense, and synonymous in another.”<sup>23</sup> Of course, at other times, he developed previous concepts and added his own original sense upon them. When he used some Greek words with no

---

“Paul’s doctrine of the Spirit is far more central and characteristic than his doctrine of justification by faith.” According to Fee, Paul understands the Spirit’s coming as fulfilling three related expectations: (1) the association of the Spirit with the new covenant; (2) the language of “indwelling”; and (3) the association of the Spirit with the imagery of the temple (pp. 15-22).<sup>19</sup> Concerning his background, see this writer’s article in *Torch Trinity Journal* 1, no. 1 (1998): 106-12.

<sup>20</sup> Concerning more explanations, see W. David Stacey, *The Pauline View of Man in Relation to its Judaic and Hellenistic Background* (New York: MACMILLAN & CO LTD, 1956), 1-120.

<sup>21</sup> Stacey, 222f.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 223f.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 223

Hebrew synonym, he used them not in the pure Greek sense, but in the sense in which they were used in the inter-testamental literature, that is, in a Hebrew setting.<sup>24</sup>

### **Is Soul (y u c h ) Sinful?**

The first anthropological word used by Paul is *yuch*, whose Hebrew equivalents are *נפש* and *חיה*.<sup>25</sup> Paul used *yuch*, only 13 times.<sup>26</sup> In the inter-testamental period there are three connotations for this term: vitality; the seat of feeling, thought, and will; and the individual person. Although he used the word 13 times, Paul used it only once in the sense of an individual person (in Romans 2:9).<sup>27</sup> Paul used this term in the sense of Old Testament usage, as well as that of LXX. Thus, Paul's idea of soul was Hebraic and not Greek.<sup>28</sup> In relation to the topic of this article, an important usage is worthy of mentioning. In 1 Corinthians 2:14 *yucikoj* (unspiritual, natural) is used of unregenerate man in contrast to *pneumatikoj* (spiritual). Another place of similar use of *yucikoj* and *pneumatikoj* is in 1 Corinthians 15: 44-46. Paul does not use *yuch* itself as evil. In Romans 2:9 he links man's soul with the agency of evil. However, it is used in the sense that man's soul is a part of sinful man or in the place of the whole sinful human being (Rom. 13:1). This fact concludes that Pauline anthropology is quite different from the Greek view of soul.

### **What Kind of Spirit (p n e u m a )?**

Another term used by Paul for referring to "soul" as well as to "spirit" is *pneuma*. Paul used this term 176 times in his letters. Stacey divides the concept of *pneuma* used by Paul into six senses.<sup>29</sup> The first concept is not the most common but significantly is applied to God, to

---

<sup>24</sup>Stacey, 225.

<sup>25</sup>In the Old Testament *נפש* is used 756 times and *חיה* 378 times.

<sup>26</sup>Paul used this word mainly indicating a man's life (Rom 11:3; 16:4; Phil 2:30), or "self" (1 Thess 2:8). But the point is whether Pauline use of *yuch* is referring to a threefold division or not. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 is the only place to show the possibility of man as tripartite. However, it is the only case; and even the purpose of this verse is not for definition but for emphasis. For detail, see Stacey, 123.

<sup>27</sup>Concerning the specific usage of this term, see Stacey, 121-23.

<sup>28</sup>For detailed discussion of this, see Stacey, 124-27

<sup>29</sup>Stacey, 128-30.

#### 46-THE TRIUNE-GOD-SPIRITUALITY

Holy Spirit, and to Christ. The next group of concepts refers to a divine influence in the life of believers, such as spiritual gifts. The third and fourth concepts refer to the kingdom of evil and to the influence of disobedient spirits. The fifth concept refers to a purely Christian spirit, created in a believer when he enters the Christian inheritance. The last concept is a personal *pneuma*, natural possession of every man.<sup>30</sup>

### **Human Spirit(*pneuma tou anqrwpou*)**

At this point, the first usage has already been discussed; and the last two concepts are the focus in this discussion. In this sense *pneuma* describes a Christian state in direct contrast with flesh (*sarx*). As has been stated, to differentiate human spirit from the Spirit of God is difficult but important. The first question on this topic is whether the spirit is applicable to both Christian and non-Christian. The problem or confusion starts from the attitude of Paul who looks at man only in relation to God.<sup>31</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:45 shows that Adam's *yuch* is compared and contrasted with Christ's life-giving *pneuma*. Someone who read too much into it interprets this to mean that Adam had no natural *pneuma*. But Paul clearly mentions that natural man has a spirit of his own (*to pneuma tou anqrwpou to en autw*) in 1 Corinthians 2:11. The point of this issue is whether the Holy Spirit transforms man's natural *pneuma* and then makes him a new creature or the Holy Spirit gives to man at conversion a *pneuma*, which he did not previously possess.<sup>32</sup> Stacey concludes that the spirit of the unbeliever and the spirit of the believer are totally different.

It is a new creation through which he experiences fellowship with God, and it is, thus, always superhuman in nature and distinct from *yuch* which is a purely human attribute. It would be misleading to say that this spirit is the highest element in man, for it is not in all men, and it can hardly be regarded as a

---

<sup>30</sup>Stacey shows the relation of the six different senses: "The Spirit (sense 1) gave rise to a new spirit (sense 5) in man, and this was the home of many other spirits (sense 2), of faith, of adoption, of prophecy, etc." (p. 131).

<sup>31</sup>See, Stacey, 128.

<sup>32</sup>For more discussion, see Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1981), 166f. Guthrie concludes, "It is more reasonable to consider that man's natural spirit, which in his unregenerate state is revived at conversion by the Spirit of God" (p. 166). See also Stacey, 132-35.



constituent factor in those who do possess it. But for the believer it is the guiding power, the true self, having fellowship with the Truth, the good influence because it is moved by the Good, unfailing guide, for it has fellowship with the Spirit of Divine Wisdom.<sup>33</sup>

Donald Guthrie concludes that Paul's wider use of *pneuma* rather than man-centered concept of *yuch* was dictated by his conversion experience in which God had so clearly taken initiative.<sup>34</sup> Stacey justly points out that even in the unregenerate man, the spirit was man at his highest.<sup>35</sup> He illustrates the defilement of flesh and spirit of natural man in 2 Corinthians 7:1 which is referring to the defilement of man on his lower and higher side.<sup>36</sup> Paul uses *pneuma* as a synonym for *yuch* where spirit is not used of the redeemed life of the believer. In this sense, Stacey's conclusion is significant for understanding Paul when he says that "between Paul and the Old Testament there are no striking differences, only development and a variation of emphasis."<sup>37</sup>

### **Flesh (σὰρξ) More than Bodily Substance**

In contrast to the concept of *pneuma*, Paul uses the concept of flesh (*σὰρξ*). This is the common element of human beings with other creations such as animals, birds, and others, although distinction was given among them (1 Cor 15:39).<sup>38</sup> This aspect is contrasted to godly things in the sense that God is spirit who cannot be seen nor heard. Flesh stands for the external, outward, temporal, visible aspect of man in contrast to the internal, spiritual, and eternal. However, Paul did not share the current Greek conception of dualism that matter is essentially evil. Flesh is more than bodily substance. Flesh (*σὰρξ*) without *yuch* is not *σὰρξ* at all. In the discussion of the eating of meat in Romans 14 and first Corinthians 8, Paul uses *krea* and *brwma* instead of *σὰρξ*. This

---

<sup>33</sup>Stacey, 133.

<sup>34</sup>Guthrie, 167

<sup>35</sup>Stacey, 134.

<sup>36</sup>In that sense, human spirit is not, of itself, either good or bad, though it is capable of evil (1 Cor 7:34; 2 Cor 7:1). In fact, it is not really capable of goodness since it has no knowledge and power of God.

<sup>37</sup>Stacey, 138.

<sup>38</sup>In this sense, *σὰρξ* signifies the earthly sphere in which man lives when it refers to the human body as the same meaning as *σῶμα* signifies.

#### 48-THE TRIUNE-GOD-SPIRITUALITY

shows that *saʿx* is more than material substance of which a body could be composed. He describes flesh as the seat of an activity in both believers and non-believers, even though he accepts that flesh itself is allied to lust and to sin in its natural state. The flesh works to sin, but flesh itself is not sinful. Following Old Testament usage, *saʿx* is used in referring to the whole man. The weakness of flesh might include a mental weakness (Gal 4:13, cf. 2 Cor 12:7). Other usage of *saʿx* is the usage for marriage relationship, sexual relationship, descent, and kinship.<sup>39</sup> In other places, *paša saʿx* is used for man as a generic conception which is the reproduction of Old Testament *rʿb lʿk* referring to “all mankind.”<sup>40</sup> In this sense, *saʿx* has a special connotation of “the nature of the earthly-human in its specific humanness—i.e., in its weakness and transitoriness, which also means in opposition to God and His Spirit.”<sup>41</sup> Richard E. Howard gives better analysis of this term. He defines the word *saʿx* as being “human.” The flesh is *something man is; something that man has, and something man uses.*<sup>42</sup>

There are a few passages in which the word *saʿx* is used in connection with Jesus: “a descendant of David” “as to his human nature” (*saʿx*, Rom 1:3, cf. 9:5). The *saʿx* here is more than the physical. It stands for the whole human existence of Jesus to show that His incarnation is being a perfect human being. God sent His own Son “in the likeness of sinful man” (*saʿx*, Rom 8:3).<sup>43</sup> The fact that Paul introduces the adjective “sinful” is due to the context of human weakness of *saʿx* that had committed sin (violations of the law). The emphasis of this phrase is that Jesus came into this human existence without the taint of sin. Paul held the clear fact that Jesus was guilty of no sin (2 Cor 5:21). In this sense, the word *saʿx* itself has no connotation of evil.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup>Descent from Abraham (Rom 4:1; 1 Cor 10:18); All Jews were Paul’s kinsmen according to the flesh (Rom 9:3; 11:14); Master slave relationship (Col 3:22).

<sup>40</sup>Cf. Gal 2:16, Rom 3:20, and 1 Cor 1:29.

<sup>41</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, Eng. trans. (London: SCM), 234.

<sup>42</sup>Richard E. Howard gives better analysis of this term in his book, *A Study in the Thought of Paul: Newness of Life* (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1975), 28-33.

<sup>43</sup>NIV translates *saʿx* into “man” to avoid the possible confusion of the phrase “sinful flesh.”

<sup>44</sup>See Eric H. Wahlstrom, *The New Life In Christ* (Philadelphia, PA: Muhlenberg Press, 1950), 11-13.

## **Other Terms for Human Beings: Heart (Kardia), Mind (Nouj), Conscience (Suneidhsij), and Body(Sw/ma)**

As has been stated, Paul is indebted to Old Testament thought in most cases wherein organs of the body were used to express emotions and reasons. The first term of these organs Paul uses is *kardia*. Heart is the center of life (2 Cor 3:3). In some cases *kardia* is referring to the whole inward man.<sup>45</sup> Heart is not considered to be inherently bad, for it can become obedient as well as disobedient (Rom 6:17). Paul is using the term *kardia* as the seat of emotions mainly to describe emotional and volitional aspects (Phil 1:7; 4:7; Rom 1:21, 24).

The word for mind (*nouj*) had very definite connotations in the Greek world and yet Paul uses it in transition to a typical Hebrew concept. It referred to that faculty of man that was capable of lucid, abstract thought whose emphasis was on mental activity. Both believers and non-believers have the *nouj*. The minds of unbelievers have been blinded by Satan (2 Cor 4:4). In this sense, mind (*nouj*) itself is not either good or bad, but is determined by what is dominating it. This term is used even referring to the mind of God (1 Cor 2:16), which becomes the guidance for the mind of man. The minds of believers need to be renewed to discern the will of God (Rom 12:2). Stacey differentiates *nouj* from *pneuma*, in that *nouj* approves the course of action but *pneuma* supplies the energy to perform it.<sup>46</sup> However, spirit and mind should be in full harmony. If they are not in harmony they cannot bear fruits as is shown in 1 Corinthians 14:14.

The concept of “conscience (*suneidhsij*)” is closely linked with mind (*nouj*). This term is Greek in origin and not found in the Hebrew.<sup>47</sup> Its root meaning is knowledge of an act (*eidhsij*), together with (*sun*) reflective judgment upon it. Conscience is universal and is found both in believers and non-believers. This made it necessary for Paul to postulate a standard of morality applicable to Pagan Gentiles.<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup>Heart as the exerciser of faith (Rom 10:10), the guarantee of the Spirit in our heart (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5), Christ dwelling in our heart (Eph 3:17), the Spirit is sent into the heart (Gal 4:6), etc.

<sup>46</sup>Stacey, 201.

<sup>47</sup>Robert Jewett, *Paul's Anthropological Terms: A Study of Their Use in Conflict Settings* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), points out the Hebraic idea of the unity of the person in this term in the sense of conscience is autonomous sometimes (pp. 459f). Guthrie points to the possibility of Stoic influence on Pauline understanding of this concept (p. 171).

<sup>48</sup>For more discussion on this, see Stacey, 206-10.

## 50-THE TRIUNE-GOD-SPIRITUALITY

Because of this, those who had never heard of the law have their own standard and works for witnessing and excusing themselves in the Day of Judgment (Rom. 2:15). Heart is the place where conscience dwells according to the same verse. There are differences among the consciences from person to person. There is weak conscience that can be defiled easily, or even hardened if not obedient to God's command (1 Cor 8:7, 10, 12). An interesting usage of this term occurs when Paul calls on conscience as an additional witness for his statement (Rom 9:1; 2 Cor 1:12).

Another important term for Pauline anthropology is *swma*. This word in Paul is, in one sense, reproducing Hebrew  $\text{רָפָּד}$ . The non-technical meaning of this word refers to the observable human body (1 Cor 5:3; 13:3; 2 Cor 4:10; 5:10; 10:10). This non-technical concept developed into technical definitions. *Swma* is used as the basis of relationship and unity between persons. This unity concept of the body is based on the Genesis passage that the two shall be one flesh (*sarx* in 1 Cor 6:16) in marriage (1 Cor 7:4). Thus, Paul discussed this principle concerning the unity of idol worshipper and idol, and believer and Christ (1 Cor 10: 14ff.), and that the body as the member of Christ contrasted to the united body of the adulterer and the harlot (1 Cor 6: 12ff). This body concept is developed from the metaphor of the body into a realistic description of the church as a somatic unity, Christ as the head and believers as members of the body (1 Cor 12: 12-31). The technical definition developed further in the Book of Romans. Not only did Paul use visible body inserting the word "body in the place of "flesh," but also he introduced new expressions such as "body of sin" (6:6), "mortal body" (6:12; 8:11), "dead body" (8:10), and "body of death" (7:24) which are related to the old aeon, sinful character of the body.

However, this concept of the old aeon changed into the new aeon through the baptism and sacrament. Paul started from the Hebrew idea but developed his own concept such as spiritual body. Unlike the flesh, the body is capable of being transformed. God can change the mortal and sinful body into life through His Spirit and it becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:18-19) and a body that glorifies Christ (1 Cor 6:20). J. A. T. Robinson distinguishes *sarx* from *swma*: "While *sarx* stands for man, in the solidarity of creation, in his distance from God, *swma* stands for man, in the solidarity of creation, as man for

God.”<sup>49</sup> This transition of body has gradual character. This gradual process is linked with dedication of the body (Rom 12:1-2). It is clear that Paul started his anthropology from  $\tau\rho\eta$  and  $\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\eta$  but he developed his concept further and made his own connotation of *pneuma*. However, his anthropology does not stop in this way. The climax of his anthropology is consummated in his Redeemed Anthropology.

## REDEEMED ANTHROPOLOGY

### The Natural Man

#### MAN OF ADAM (*yucikoj*)

Paul used two anthropological terms referring to natural man. The first term is *yucikoj*. Paul used this word only four times, all in First Corinthians. First, it is found in verse fourteen of chapter two in which it refers to a natural man who cannot accept nor understand the things that the Spirit is doing. This term was preferred to correct the presuppositions of the Platonic understanding of the Corinthians. In the Hellenistic understanding of soul (*yuch*), this term is almost synonymous with the spirit (*pneuma*). Paul differentiates in this letter between spirit and soul, and the man of soul (*yucikoj anqrwpoj*) and the things of the Spirit (*ta tou pneumatoj*) are different. The reason why Paul used this term only with the Corinthian church was because of the special situation of the church. In chapter fifteen, he used this term twice in verse 44 and once in 46, referring to the unregenerated body in contrast to the spiritual body. In verse 45, Paul related *yucikoj* to Adam, the progenitor of all natural human beings. Adam is called a living soul (*yuchn zwsan*). But Christ was called life-giving spirit (*pneuma zwopoiouh*). Paul wanted to differentiate natural man from the spiritual man who was born of Christ by the Spirit. Paul was explaining that there was a suitable body of flesh and blood for the *yuch*. Adam possessed this body and handed it down to every natural man. The characteristics of this body are corruptibility, dishonor, and weakness. In this sense Paul wanted to differentiate spirit and soul even though both of them were translations of Hebrew words  $\tau\rho\eta$  and  $\chi\omega\mu\acute{\epsilon}$ . This teaches a very important lesson about the Pauline theology of

---

<sup>49</sup>J. A. T. Robinson, *The Body*, 31; quoted in Guthrie, 175.

## 52-THE TRIUNE-GOD-SPIRITUALITY

spirituality. Unless a man is regenerated by the Holy Spirit, it is impossible to be spiritual. Descendants of Adam need to be born again by the Spirit (John 3:5-6).

### MAN OF FLESH (sarkikoj /sarkinoj)<sup>50</sup>

Since the “flesh” is against the “Spirit” in the writings of Paul, the adjective of “flesh (sarkikoj)” is the opposite concept of the adjective of “the Spirit (pneumatikoj).” The adjective meaning is defined according to the noun. Flesh (σαρξ) itself has various meanings. Paul’s letters contain two expressions in the use of σαρξ in relation to sin. As has been discussed, sin may invade through finding the easiest entry available. It may create a lower nature in the flesh to war constantly with the divine inspiration and to bring about a state of tension. However, flesh itself is not sinful. Upon this principle, two flesh-related phrases must be explained. In Second Corinthians 10:3 Paul draws a distinction between these two phrases: For we walk *in flesh* (en sarki), but we do not carry on warfare *according to flesh* (kata sarka).<sup>51</sup>

The first one is en sarki. Man is God’s creation. The creation was by God’s will and was not evil (Gen 1:31). Flesh is a basic element of human substance. This element continues even after his redemption. Not only a natural man, but also a man in faith has flesh (Gal 2:20).<sup>52</sup> To be in the flesh (en sarki) is a natural and God-given mode of earthly existence (Phil 1:24). Flesh is basic to the whole human body (σωμα), whether unbeliever or believer. Even believers have to keep this body of flesh; he could please God with that flesh until they stand before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5: 9,10). In this sense, flesh (σαρξ) is interchangeable with body (σωμα).<sup>53</sup> However, when Christ returns, this body of flesh (σωμα yucicon) will be changed into new body (σωμα pneumatikon) in the resurrection (1 Cor 15: 42-44). This is the exchange of the humble body (σωμα thj tapeinwsewj) of flesh into

---

<sup>50</sup>Sarkinoj means “composed of flesh” and is a quite common word, but occurs only four times in the NT (three in Paul, once in Hebrews). However, sarkikoj is more common in Paul and means “determined by the flesh;” “carnal” (C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 1:357).

<sup>51</sup>NIV translates flesh (σαρξ) into “world,” which includes too narrow a meaning.

<sup>52</sup>NIV translates flesh into “life.”

<sup>53</sup>The usage of interchanging can be found in 1 Corinthians 6:16 (he is one with the prostitute in *body* . . . , the two will become one *flesh*). Also, compare 2 Corinthians 4: 10 (carrying the body of Jesus in our *body*) with 4:11 (his life may be revealed in our mortal *flesh*); and 1 Corinthians 5:3 (being absent in the *body*) with Colossians 2:5 (I am absent in the *body*).

the glorious body (swmati thj doxhj), the same one that Jesus had after the resurrection (Phil 3:21). In this way, en sarki signifies the sphere of human existence. It is impossible for a man to live apart from the flesh. This is the same context in which Jesus prayed for his disciples, “My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one” (John 17:15).

The second phrase of flesh is “according to flesh (kata sarka).” This phrase could mean “in accordance with the flesh” or even “for the purpose of the flesh.”<sup>54</sup> In this way, to live according to flesh means to live by means of human strength, power, and resources, and by human weakness and finiteness. Thus, when a man lives according to flesh (kata sarka), he is living according to himself.<sup>55</sup> Not only he lives by human means, he lives for himself. In this sense, normal man lives according to flesh. Paul considered the results of living according to flesh as merely human works and values and are far beneath the life God provides. Paul calls the life according to flesh as old aeon which should be transposed with the new spiritual aeon. In the previous life, old aeon governed the Ephesians and resulted in a life following the ways of this world, which is the same as the life following the lust of flesh and the wishes of flesh (Eph 2:1-3). The man who lives “according to flesh” is the old man who has no part in the promises of God and is “dead in trespasses and sins.”<sup>56</sup> The works of flesh that have been illustrated in Galatians (5:19-21) are exactly same as the sins illustrated in the list of Romans one (1:29-31).

## TRANSFORMATION

Man must cease to be “according to flesh” to become a new man and to be right with God (Rom 6:6).<sup>57</sup> Even Paul says the flesh of the believer has been crucified, which results in the crucifying of the passions and lusts in the flesh (Gal 5:24). The desire of flesh is against the Spirit. In fact, they are enemies (Gal 5:17). Paul used many

<sup>54</sup>Paul speaks of human wisdom (1 Cor 1:26) and human intention (2 Cor 1:17).

<sup>55</sup>There are some passages in which a certain relationship is described as being “according to flesh.” The Jews are Paul’s kinsmen according to flesh (Rom 9:3); Abraham “our forefather according to flesh” (Rom 4:1); “Israel according to Israel” (1 Cor 10:18); “the one who has been born according to flesh (Gal 4:23).

<sup>56</sup>Most cases of the phrase “sinful nature” in the NIV are translations of one word *sarx* in this meaning.

<sup>57</sup>Paul describes this old man as *the body of sin*, which can be identified with the body of flesh in the context of the following discussion of the sinful body in chapter seven, “in me, *that is in my flesh*,” (Rom 7:18, NIV omitted the italicized phrase).

## 54-THE TRIUNE-GOD-SPIRITUALITY

pictorial words in various metaphors to refer to this transforming event in his writings. All of his figures have a simple sequence of the natural state of man, God's act of redemption, and the new state.<sup>58</sup> Paul shows that man is a helpless sinner, separated from God and unable to save himself. Natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit nor can he understand them (1 Cor 2:14). Natural man has no Holy Spirit, although he has his own spirit which is unable to do anything for himself. Only the man in Christ has hope. The works of the flesh, human intention and effort, or the means of natural man such as seeing, hearing, and thinking are not sufficient to have an understanding of the things of God (1 Cor 2:9). Since natural man cannot or does not understand or accept the things of the Spirit, the important question is What is the solution? What is the process of transforming from natural man to Spiritual man? The answer to this question is "by grace" and "through faith." This is the basic principle of Christianity and the main teachings of the New Testament, as well as of Paul. There is nothing that natural man can do. God comes to natural man in grace and mercy to bring him out of death into life, from the old "aeon" to the new "aeon." Redemption is the act that God comes to man with life-giving Spirit (*pneuma zwopoiouh*, 1 Cor 15:45; *sunezwopoihsen*, Eph 2:5) and power (Eph 1:19). This gracious act of God ends the existence of the natural man and brings the new man into being.

### **The Spiritual Life**

#### **MAN OF STRUGGLING**

God's action of transformation is a decisive act, and the new man has died to sin and is no longer under its power (Romans 6). However, Paul's statement of transformation includes some eschatological aspects. Salvation is finally accomplished on the last day. But the future aspect does not minimize the present struggle for salvation. Salvation is a continuing process that must go on. Although the believer has been moved from the old aeon to the new, he still has flesh. He is living in flesh (*en sarki*) but should not live according to flesh (*kata sarka*). Romans chapter seven shows this conflict best.

---

<sup>58</sup>Wahlstrom illustrates 8 different metaphors of salvation to show its previous state (the natural man in the flesh), transformation process (to die and rise again), and the result (the new man in Christ) with the figures of slave market, forum, war, death, family, debt, horticulture, and ritual (pp. xvi, 57-86).



Those who have the first fruits of the Spirit groan inwardly while waiting eagerly for the full adoption as sons (Rom 8:23).

In Galatians chapter five, Paul describes this new life as freedom. The new man has power to control himself in using the freedom, either to make it an advantage to (his own) flesh (σαρξ) or to make it an advantage to serve one another (v. 13).<sup>59</sup> The best way to overcome the flesh is to walk in the Spirit (v. 6). For the trend (epiqumi a) of flesh and that of the Spirit oppose each other (v. 17). Thus, the works of flesh and the fruit of the Spirit are evidently contradictory (vv. 18-23). Paul even called the Christian to crucify his flesh together with its passions and desires (v. 24).

### WAR OF FLESH AGAINST SIN

One thing must be mentioned about this conflict. Flesh itself is the field and not the power, like the human spirit. Pauline anthropology is different from that of Greek dualism. The Hebrew understanding of a human being is a unity of man not separable into spirit and flesh as Hellenism did. Both spirit and flesh are their points of contact with man himself.<sup>60</sup> In this sense, the conflict of flesh and Spirit is not a battle between flesh and the spirit of the same person. Paul cries out, “I do not know what I am doing. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do” (Rom 7:15). Paul clearly confesses that this struggle is not of himself, but his struggle against sin inside (Rom 7:16-17, 21). Concerning the identity of the first person singular in verses 7-25 of Romans seven, they divide the passage into two sections. The first section is verses 7-13, which has past tenses, and the second one has present tenses. Cranfield suggests six main considerable suggestions concerning the first section and seven for the second section.<sup>61</sup> Cranfield is correct that Paul is describing his own experience as well as the general experiences of Christian life in this passage.<sup>62</sup> As Stacey

---

<sup>59</sup>Both “flesh (σαρξ)” and “one another (αλληλων)” are dative case (words in parentheses are understood).

<sup>60</sup>For more discussion on this, confer Stacey, 174-80. Stacey is correct when he says, “If the flesh is not evil in itself, it is not of necessity opposed to the spirit, though it may be under certain circumstances. The antithesis is not a priori but empirical. That means that it is Hebrew and not Greek” (pp. 176f).

<sup>61</sup>Confer Cranfield, 1:342-49.

<sup>62</sup>Cranfield, 1:347. Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), has a different conclusion (pp. 423-48). Moo concludes that “Paul is looking back, from his Christian understanding, to the situation of himself, and other Jews like him, under the law of Moses” (pp. 447f).

## 56-THE TRIUNE-GOD-SPIRITUALITY

points out, “Paul’s contrast was between man as a human being seeking to live a godless life, and man as a child of God seeking fellowship with Him.”<sup>63</sup>

### **The Spirit of Triune God**

#### **MAN OF THE SPIRIT (pneumatikoj)**

The secret for the victory of the believer over sin is not to follow the desire of flesh (yucikoj and sarkikoj) which leads to sin but to obey in the Spirit (pneumatikoj). All Christian life is Spirit-operated life. Unless God’s Spirit dwells within, he is not a believer (1Cor 3:16). One misinterpretation on the spirit-possession must be corrected. Spirit-filled life (pneumatikoj) was not abnormal in Christianity. Another misinterpretation concerning pneumatikoj is that to be filled with the Spirit means being a different person than normal. The “Spiritual man in Paul is quite different from “the spiritual man” of other mystery pagan religions. As Stacey shows, “The pagan ‘spiritual man’ departs from common humanity, while the Pauline ‘spiritual man’ remains within the bounds of humanity.”<sup>64</sup> This Pauline concept is a more developed one than that of the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit is the promised one in the Old Testament and began a new aeon, dwelling and exerting in believers. The Holy Spirit is the key that makes the difference from Romans chapter seven to chapter eight.

#### **SPIRITUALITY OF THE FOUR GOSPELS**

Barton characterizes the spirituality of the four Gospels; spirituality can be described as *Theocentric, Christocentric, and Pneumacentric*. In other words, spirituality is a salvation term related to the Triune God. God is the subject of the salvation of human beings. The functions of the Triune God on the process of redemption are clearly distinguished in the Bible. However, in many places the different name of the Triune God is used in many places. The third person of the Triune God is the Holy Spirit. Paul calls this Spirit by many different terms. Paul uses mere “spirit” or “the spirit” without any other modification over 140 times in his letters.<sup>65</sup> In this case, he is referring either, to the Spirit of God or to a human spirit. In other places,

---

<sup>63</sup>Stacey, 178.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 151.

<sup>65</sup>Fee, 28.

Paul uses ‘the Spirit of God,’ “the Spirit of Jesus,” “the Spirit of Christ,” and “the Spirit of Him, or His Spirit.”

### **SPIRIT OF GOD IN ROMANS EIGHT**

“Spiritual life” for believers is possible with the working of the Holy Spirit in believers. The eighth chapter of the Book of Romans (verses 1-17) illustrates various usages of the term, *pneuma*, in relation to the Spirit of Triune God. In fact, *pneuma* is the key word of this chapter. The Spirit is the answer for the problems raised in the previous chapters—i.e., the problem of sin and the problem of the law or of death in believers—mentioned in verse two of chapter eight: the law of the Spirit versus the law of sin and death. Paul used the word *pneuma* twenty-one times in this one chapter alone, compared to thirty-four times throughout the whole Book.<sup>66</sup> In verse two, Paul uses “the Spirit of life.” He uses “according to/in the spirit” in verses four, five, and nine in contrast to the phrase “according to/in flesh.”<sup>67</sup> In the second half of verse nine, Paul illustrates “the Spirit of God” and “the Spirit of Christ.”<sup>68</sup> He is referring to the same entity, the Holy Spirit, by the two different titles. In verses ten and eleven, Paul uses “the spirit” with a definite article. We have another “Spirit of God” expression in verse fourteen. In verse fifteen Paul is contrasting “a spirit of slavery” to “a spirit of adoption.” In verse sixteen, he puts human spirit and the Holy Spirit in the same level.<sup>69</sup>

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE SPIRIT OF LIFE-GIVING**

The basic question is raised as to why Paul used those different expressions and what the exact difference among them is. The answer to that question is that each different usage has a unique meaning and

---

<sup>66</sup>The rest of the chapters used this term less than once per chapter, five times in chapters 1 to 7, and eight times in chapters 9 to 16.

<sup>67</sup>In Greek, there is no definite article even though the English translation has a definite article: *kata Pneuma* (v. 4,5), which stands against *kata sarka* and *en pneumatī* stands against *en sarki*, (v. 9). NIV translates *flesh (sarx)* as “sinful nature” (vv. 4, 5, and 9). Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), insists that Paul’s main purpose of contrasting the antithesis between *flesh* and *Spirit* is to highlight the radical difference between the *flesh* and the *Spirit* (pp. 485f).

<sup>68</sup>*Pneuma qeou* and *Pneuma Cristou*

<sup>69</sup>Both spirits were used with the definite article (one in the nominative case and the other in the dative case) but can be differentiated clearly based on the context. The prefixed preposition *sun* in the compound verb *summarturei*/connects these two spirits, the spirit of God and the spirit of believers.

## 58-THE TRIUNE-GOD-SPIRITUALITY

should be emphasized and explained clearly. The basic theme of this passage is **the spiritual life, or life in the Spirit**. After the famous discussion of the life under the law in chapter seven, Paul is explaining how the believers are freed from the life under the law and transposed into the life in the Spirit. The key word for his answer is “the Spirit.” Most usages of spirit in this passage are referring to the Holy Spirit.<sup>70</sup> However, their emphases are different. In verses two and six, Paul emphasizes the life-giving nature of the Holy Spirit. This Spirit freed the believers from the life of slavery under the sin and the death.<sup>71</sup> Verses four through nine define the spiritual life—i.e., a life walking/practicing (*peripatousin*) or being (*ontej*) according to/under (*kata*) the Spirit, contrasted with the life under the law, which resulted in life under the sin and the death. Thus, Spiritual life should be active and alive in freedom. There is no smell of death or sin. Spiritual life is perfect freedom from sin and death and their condemnation. The secret of this victory comes from walking, not according to flesh (*kata sarka*) but according to the Spirit (*kata pneuma*).

### SPIRITUALITY OF TRIUNE-GOD

In the first part of verse nine ‘the Spirit of God’ is used, and in the latter part of verse nine “the Spirit of Christ” is used. Both of them are referring to the same Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. In this usage, we can find Paul’s understanding of the concept of the Triune God. It does not mean that Father God and God the Spirit are exactly same, but can be used interchangeably with little difference. The same principle is applied to the expression of identifying the Holy Spirit as “the Spirit of Christ” or “the Spirit of Jesus.”<sup>72</sup> As Barton characterizes the spirituality of the Four Gospels with the terms *Theocentric, Christocentric, and Pneumacentric*, it is possible to call Pauline spirituality **Triune-God-Spirituality**. Paul intentionally used different titles for the Holy Spirit.

---

<sup>70</sup>Of over 140 occurrences of *pneuma* in his letters, Paul uses the full name, Holy Spirit, in seventeen instances. He designates the Spirit as “the Spirit of God”/“his Spirit” sixteen times, and as “the Spirit of Christ,” or its equivalent, three times (Fee, 28).

<sup>71</sup>The words, both sin and death, have a definite article in Greek.

<sup>72</sup>This usage can be found not only from Paul but also in the writings of Luke, the companion of Paul in his missionary journeys. The Holy Spirit is replaced with “the Spirit of Jesus” (Acts 16: 6, 7).

### **THE SPIRIT OF GOD: RIGHT RELATION TO GOD THE FATHER**

The reason why Paul describes the Holy Spirit as “the Spirit of God” is to show the relationship of believer to God the Father. Gordon Fee suggests that Paul thinks of the Spirit in terms of the Spirit’s relationship to God the Father, who was the subject when the Holy Spirit was sent.<sup>73</sup> That is why in some cases Paul identifies the Spirit as the Spirit of God, which is determined by Paul’s Old Testament roots. However, the Romans passages show deeper meaning than that. The previous verses (7-8) explain that those who live according to the law are enemies of God but that those who live according to the Spirit are pleasing God the Father. The best way *to please God* is to have/to be/to live in *the Spirit of God* because of the intimate fellowship of the Triune God within. The following usage of the Spirit of God appears in verse fourteen. The reason why this phrase is used is clear from the following phrases. The qualification for becoming the sons of God is to be *led by the Spirit of God*.<sup>74</sup> Other phrases such as “the Spirit of Christ,” or “the Spirit of Jesus” is not appropriate to show the qualification for becoming the children of God, even though theologically correct with those descriptions. Verse fifteen provides more information of Paul’s intention. He contrasts the spirit of slavery to the spirit of adoption. The Father and the sons have the same spirit as a family of God (Eph 4:4-6). For this reason, “the Spirit of God” is the best description for this context. Spirituality is to have the right relationship with God the Father. The main reason for calling believers is to be holy (1Cor 1:2). The best way a believer can become holy is to allow the Spirit of God the Father to indwell, thus becoming the temple of God the Father (1Cor 3:16).<sup>75</sup>

### **SPIRIT OF CHRIST: POSSESSION OF CHRIST**

A similar reason can be applied to the phrase of “the Spirit of Christ.” In verse nine “the Spirit of Christ” is preferred for qualifying a believer as *belonging to Christ* (cf. Rom 1:6). However, the next verse adds more explanation on this phrase. Paul identifies “the Spirit of

---

<sup>73</sup>Fee, 29. Besides, Fee points out “that Paul sees the Spirit as distinct from God; yet at the same time the Spirit is both the interior expression of the unseen God’s personality and the visible manifestation of God’s activity in the world” (p. 30).

<sup>74</sup>Also, see 1 Corinthians 2:10-16.

<sup>75</sup>In 2 Corinthians 3:3, Paul uses “the Spirit of God” in relation to giving the Old and New Commandment.

## 60-THE TRIUNE-GOD-SPIRITUALITY

Christ” as Christ Himself, not the Holy Spirit. Paul identifies the indwelling of the Spirit as the indwelling of Christ with this phrase. This does not mean Paul is identifying the entities of God the Son and God the Spirit. Rather, Paul is assuming the same kind of close relationship of the two. The reason Christ is involved in this verse is to supply the privilege of His resurrection to the ones who are belonged in Christ. The Spirit of Christ makes the spirit of a believer alive. In verse eleven, Paul includes “the Spirit of God” again with the phrase of “the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead.”

In this way, the Holy Spirit makes a believer as “a son of God.” and as the one who belonged in Christ, that is, a Christian. As the role of the “Spirit of God” is bonding believers with the father-son relationship, the role of the “Spirit of Christ” is to quicken a human spirit. However, this father-son relationship makes available the sharing of the privileges of Christ, not only the resurrection but also the heirship of the Son of God (vv. 17-18). In 2 Corinthians chapter three, Paul uses “the Spirit of the Lord” who gives freedom (cf. John 8:36). Thus, this Triune-God-Spirit concept explains all the relationship and fellowship of the Triune God with believers. The Holy Spirit is the agent making all these things happen. One good example for this can be found in verse twenty-seven. After mentioning the interceding prayer of the Spirit with groaning for the saints, Father God knows the mind of the Spirit because the Spirit intercedes in accordance with God’s will (Rom 8:26-27). Holy Spirit and Father God work together for the saints. The rest of the chapter after verse thirty-one deals with the assurance of the believer’s salvation under the relationship of Father God and God the Son (“the love of God that is in Christ Jesus”—8:39), with whom the Holy Spirit connects, dwelling in the believers. Actually, the Triune-God-Spirit concept of Paul explains the unity of diversity of the Christian community, including the Triune God and believers in the whole procedure of salvation, even Spirituality.

### **Characteristics Of Spirituality**

#### **BEING OBEDIENT TO GOD THE FATHER**

The first condition to be ing “Spiritual” is to obey the Spirit, not the desires of the flesh. In other words, crucify “the old man” with his

intention and self-glory and put him to death. He must surrender to the Holy Spirit and give himself up. The believer must take off the old man—that is, put off the previous unclean conduct and greediness—and put on the “new man” (Eph 4:19-24). Paul states the same thing in different words in Colossians. Taking off the old self means putting away all the bad habits, and putting on the new man means being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator (Col 3:5-10).<sup>76</sup> The new man should put on new clothes, such as compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forgiveness, and love (Col 3:12-14). All these things become possible through the guidance of the Spirit of God the Father (Rom 8:14) who adopted believers to be His sons. In other words, spiritual life is the same as the life of the sons of Abba Father (Rom 8:15-16). It is because only those who have the Spirit of God the Father could know the thoughts of God (1Cor 2:11-14).

### UNION WITH CHRIST

The second characteristic of being spiritual means to be united with Christ. This concept is described by two different terms: “in Christ” and “Christ in me.” Just as the phrase “in the flesh” is the chief symbol of the old state, so “in Christ,” “in the Lord,” and “in Him” are the distinctively Pauline symbols of that new life. After the desperate cry at the deepest bottom of despair in Romans seven, Paul suddenly raises the victory song in the last verse of the chapter. Chapter eight is the explanation of the victory song, stating the reason why Paul has been changed. The only reason for the victory song is the Holy Spirit in Christ Jesus (8:1). In other words, Paul directly relates the phrase “if the Spirit of God lives in you” (Rom 8:9) and “if Christ is in you” (Rom 8:10).

“Christ in you” carries clear corporate implication besides the personal concept. This phrase is more than mysticism and intends to show the believer’s relation to God.<sup>77</sup> It means literal and positional change when Paul declares, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, He is a

---

<sup>76</sup>Paul links “God’s son” idea and “the image of God” idea together (Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 4:4). Also, see Kittel TDNT, 2:395-97.

<sup>77</sup>Albert Schweitzer defines mysticism, in his book, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, trans. William Montgomery (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998): “We are always in presence of mysticism when we find a human being looking upon the division between earthly and super-earthly, temporal and eternal, as transcended, and feeling himself, while still externally amid the earthly and temporal, to belong to the super-earthly and eternal” (p. 1). Schweitzer also points out that, “In Paul there is no God-mysticism; only a Christ-mysticism by means of which man comes into relation to God” (p. 3).

## 62-THE TRIUNE-GOD-SPIRITUALITY

new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Cor 5:17). In this way, “to be in Christ” is the same meaning as “in Spirit” and stands for a symbol for the new aeon (Rom 8:9-10). As Schweitzer confesses, “One thing which surprises us in the Pauline Christ-mysticism is its extraordinarily realistic character. The being-in-Christ is not conceived as a static partaking in the spiritual being of Christ, but as a real co-experiencing of His dying and rising again.”<sup>78</sup>

### CONCLUSION

“Spirituality” is an important concept in the New Testament as well as in the theology of Paul. In spite of vague understandings of the concept, a biblical definition of “spirituality” gives right direction for believers both in theology and ministry. “Spirituality,” whose basic meaning is “pertaining to the spirit,” is deeply related to the Spirit. Spirit is spoken with both human and divine meaning. In God’s redemptive plan, the Triune God is involved in the salvation of man. Father God sent His only Son Jesus Christ to accomplish His predestined plan to die on the cross and raised Him from the dead, and He ascended to heaven until He comes again. The Holy Spirit is God’s way of completing His plan in the believer’s life.

Paul understands and explains human beings using Hebrew concepts in Greek terms. He developed his own understanding in addition to the previous concepts of the Old Testament and his contemporaries. He differentiates believer and unbeliever, the descendant of Adam and the descendant of the Second Adam, Jesus Christ. The problem is that, even after being transposed from the old aeon to the new, the human being remains in the same flesh (σαρξ) — i.e., old sin nature. The believer needs to obey the Spirit who dwells in him and not follow the sin nature. Once converted by the exertion of the Holy Spirit inside, the human spirit which once was impotent becomes alive and active to work with the Spirit. However, the new man still remains in the state of a man of flesh, a person who follows the desire of the flesh, not obeying the Spirit. This kind of struggling continues until Christ comes and restores the lost image of God in believers.

---

<sup>78</sup>Schweitzer, 13. Also he says, “Paul’s mysticism is then historico-cosmic where that of the Hellenistic religions is mythical (p. 23).



The work of the Spirit is spoken in relation to the Triune God since the doctrine of Trinity is mysterious in the theology of Paul. The Holy Spirit is spoken of as the life-giving Spirit who exerts and gives new life to the believers. The Spirit who dwells inside of believers, works in relation to God the Father. The Spirit is called the Spirit of God when the function of the Spirit is related to God the Father: Father-sons relationship, inheritance of heavenly blessings with Christ. Listening to the guidance of the Word of God as the sons of God, “the Spirit of God” is used. When the Spirit takes the task of Jesus Christ in believers, “the Spirit of Jesus/Christ/Lord” is used who shares the privilege of heir of the coming kingdom as well as belonging to Jesus. Especially, the believer’s life on earth together with Christ is governed and guided by the “Spirit of Christ” in order to establish the image of God in believers.

Those who are “spiritual” show many characteristics. Two major characteristics are worthy of being mentioned. The first characteristic of being spiritual is obedience to the words of Father God in every way of life. As the result of this obedience, the fruit of the Spirit (or maturation of believer) is coming even to the measure of Christ. In other words, the old self is being taken off and the new man is coming alive. The second characteristic of being spiritual is union with Christ. The phrases, “Christ in me” or “in Christ,” are used to refer to the life being spiritual. These phrases show the personal and corporate relation of a new man with Christ. However, with respect to eschatological interpretation, these phrases signify the depth of Christ and the intimate communion with Triune God in practice.

The Pauline theology of spirituality is important for understanding all of his theology. The theology of spirituality is related not only to the theology of God but also to soteriology. Besides, it can be understood fully if it is explained with regards to anthropology, even “redeemed anthropology.” With the work of the Spirit of the Triune God, believers can complete the good work that Father God began until the day of Christ (Phil 1:6).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barclay, William B. *“Christ in You” A Study in Paul’s Theology and Ethics*. Lanham, New York, Oxford: University Press of America, Inc., 1999.

#### 64-THE TRIUNE-GOD-SPIRITUALITY

- Barton, Stephen C. *The Spirituality of the Gospels*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1992.
- Bauer, Walter. *A Greek Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Edited and revised by F. William Arndt, F. Wibur Gingrich, and Fredrick W. Danker. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1957, 1979.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. *Theology of the New Testament*. London: SCM, 1952.
- Cranfield, C. E. B. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Vol. 1. Edinburgh: T&T Clark Limited, 1985.
- Cunningham, Lawrence S., and Keith J. Egan. *Christian Spirituality: Themes from the Tradition*. New York: Paulist Press, 1996.
- Dunn, James D. G. *The Christ and the Spirit*. Vol. 2, *Pneumatology*. Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998.
- Jones, Cheslyn, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, eds. *The Study of Spirituality*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Fee, Gordon. *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1996.
- Guthrie, Donald. *New Testament Theology*. England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1981.
- Howard, Richard E. *A Study in the Thought of Paul: Newness of Life*. Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1975.
- Jewett, Robert. *Paul's Anthropological Terms: A Study of Their Use in Conflict Settings*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971.
- Kittel, Gerhard. "eikwn," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Vol. 2. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 392-97.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "pneuma" *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Vol. 6. Edited by G. Kittel. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 332-452.
- Lane, George A. *Christian Spirituality: An Historical Sketch*. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1984.
- Moo, Douglas J. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996.
- Schweitzer, Albert. *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*. Translated by William Montgomery. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.

- Stacey, W. David. *The Pauline View of Man in Relation to its Judaic and Hellenistic Background*. New York: MACMILLAN & CO LTD, 1956.
- Wahlstrom, Eric H. *The New Life in Christ*. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1950.
- Wenham, David. *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?* Grand Rapids and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995.