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PAULINE ANTHROPOLOGY:  
BODY, FLESH, MIND, AND INNER MAN

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# **Pauline Anthropology: Body, Flesh, Mind, and Inner Man**

## **I. Introduction and Thesis**

Anthropology is typically associated with the sciences as it is the methodical study of what comprises man. However, the nature of biblical anthropology, though still concerned with man's composition, attempts to focus on how man is created with respect to his Creator. The primary New Testament exposition of theological anthropology may be found as an underlying theme in Paul's letters to the churches, and especially in his letter to the Romans. This paper will address Paul's sense of anthropology as it relates directly to his overall theological presentation in the letter to the Romans. Addressing Paul's anthropology will require a brief, but systematic look at Paul's training and background as a consideration of the dominant Hebraic influences reflected in his thinking. In order to fully understand the nature of his approach, it will also be necessary to understand the key Hellenistic concepts and terminology he employs in relating it. The apostle Paul wrote extensively throughout his lifetime addressing all manner of topics and ideas, but he did not, for whatever reason, set down in writing a precise exposition of the composite man. The idea of human anthropology, with respect to the body, flesh, spirit, soul, mind, and inner man is not something Paul addresses often or comprehensively, yet it can be found as an underlying motif throughout his corpus of writings, giving weight to his understanding of man's nature and relationship to his Creator, and finding its apex within his systematic address in Romans 6-8.

## **II. Paul's Training and Background**

In approaching the subject of Pauline anthropology it is necessary to understand what factors influenced Paul's thinking on the subject. Paul's proclivity for turning to the Law and Prophets as the source of authority on all matters reveals his approach in realizing this issue as also being firmly rooted therein. Of utmost importance in understanding Paul's sense of man's composition is the dominant environmental factors contributing to his view. Paul displays two major influences in his overall thought and writings. Though many have made claim of various levels of Hellenistic influence in his writings his own testimony is contrary to this with respect to his anthropology. Paul's primary view-shaping dynamic comes from his rabbinical roots, as can be seen in both his own testimony throughout his ordeal in the book of Acts, as well as by looking at his background and the impact it had on him, even beyond his conversion experience.

### **1. Jewish Rabbinical Training**

Until his conversion experience on the road to Damascus, Paul was a highly esteemed Pharisee. This can be gleaned from his own statements to the fact as well as Luke's documentation of particular facts and events in the book of Acts. Having ties with the Pharisaical court of the Jews in itself was not a negative thing, though the modern nuance of the word Pharisee bears a bad connotation. In fact, there is scriptural evidence that some of the Pharisees believed in Jesus and quite possibly became devout followers of the Way. Nicodemus is the most obvious example, who, in his seeking out

Jesus in the garden at night in John 3 and by bringing burial oils and assisting in Jesus entombment, as revealed in John 19, aligns himself straightforwardly with the band of disciples who followed Jesus. That aside, it is Paul's devotion to Pharisaical Judaism which ultimately brings him into conflict in the presence of the risen Christ on the Damascus road, as he was on his way to persecute those who had believed Jesus in that city. In the exchange recorded in Acts 9, and in subsequent references to the experience recorded there, Paul never renounces his Pharisaical upbringing; rather, he discusses his conversion in terms of a more complete understanding of his Hebrew roots. It is no stretch then, to parallel Paul's anthropological view with that of his Pharisaical predecessors and contemporaries, as is evidenced by his numerous post-conversion allusions to being a member of that group. In a series of defensive statements during a trial and ordeal that spanned the remainder of his life and concluded with his imprisonment and death in Rome, Paul makes five separate declarations specifically aligning himself with the anthropological and eschatological beliefs of the Pharisees.

(1) First claim before the Jewish mob at the Antonia Fortress (Acts 22:3) While in Jerusalem Paul's Jewish adversaries seized him in the Temple area and after accusing him of bringing a gentile into the Temple court they began to beat him. After a Roman Commander stops the beating, Paul is chained and taken to the barracks. It is at this point that Paul asks to make a statement to the crowd and in it he boldly states, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today." This indicates not only familiarity with the beliefs of the Pharisees, but by including his well-known teacher's name he unswervingly aligns himself with that viewpoint before the mob that had just beaten him.

(2) Second claim before the Sanhedrin (Acts 23:6) the following day, when Paul is placed on trial before the Sanhedrin, he declares in his opening defense statement, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees! I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!" In doing so he allies himself with the basic thinking and underpinnings of that sect with respect to their eschatological sense of anthropology.

(3) Third claim before the Roman Governor Felix (Acts 24:14-15) More evidence is provided when, in his opening statement before the Roman governor Felix, Paul emphasizes his relationship to Pharisaical beliefs, stating, "But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets; having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked." Here Paul is once again clinging to the nature of his pre-conversion understandings with regard to non-messianic issues.

(4) Fourth claim before the Roman appointed King Agrippa (Acts 26:4-5) As Paul stands accused before Agrippa, he states his defense by once more linking himself directly with the beliefs of the Pharisees when he says, "So then, all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my own

nation and at Jerusalem; since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.”

(5) Fifth claim in a letter to the Philippian church (Philippians 3:5) Outside of the book of Acts there is only one other mention Paul makes in relationship to these defensive declarations. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul emphasizes his alignment with these traditional roots again, almost boasting, “circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee;” leaving no room for doubt about the strictly Hebraic nature of the dominant influence in his thinking.

Taken in whole, these dramatic sequences in which Paul stands accused before various councils and tribunals and offers his Pharisaical roots and beliefs as the main component of his defense stand in sharp contrast to any idea that would set him against such ideas, in favor of a Hellenistic inclination. There need be little guesswork in coming to the conclusion that though Paul’s conversion changed his understanding of Messiah, it did not in fact drastically altar his keen Judaic sensibilities and theological understanding of certain pre-conversion concepts, anthropology being only one.

## 2. Limitations of Hellenistic Influence

It is clear that Paul was well-versed in the Hellenistic thinking of his day. His familiarity with specific Greek philosophical terminology and ideas displays a sound grasp of the theoretical archetype prevalent in the first century Greco-Roman world. What is challenging to identify with any assurance is whether his familiarity fostered a paradigm-shift within his own thinking, away from his Pharisaical roots. As discussed previously, his own statements seem to countermand this notion, linking him directly with the more archaic Hebrew understanding. If anything, it seems that Paul merely drew upon the terminology and particular references from within the classical Hellenistic ideal to make his points more approachable to that audience. Grundy agrees, saying “The contrast between inner and outer man was native to Hellenistic thought. But unlike Hellenistic thinkers, Paul does not denigrate the outer man as evil or irrational. And the eschatological frame of reference...contrasts with Hellenistic thinking.” (Grundy, 1987) This would very much be in keeping with his statement in 1 Corinthians 9:2, when he states, “I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.” Consequently, Albert Schweitzer denies any Hellenistic influence in Paul’s theology. In his book on Paul he makes the bold assertion that, “Our review of the characteristics of Pauline mysticism has shown that it is closely connected with the eschatological world-view; that it finds no place for the conceptions of rebirth or deification; that it is dominated by the eschatological idea of predestination; that it has a kind of realism which is foreign to the Hellenistic mysticism; and that the symbolism which plays so essential a part in the sacramental side of Hellenistic mysticism here plays no part at all.” (Schweitzer, 1998) Schweitzer goes on to make the case that the church in fact did integrate Hellenistic influences, but almost as a reaction against Paul’s mystical teachings, and certainly not in agreement with them. In light of such evidence it would be difficult to extrapolate any Hellenistic dominance in Paul’s anthropological position.

### III. Explanation of Terminology

#### 1. Hebrew

Consideration of the ancient Hebraic perception of man and its correlating terminology, by which Paul's precursory formal training was most certainly structured, will assist greatly a comprehension of his dominant anthropological perception. Such Hebrew words as spirit (neshamah) soul (nephesh) flesh (basar) and man (adamah) relate the foundational premises of conception in Hebraic thought. It is the concepts conveyed through these words which undoubtedly helped formulate Paul's overarching anthropological view.

(1) Neshamah. This word is a peculiar Hebrew term finding attribution only to God or as a link from God to man, which by its very nature sets man apart from the animals in some abstract way though he is still obviously tied to them in a natural physical way. Albert Barnes notes, "It expresses the spiritual and principal element in man, which is not formed, but breathed by the Creator into the physical form of man. This rational part is that in which he bears the image of God." (Barnes, 1983) In this word then is found a direct and unparalleled link between man and his Creator. It is the neshamah that defines the life-essence of man as being directly related to God. This is a Hebraic distinctive that cannot be dismissed when determining Paul's view.

(2) Nephesh. This Hebrew term has many meanings, including soul, self, life, creature, person, appetite, mind, living being, desire, emotion, and passion. The concept of soul in Hebrew bears numerous different meanings when translated into the Greek as well, each depending on the context for denotation. It is probably best translated as "living being" and can be found throughout the Old Testament, referring not only to man, but to all other creatures as well. This establishes the term as another Hebraic distinctive in that it reveals man as native to the world of created and living things and thereby bound to it. The complimentary nature of neshamah and nephesh with respect to man is clear in the Genesis account, and so bears relevance on the underpinnings of ancient Hebraic thought, and likewise on Paul.

(3) Basar. This is the Hebrew term for flesh used throughout the Old Testament. It bears several meanings, but most often demarcates the actual bodily form of man or animal. In Hebrew thought, flesh simply consisted of all animate or inanimate bodies, taking on no abstract meaning in the absence of life.

(4) Adamah. The first man derives his name from the substance of his creation, that is, from the dirt of the ground which in Hebrew is adamah. This term, though given as a name to the man God created to tend the garden is also used to delineate all of mankind in a holistic sense. Countless sources throughout the Old Testament make reference to coming from or returning to the earth in the birth and death cycles of life. It is noteworthy that Paul draws on this meaning in his description of the first man and an identification of his fall in the garden with the ongoing sin problem which separates God

from the rational beings he created in Romans 6-8 and its corresponding link in 1 Corinthians 15.

## 2. Greek

Paul's familiarity with the both the Hebrew Scriptures as well as the Greek Septuagint and the Hellenistic origins of the translated words and the meanings behind them would have given him keen insight into the manner in which all these terms coalesce. Given his position as a Pharisee, he would have been well-studied in the nature of the overlap, having grown up understanding the Hebrew via his temple training and Torah study, and the Greek by means of his formal education. Therefore, by looking into the Greek paradigm in which Paul writes, several words come to the foreground in this discussion which demand understanding through definition. There is such an incredible amount of overlap in so many of these words in Greek that to address the issue properly would take an entire book, if not several volumes. For the purpose of this discussion it is only necessary to discuss those terms which bear relevance to Paul's Hebraic pedigree. With that in mind, only certain terms and their meanings will be addressed here.

The major anthropological terms that occur in Paul's letters are: body (soma), flesh (sarx), soul (psyche), spirit (pneuma), mind (nous), conscience (suneidesis), and inner man (eso anthropos). Understanding how these terms link together and even, quite often, overlap is of vital importance. Undertaking an explanation of Paul's usage of these words in given contexts is a daunting task, but necessary at length in comprehension of the meaning he attaches to them and draws from them.

(1) Soma (1 Corinthians 6:13) this is the Greek word delineating the body, both of men or animals, whether living or dead. Paul makes use of it roughly 85 times in his various letters. As Robinson explains, "...both the most decisive words in Pauline anthropology, 'flesh' and 'body', represent a common Hebrew original." (Robinson, 2002) Paul is applying specific eschatological and anthropological importance to them in his first letter to the Corinthians when he states, "Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body." By making such a claim, Paul clearly seeks to attach meaning based on function, and thereby to draw out the nature of his view of the practical importance of the body. The function, however is not of natural origin, but of supernatural origin, in that Paul is describing the body as the dwelling place of the Lord, and idea he states even more clearly in 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19, both of which basically relating Paul's thought that the purpose of man's body is to be the dwelling place of God's Spirit. As such, care and maintenance of the body and its faculties is not only a practice in self-preservation but more importantly an act of devotion. This idea is expressed by Paul throughout Romans 6, brought to its culmination in Paul's admonition of 12:1 and similarly echoed in 1 Corinthians 6:20. Such a view of the body as necessary and purposed for holiness is in agreement with Hebraic thinking and stands in sharp contrast to the idea of the negative connotations applied to the body by Hellenistic thought.

(2) Sarx (1 Corinthians 15:39, 42) this is the Greek word for flesh, meaning the soft substance of the living body, which covers the bones and is permeated with blood. The Greek terms soma and sarx allow for a great deal of interplay between two similar ideas. As with soma, sarx applies to both man and animals; however, Paul ignores the most obvious anthropological ties between the two words and in his use of these terms, differentiates between them. Paul never abuses the traditional meaning of sarx; he sets it up in a manner unexpected by employing its connotation of mortality with his notion of the outcome of sin. In his typical fashion, Paul takes a word which conveys a concept and while keeping the word's basic meaning, alters the concept to agree with his argument. This maneuvering is evidenced in 1 Corinthians 15:39, 42 in his statements about the nature of the fleshly body being mortal and the nature of the spiritual body being immortal through resurrection. By way of summary, Robinson notes, "...sarx stands for man, in the solidarity of creation; in his distance from God." whereas "...soma stands for man, in the solidarity of creation, as made for God." (Robinson, 2002)

(3) Psuche (1 Corinthians 15:45) the breath of life and vital force which animates the body and shows itself in breathing. This is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew term nephesh, and takes on roughly the same meaning, though it has a tendency to allow for abstraction depending on its usage. This term is curiously absent in the majority of Paul's discourses and especially so in Romans chapters 6-8, yet his foundational dependence on the kindred term, pneuma, is unmistakable in all his writings. What one makes of this exchange is essential in deciding how to go about interpretation of its use in his line of thought. By looking at the similarities between the words psuche and pneuma some insight may be gained into his differentiation between the terms and more frequent use of the latter. It is also important to note that Paul's copious use of the term soma may be of consequence as well in that his ideology caters strongly to functionality.

(4) Pneuma (1 Corinthians 15:45) the spirit and vital principle by which the body is animated. This is man's rational spirit, the power by which the human being feels, thinks, and decides. Paul uses this word often in his writings, and it dominates his thinking in Romans 8. By once again turning to 1 Corinthians 15, a pattern to his methodology may be seen as he draws a distinction between psuche and pneuma by aligning Adam with a living soul and Jesus with a living spirit. That Paul sets these terms at odds in this passage displays his keen disinterest in using them according to their Hellenistic implications which, though unique, were relatively complimentary.

(5) Nous (Ephesians 2:3) the mind, comprising alike the faculties of perception and understanding as well as those of feeling, judging, and determining. Paul seldom relies on using this term to relate his points; however, it does appear in his efforts at key points of interest and with intriguing association to other words. A prime example is in his letter to the Ephesians where he writes, "Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." His purposeful connection of mind with flesh is understood more fully by the manner in which he derives the latter. As stated previously, Paul took a unique approach to flesh based on its mortality. That he here and

elsewhere associates the mind with the flesh is certainly no accident, leading his audience to correlate the two in like manner. It is the flesh's inability to last that draws Paul's inference to it as a keen symbol for the nature and end of sin. The definite relationship between it and the mind then, is one of implied mortality. This concept is so foreign to the Hellenistic way of thinking that any correlation between Paul and Hellenistic thought with respect to the nature of terminology is hard to maintain. In using the mind as a means for sinfulness, he is equating man's normative way of thinking and determining with the sinfulness that overrides it.

(6) Suneidesis (Titus 1:15) The soul, as distinguishing between what is morally good and bad, prompting one to do the former and shun the latter; commending one, condemning the other. Paul's use of this Greek concept of man's innate sense of morality seems to hold true to the implicit meaning, though he does link it with the sinful flesh idea at times, such as in his pastoral letter to Titus, where he confers that those who are defiled and unbelieving "...their mind and their conscience are defiled." Though he seems to believe each man's conscience will be used as a character witness in the final judgment, as is seen in Romans 2:15, Paul is relatively quiet on the role of the conscience for the better part of the letter, omitting any discussion of it in chapters 6-8. In spite of its absence in the main body of the discussion, Paul's numerous references to mind, such as in Titus, may very well allow for overlap and as such it remains an integral part of this deliberation. It may very well be tied to Paul's treatment of which law the mind serves in 7:23-25, giving it an indirect role in the nature and predicament of the overall man Paul is focusing on. For this reason mind takes precedence, though conscience is surely at play in the field of related issues.

(7) Eso anthropos (2 Corinthians 4:16) In Greek this is the inner man. The Hebrew language had absolutely no concept that fits this notion, quite possibly due to the fact that, as Robinson notes, "Hebrews were content to leave unasked so many questions which seemed to the Greeks...so obvious." Paul himself only uses the expression three times in his entire corpus of writings. This would point toward either the term having special significance or a general lack of appropriate meaning in relating what Paul wanted to say in the vast majority of situations. In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul draws on this terminology to bring out his point by stating, "...even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day." Based on the correlation made here with the other similar statements Paul makes throughout Romans 6-8, it is most likely the former option. Paul's use in both passages not only draws attention to a familiar sentiment being made but heightens the impact of it. Whereas Paul is fairly content to describe the death versus life scenario in terms of flesh versus spirit on most occasions, his employment of the inner man and outer man ideals reinforces the theme he is driving at in both.

#### **IV. The Crux of Pauline Anthropology**

Paul's letter to the Romans stands as a monumental effort. In it, he sets down the basics of the Christian faith and belief in Jesus as Messiah. It is also a systematic approach to how things integrate with each other within Christianity. There is little doubt

that Paul, having never been to Rome, was attempting to exert some authority on doctrinal matters, as well as prepare them for his planned arrival and stay there. In developing such a comprehensive methodology within a letter, Paul was careful to give frequent and specific reference to the sources he drew upon, as well as to allude to his overarching line of thought made more apparent in other letters where the issues he addressed were somewhat different. Consequently, it will be advantageous to look further into the whole of Scripture to bring about a broader, more rounded understanding of the nature of man's composition, in order to place Paul's general view on the subject within its Scriptural context.

## 1. Old Testament Sources

(1) Primary statement of anthropological orientation (Genesis 2:7) this passage describes man as comprised of two main elements. He is formed "of dust from the ground" and given the "breath of life" by God in order to become "a living being." This establishes a bipartite being, existing solely in unity. Knowing his Torah, Paul would easily have recognized and agreed that man is composed of body and flesh, both coming from the dust of the ground. He would have also understood the animating factor of spirit as having come from God. Paul's understanding would certainly have taken this into account, given his rabbinic background and familiarity with the Genesis account and the view of man it established; a view that was echoed in the wisdom literature, and especially by Qoheleth in the book of Ecclesiastes.

(2) First example from the writings of Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes 3:19-20) Qoheleth explains that both men and animals have the same fate in death. What is striking about his statement is that he continues on to say, "All go to the same place. All came from the dust and all return to the dust." Such a distinctive correlation between man and animal, both in life and death, has bearing on this discussion in that Qoheleth's treatise on wisdom was certainly not only familiar to Paul as he wrote, but a governing factor in his point of view. There is no doubt then, that just as the Genesis exposition of human anthropology defines man as a bipartite being consisting of dust animated by God's breath, so too does Qoheleth. This fact serves to bolster the hypothesis that Paul must have drawn from in formulating his thinking on the subject.

(2) Second example from the writings of Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes 12:7) in taking the idea a step further Qoheleth reveals, "...then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it." This statement would easily fall in line with what is known of Paul's eschatological view. Again, as before, Qoheleth's earthy outlook of man's natural composition attests to the underlying assumption which guided Paul's thinking, including in this instance a view of God as not only the giver of life, but also the keeper of spirit.

## 2. Romans 6-8

In opening the chain of thought presented in these three chapters, Paul launches into an explanation of the believers victory of death by means of Jesus' resurrection, and

proceeds to make a case for why man should pursue life as he was created to live it as opposed to the inevitable death resulting from allowing the weakness of his flesh to override this purpose. He makes his case with three bold statements. First, in verse 13, he calls for man not to permit this dominance to continue, admonishing him to avoid presenting all his integral parts as "...instruments of unrighteousness..." but instead as a whole person to present ones essential components as "...as instruments of righteousness to God." He reiterates this point by asking a rhetorical question in verse 16, likening man's presentation in this matter to slavery. In verse 19 as in chapter 12:1-2, he champions his audience to "...present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification." This critical section hinges its entire argument on the premise that the whole man is affected by sin leading to death and that likewise the whole man must be offered to God instead. Paul's anthropological understanding, determined as it was by his Hebraic roots can easily be viewed as an underlying motif in this line of reasoning.

As he continues his argument in chapter 7, Paul develops a quick analogy from marriage to aid his case and then proceeds to hammer on his central concept all the more. As the need arises he begins to incorporate the Law and its purpose, and though portraying it as the vehicle for sins emergence and dominance in man, he resiliently distinguishes it as good. His position on the purpose of the Law finds its apex in verses 13 and 14 where he reveals the objective of the Law as being to reveal the nature of sin in man and for man to recognize that sin as "...utterly sinful." He follows this notion by venerating the Law as spiritual in spite of the bondage to sin it afforded. Here is a turning point in the discussion as Paul begins to make a path toward establishing the desire and focus of everyone in Christ as being able and obligated to live as the spiritual body they have become and are becoming. He makes clear that this requires shedding the death-encumbered life of the sin-enslaved flesh in favor of the freedom of the life found through the Spirit; and that is the Spirit of God. Paul never overlooks the predicament and purpose of the body throughout this discourse as he finalizes his thoughts by illustrating the war taking place between the flesh and the spirit. Unlike the Hellenistic thinking of his contemporaries which saw the body itself as the operative of sin, Paul places the emphasis on the body as of a prize being fought over. Grundy similarly argues, "...the body is not to be blamed, as though the conflict took place simply between the inner man and the body. The real conflict occurs between the inner man and sin, with the body caught in the middle." (Grundy, 1987) From this vantage point, Paul's counter-cultural view of man's composition, and the nature of the struggle within it, acquires its most ardent expression. This leads into his eschatological discourse in chapter 8, wherein the aim of the gospel, and its development with respect to the history and future of mankind comes to rest firmly on the Christocentric eschatological anthropology Paul has been building his case on.

Beginning with his affirmation that there is no condemnation for those in Christ, Paul marches his line of thought to its logical end. Here, he expounds on the idea of Messiah as the ultimate and only means of life. This stems directly from his Hebraic bipartite thinking in that just as it is God who breathes neshamah into man's body to give him life, so Christ brings life to man's body giving him life. Paul takes the view that to be outside of Christ is to be essentially dead. The impetus of these statements is

unrelenting and again, as before, he repeats them for emphasis. In verse 10 he claims that the body is dead because of sin but that if Christ is within the spirit is alive. In verse 13 he puts it another way, stating, "...if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live." This leaves no room for doubt about Paul's vision of how the transformation from dying to life takes place. It clearly harkens back to the understanding established in Genesis 2.

Not only is Jesus role as Messiah brought to the forefront in this chapter, but also the role of the Spirit. Paul's preferential use of *pneuma* in chapter 8, in agreement with his other writings, is almost entirely in reference to the Spirit of God, giving the sense that this immortal life is not something innate in man, but brought to him from outside himself. The ultimate eschatological and anthropological hope delivered in this chapter is based on the premise that just as God worked to bring about life in the Genesis account, so too has he worked in Christ to bring about life for all who will receive it, and that this life will be granted to them immediately, yet not completely. In verses 20-23, Paul describes the longing of creation for such renewal, implying directly that such has not yet occurred. Paul then links man unambiguously with the created order, stating our identical longing by saying in verse 23, "...even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body." The final expectation is that man will overcome sin and death just as Christ did because of Christ's work of love in renewal. Paul captions it by pronouncing, "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us." This victory is simply a reinstatement of the order God desired in creation.

### 3. New Testament Sources

Though the bulk of Paul's anthropological framework may be seen in the Romans passages, it is not comprehensive in its description so as to relate his full grasp of the concept. Though several cross-references have already received treatment in the preceding discussion, there remain significant examples from other writings which may add insight and significance to the overall understanding. Therefore, it is crucial to the discourse to address not only the relevant parts of Romans but these other writings from Paul's life as well. For the purpose of this contention 1 Thessalonians 4, 2 Corinthians 5, and Philippians 3 will all be addressed, if somewhat briefly.

(1) First eschatological example (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17) In this passage Paul is addressing concerns about some who have died before the second coming; a reality which apparently took many by surprise. Paul takes an eschatological approach, accenting his comments in Romans 8:23 and comforting them by informing them that those who sleep will rise up and precede those still alive when Jesus returns, at which point the living will be "...caught up together with them in the clouds..." In this teaching can be seen further eschatological development of Paul's anthropological view expounded on in the letter to the Romans. He makes a point of drawing out the idea in fuller scope here by depicting the sequence of events to come, which would inevitably lead to the conclusion that Paul saw a delicate balance between anthropology and eschatology with respect to the nature of their sequential implications.

(2) Second eschatological example (2 Corinthians 5:1-10) Paul uses this opportunity to qualify exactly what comprises a man, and though he does so in an abstract style, his main point can be fairly assessed. His persistence in exemplifying one aspect of man as dying while one aspect consequently becomes more alive pervades this section of thought and can be shown to be congruent with the ideas presented in chapter 8 of Romans. When Paul looks at life as “swallowing” death he is no doubt referring to resurrection again, having drawn this parallel to his statement in Romans 8:13 regarding dying to live, he goes on to pursue the parallel by reiterating the idea laid out in 8:9 concerning being “in the Spirit” by painting two distinct metaphors. The first is of a house or building which Paul says is “not made with hands, eternal in the heavens...” revealing the concurrent link between anthropology and eschatology yet again. The second is of articles of clothing which Paul claims the spiritual man is “...longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven...” He concludes this section of thought by stating and then restating the thought that to be alive here or with God is to be home in that place. A perplexing conclusion given the nature of his previous statements in the passage but not contradictory because Paul sought for every believer to be at peace at whatever stage of life they were in.

(3) Third eschatological example (Philippians 3:20-21) The statement he makes to the Philippians with reference to the present state and the state of things to come is an interesting one in that he juxtaposes body (soma) over against itself with the distinction being applied by the nature of the body. He asserts that Jesus “...will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory...” In expressing the idea this way he is tying everything back to the idea of being made alive by the Spirit as indicated in Romans 8:11 and in doing so, relating the entire anthropological eschatology he rests his hope in on the respective proposition.

## **V. Conclusion**

Man. The complexities in describing this statement alone have dominated humanities quest for knowledge over the centuries. People have developed all manner of studying and quantifying man, of associating and labeling him, of defining and characterizing what makes him. In doing so they have discovered a great many things about man but not so much as they would prefer. The reason is quite simple. There’s much more to man than anything that can be studied, quantified, associated, labeled, defined, or characterized because man is more than a physical being with physical processes. He is a spiritual machine as well, and in recognizing this, one begins to understand just how important anthropological theology is and why an understanding of Apostle Paul’s views on the matter is vital.

With an understanding of Paul’s strict Pharisaical roots and familiarity with classical Hellenistic culture, aided by a firm conception of the manner in which Paul employed its terminology to his own ends, the crux of Pauline anthropology takes shape, developing not only a systematic approach to the composite nature of man’s being but more importantly, a vital and motivational grasp of how the whole man is related to Jesus in terms of necessity and desire.

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\*All Scripture quotations are from the NASB.