

I Need Some Change

Acts 3:1-10 ¹Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. ²And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; ³Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. ⁴And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. ⁵And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. ⁶Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. ⁷And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. ⁸And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. ⁹And all the people saw him walking and praising God: ¹⁰And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

- **ALMS** simply means “a donation to the poor” – what the crippled man kept saying year after year was, “I need some change!”

THE CRIPPLED MAN:

- **His disability wasn't his fault** because he was born with it
- He never got further than the fringes (gate) of the church
- He expected others to carry him to church
- He was focused on the wrong thing (alms) when he got to church
- He had been in the same rut for many years
- **His disability was his fault** because he wasn't doing anything about it – Jesus had passed this same man by many times – what if he had cried out like blind Bartimaeus?

PETER & JOHN:

- They went to church habitually (ninth hour)
- They went to church together (in unity)
- They went to church for the right reason (hour of prayer)
- They were compassionate toward those at the fringes (gate)

- Since Adam and Eve's disobedience, every man and woman is born crippled. God had warned that disobedience to His command would result in death (Genesis 2:16-17), but did Adam instantly fall dead? No, he lived to the age of 930 years! And yet, man DID die the very moment he ate the forbidden fruit. Since man is a spirit-being, it was into man's spirit that death entered. This does not mean that his spirit ceased to exist, for spiritual death is not a state of non-existence, but rather a state of separation and alienation from God.

- **Spiritual death is SEPARATION from God due to SIN. Every human being is born crippled with this condition. Only SALVATION can cure it!**
- When Adam experienced spiritual death in his **spirit**, his **soul** and his **body** also became subjected to the Enemy. In effect, God's highest creation was now a child of Satan!
- **John 8:44a** *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.*
- **Romans 5:19** *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*

Man was created by God as a three-fold being:

- SPIRIT** **the inner man;** the part that knows God and will exist eternally in either Heaven or Hell; the part of man that gets saved
- SOUL** **the mind;** the intellect (thoughts and reasoning), the emotions (temperament, feelings, attitudes and moods), and will (choices, decisions and determination)
- BODY** **the outer man;** the external or visible house in which man's invisible spirit and soul reside; the part which operates our five senses; the part that provides an outward witness to our inward salvation



In a SPIRITUALLY DEAD person, the SPIRIT is alienated from God because of sin. Unless he makes a choice to change it, this is an eternal condition! Since the spirit is dead, the SOUL is now in charge. Led by his intellect, emotions and will, this person cannot understand spiritual concepts, for they are foreign to him. His BODY becomes merely a tool for acting out his lusts and passions. This man is truly “mortal,” which means “death-doomed” or “Satan-ruled.”



In a SPIRITUALLY ALIVE person, the SPIRIT is back in fellowship with God because of salvation. And unless he makes a choice to change it, this also is an eternal condition! Since the spirit is alive, the SOUL is not allowed to be in charge. There is an ongoing war to subjugate the natural mind and body to God's Spirit now dwelling in the redeemed human spirit. (Romans 6:11-13, 7:22-23, 8:13-14) His BODY is offered as a “living sacrifice” (Romans 12:1) to do the will of God, and not allowed to fulfill fleshly lusts. This man is truly “im-mortal,” which means “NOT death-doomed”!

THE MIND IS THE BATTLEGROUND!

- Basically everything that lures, drives, attracts, convinces, persuades or motivates you is generated at the **intellectual** or **emotional** levels of the mind (soul). Your decision as to how to react is then made in your mind by the **will**.
- **The human WILL is the most awesome feature of the soul, for it determines your DESTINY.** The soul (mind) is therefore crucial in obtaining salvation!
- **Ezekiel 18:20** The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”
- **In the process of the new birth, my SOUL repents, my BODY is baptized, and my SPIRIT is filled with the Holy Ghost.** Then as a Christian, I no longer have to be manipulated by the evil forces in the world. I have Jesus Christ living inside of me!
- **My body is now subject to direction from my reborn spirit – through the “MIDDLE MAN” of my soul. Thus, it is my MIND that determines the quality of my service to God.**
- Satan is powerless as far as the **SPIRIT** of a man is concerned. He cannot force you to be lost – only you can make that decision. He is occasionally permitted by God to cause us trouble in the flesh (**BODY**), but even then God keeps him “on a leash.” (Job 1:12, 2:6)
- **THE HUMAN WILL IS GREATER THAN MAN’S POWER:**
John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.
- **THE HUMAN WILL IS GREATER THAN THE DEVIL’S POWER:**
1 John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.
- **The only place Satan is allowed regular access to you is on the battleground of the MIND. Here in the SOUL of man, the battle for man’s eternal SPIRIT is lost or won.**
- **1 Peter 2:11** Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;
- **Romans 12:2** And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.
- **I NEED SOME CHANGE!** (repentance is a change of MIND!)