**How is Your Soul #4**

**July 3rd, 2022**

1 Thessalonians 5 NLT

***23Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again[[1]](#footnote-1)***

3 John 2 NASB

***Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.[[2]](#footnote-2)***

-The word there for prosper means “to succeed on the journey”.

-You cannot succeed on the journey and leave your soul behind.

-A successful journey in life is to be made whole and to prosper-spiritually, physically and in the inner man.

Mark 8:36  
***And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?***

-We are going to spend an extended time this summer talking about the man on the inside.

-Mental and emotional health are vital, especially in the times we live.

-Jesus said in the last days men’s hearts would fail them for fear when they see what is going on around them.

-A life with an unhealthy soul is not a joyful life.

Peter Scazzero makes a statement:

**“IT’S IMPOSSIBLE TO BE SPIRITUALLY MATURE WHILE REMAINING EMOTIONALLY IMMATURE.”**

**A Heart Set Free**

John 14 NLT

***27“I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.[[3]](#footnote-3)***

-I believe this a season of the Lord to address some deep things in your life so we can experience a level of freedom from guilt and shame.

Psalm 119 NIV 84

***I run in the path of your commands,***

***for you have set my heart free. [[4]](#footnote-4)***

1. **A Healthy Soul is the Result of Thinking Correctly.**

-The Bible says God’s thoughts are not our thoughts and his ways are not our ways.

-I like to add, BUT THEY CAN BE. They are in the Bible.

Romans 12 NLT

***And so, dear brothers and sisters,[[5]](#footnote-5)\* I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.[[6]](#footnote-6)\* 2Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. [[7]](#footnote-7)***

-Your thinking is the roadmap to your life and future.

-Those who think they can and those who think they can’t are both right.

-Proverbs 23 from the KJV says as a man thinks in his heart…..so is he. In context that is saying be careful who you fellowship with and be on guard for stingy people.

-I needed to be and still need to be transformed.

-The word for transformed is the same word used for Jesus’ transfiguration……it is to enter metamorphosis.

-It is a radical changing of the form of who you are.

-When we became Christians we faced a clashing of cultures.

-If you keep thinking like you did before Jesus, nothing will change for you.

-I believed in all sorts of cultural non-Biblical stuff that I inherited from the 60’s and 70’.

-I started high school in 1969.

-That was the end of the hippy era and an era of open rebellion against everything.

-I believed all sorts of cultural nonsense.

-They told me in college that I was the result of what other people thought of me (Psychology).

-When we started reading the Bible our worldview was challenged.

-Which way are we going to think?

Hebrews 4 NLT

***12For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. 13Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable. [[8]](#footnote-8)***

-The Bible exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.

-It lays open the soul and the thoughts you entertain.

-I was challenged with some things in Scripture that made me rethink what I thought.

-Choose the thoughts you keep and reject the ones that are contrary to God’s Word.

-We have probably all seen the TV show called ***“What were you Thinking”.***

-It is a show where people do stupid things like pick up a snake or try to fly off of a barn roof with some crude wings or whatever.

-It makes for good comedy but if we are honest we have suddenly come to our senses in some unusual circumstances and said to ourselves; “WHAT WERE WE THINKING?”

-That is because we know that the situation that we experienced began with a thought or the lack of one.

-Good thoughts are the key to a good life.

-The Bible has a lot to say about thoughts.

-A Godly thought is the seed of a Godly future.

Watch your thoughts; they become words.

Watch your words; they become actions.

Watch your actions; they become habits.

Watch your habits; they become character.

Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

2 Corinthians 10

﻿***3﻿ For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ﻿4﻿ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ﻿5﻿ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. [[9]](#footnote-9)***

Message

***We use our powerful God-tools for smashing warped philosophies, tearing down barriers erected against the truth of God, fitting every loose thought and emotion and impulse into the structure of life shaped by Christ. Our tools are ready at hand for clearing the ground of every obstruction and building lives of obedience into maturity.[[10]](#footnote-10)***

-The pattern is:

* **Thoughts**
* **Imaginations/pictures**
* **Strongholds**

-The Message calls a stronghold a “***barrier erected against the truth of God.”***

-You can only take responsibility for your life by taking responsibility for your thoughts.

-Your thoughts are the building blocks or building materials for your life.

-In the book “Every Man’s Battle” the author uses several illustrations to help us to deal with thoughts.

-He gives the example of a corral that you don’t let wild horses into.

-Every so often you have to go in there and throw a wild horse out that has crept in somehow.

-He also talks about in the case of a man who is very visual and subject to temptation by what he sees, especially when it comes to attractive women, to simply see the temptation as a tennis match and bounce away with your eyes and mind.

-As you continue to yield to temptation it grows stronger.

-People will say, I COULDN”T HELP IT! The truth is that you couldn’t help it after you gave it Wheaties and pumped some iron with it.

-I developed his idea a little further by imagining a castle with a drawbridge and a moat around it.

-I don’t have to let thoughts in just because they yell from outside.

-Until I let them in, they are not my thoughts. They only become my own when I embrace them.

-I got one I like even better;

I like to think of my thoughts as coming up to a customs desk. When you go to another country your passport is examined to see if you are a terrorist trying to get in. If you don’t qualify you are rejected.

-Of course we know that the passport is the Word of God.

-A wandering mind is the beginning of a wandering life.

-You can see someone run off with another person who isn’t their spouse and say “What were they thinking?”

-I can get pretty close guessing.

Matthew 4:17 (Ben Campbell Johnson)

***"From the time that John was in prison, Jesus began his ministry saying to all the people, 'Change your attitude and actions because an invasion of the Spirit is imminent."***

-The Israelites were fresh out of Egypt, but they weren’t ready for the Promised Land because of their thinking and attitudes.

-They had left Egypt as someone said but Egypt had never left them.

-The way you think can hinder your ability to follow God properly.

-A healthy soul is the fruit of a healthy thought life.

1. **A Healthy Soul is the Result of Healthy Choices.**

Psalm 119 NIV 84

***I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.*** [[11]](#footnote-11)

-We are faced with so many choices that either feed or soul or hurt our soul.

-It isn’t a religious thing of do’s and don’t but an honest evaluation of what is helpful and what is hurtful.

-Remember the definition of biblical prosperity is to SUCCEED ON THE JOURNEY.

-We have to make choices about things like:

* Who I hang around with
* Who I allow to influence me
* What I read
* What I listen to
* What I daydream about

-My story of going to Scotland goes back to daydreaming at a job where I was bored and wrestling with my thoughts.

-I chose to fill my mind with where I wanted to go. God gave us our imagination and dreaming, or daydreaming can sometimes be great.

-Your life today is the result of choices you made yesterday.

-If you want a different tomorrow, choose wisely today.

-What choices feed your dream and which ones steal from your dream?

-Is your heart free?

-Why or why not?

-What choices are keeping your heart from freedom?

-A heart set free in God. That is a healthy soul.

-It is not perfect it is simply one that is not suffering the consequences of bad choices.

1. **A Healthy Soul is the Result of Which Responsibilities We Accept.**

The Man on the Bridge:

NARRATOR: Rabbi Edwin Friedman tells the story of a man who had given much thought to  
what he wanted from life. After trying many things, succeeding at some and failing at  
others, he finally decided what he wanted.  
One day the opportunity came for him to experience exactly the way of living that he had  
dreamed about. But the opportunity would be available only for a short time. It would not  
wait, and it would not come again.  
Eager to take advantage of this open pathway, the man started on his journey. With each  
step, he moved faster and faster. Each time he thought about his goal, his heart beat  
quicker; and with each vision of what lay ahead, he found renewed vigor.  
As he hurried along, he came to a bridge that crossed through the middle of a town. The  
bridge spanned high above a dangerous river.  
After starting across the bridge, he noticed someone coming from the opposite direction.  
The stranger seemed to be coming toward him to greet him. As the stranger grew closer,  
the man could discern that they didn’t know each other, but yet they looked amazingly  
similar. They were even dressed alike. The only difference was that the stranger had a  
rope wrapped many times around his waist. If stretched out, the rope would reach a  
length of perhaps thirty feet.  
The stranger began to unwrap the rope as he walked. Just as the two men were about to  
meet, the stranger said...  
STRANGER: Pardon me, would you be so kind as to hold the end of the rope for me?  
NARRATOR: The man agreed without a thought, reached out, and took it.  
STRANGER: Thank you...two hands now, and remember, hold tight.  
NARRATOR: At that point, the stranger jumped off the bridge.  
The man on the bridge abruptly felt a strong pull from the now-extended rope. He  
automatically held tight and was almost dragged over the side of the bridge.  
MAN: (SHOUTING) What are you trying to do?  
STRANGER: (SHOUTING) Just hold tight!  
NARRATOR: This is ridiculous, the man thought. He began trying to haul the other man in. Yet  
it was just beyond his strength to bring the other back to safety.  
Again he yelled over the edge,  
MAN: (SHOUTING) Why did you do this?  
STRANGER: Just remember, if you let go, I will be lost.  
MAN: But I cannot pull you up!  
STRANGER: I am your responsibility  
MAN: I did not ask for it  
STRANGER: If you let go, I am lost.  
NARRATOR: The man began to look around for help. No one was within sight.  
He began to think about his predicament. Here he was eagerly pursuing a unique  
opportunity, and now he was being sidetracked for who knows how long.  
Maybe I can tie the rope somewhere, he thought. He examined the bridge carefully, but  
there was no way to get rid of his new found burden.  
So he again yelled over the edge,  
MAN: What do you want?  
STRANGER: Just your help.  
MAN: How can I help? I cannot pull you in, and there is no place to tie the rope while I find  
someone else who could help you.  
STRANGER: Just keep hanging on, that will be enough.  
NARRATOR: Fearing that his arms could not hold out much longer, the man tied the rope  
around his waist and then continued the conversation.  
MAN: Why did you do this? Don’t you see who you have done? What possible purpose could  
you have in mind?  
STRANGER: Just remember, my life is in your hands.  
NARRATOR: Now the man was perplexed. He reasoned within himself, If I let go, all my life I  
will know that I let this other man die. If I stay, I risk losing my momentum toward my  
own long-sought-after salvation. Either way this will haunt me forever.  
As time went by, still no one came. The man became keenly aware that it was almost too  
late to resume his journey. If he didn’t leave immediately, he wouldn’t arrive in time.  
Finally, he devised a plan.  
MAN: Listen, I think I know how to save you. You can climb back up by wrapping the rope  
around yourself. Loop by loop, the rope will become shorter.  
NARRATOR: But the dangling man had no interest in the idea.  
MAN: I don’t think I can hang on much longer,  
STRANGER: You must try, If you fail, I die.  
NARRATOR: Suddenly a new idea struck the man on the bridge. It was different and even alien  
to his normal way of thinking.  
MAN: I want you to listen carefully, because I mean what I am about to say.  
NARRATOR: The dangling man indicated that he was listening.  
MAN: I will not accept the position of choice for your life, only for my own; I hereby give back  
the position of choice for your own life to you.”  
STRANGER: (AFRAID) What do you mean?  
MAN: I mean, simply, it’s up to you. You decide which way this ends. I will become the  
counterweight. You do the pulling and bring yourself up. I will even tug some from here.  
NARRATOR: He unwound the rope from around his waist and braced himself to be a  
counterweight. He was ready to help as soon as the dangling man began to act.  
STRANGER: (UPSET) You cannot mean what you say, You would not be so selfish. I am your  
responsibility. What could be so important that you would let someone die? Do not do  
this to me.  
(A LONG PAUSE)  
MAN: (SLOWLY) I accept your choice.

NARRATOR: In voicing those words, he freed his hands and continued his journey over the  
bridge.

-God loves you and everyone has a plan for your life.

-If you don’t set up boundaries your life will not be your own.

-You will stand before God to give and account of your life.

-You can’t make everyone happy.

**Codependency is a dysfunctional relationship dynamic where one person assumes the role of “the giver,” sacrificing their own needs and well-being for the sake of the other, “the taker.” The bond in question doesn’t have to be romantic; it can occur just as easily between parent and child, friends, and family members.**

-We are called to love and sacrifice for others but as a choice you make from love-not guilt.

-As I read this Scripture, see if you can pick out the things we actually are responsible for.

Proverbs 4 NLT

***18The way of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn,***

***which shines ever brighter until the full light of day.***

***19But the way of the wicked is like total darkness.***

***They have no idea what they are stumbling over.***

***20My child, pay attention to what I say.***

***Listen carefully to my words.***

***21Don’t lose sight of them.***

***Let them penetrate deep into your heart,***

***22for they bring life to those who find them,***

***and healing to their whole body.***

***23Guard your heart above all else,***

***for it determines the course of your life.***

**-God put your future in your heart. There is a divine GPS in there. Don’t let outside influences from the world, the flesh or the devil corrupt it.**

**-He then tells us how to guard our heart and you could say keep your soul healthy.**

***24Avoid all perverse talk;***

***stay away from corrupt speech.***

**-What you say affects your soul.**

**-Your words matter.**

**-James says your tongue controls your whole body.**

***25Look straight ahead,***

***and fix your eyes on what lies before you.***

**-That is what you see.**

**-Your eyes feed your heart with Godly or ungodly things.**

**-Your soul is impacted by your focus.**

***26Mark out a straight path for your feet;***

***stay on the safe path.***

**-This is your path. Where do you hang out? Who do you hang out with?**

**-Stay on course.**

**-Realize that there really is a right and wrong.**

***27Don’t get sidetracked;***

***keep your feet from following evil.***

**-Be alert. You have a spiritual enemy who wants to sidetrack you from succeeding on your journey.**

**“IT’S IMPOSSIBLE TO BE SPIRITUALLY MATURE WHILE REMAINING EMOTIONALLY IMMATURE.”**

Psalm 119 NIV 84

***I run in the path of your commands,***

***for you have set my heart free. [[12]](#footnote-12)***

**WHAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM HAVING A HEALTHY SOUL?**

**WHAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM HAVING FREEDOM ON THE INSIDE?**

1. Tyndale House Publishers. [*Holy Bible: New Living Translation*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nlt?ref=BibleNLT.1Th5.23&off=23&ctx=l%E2%80%99s+Final+Greetings%0a~23%C2%A0Now+may+%E2%80%A2the+God+). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015. Print. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
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4. *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. (1984). (Ps 119:32). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. \* **12:1a** Greek *brothers*. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. \* **12:1b** Or *This is your spiritual worship*; or *This is your reasonable service*. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Tyndale House Publishers. [*Holy Bible: New Living Translation*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nlt?ref=BibleNLT.Ro12.1&off=26&ctx=ng+Sacrifice+to+God%0a~And+so%2c+dear+brother). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015. Print. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
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