

## What Does *Soulish* Mean?

**Commentary for March 15, 2022** [updated from April 2005] — **We Have Soulsh Bodies**

**QUESTION:** What does “soulsh” mean? You have used that word in articles.

**ANSWER:** I have used this adjective before, and I will use it again. I use “soulsh” because it is one of the biblical **“sound words”** the apostle Paul talks about in 2 Timothy 1:13, which should be fully appreciated when properly used. It is an adjective that accurately describes your body now, a body which is distinct from a spiritual body. Your body, flesh, soul, and spirit are all distinguished in Scripture with a precision not always presented in translations.

We are “soulsh” from God, but we are not just flesh. Flesh is what our body is at present. The body is the structure of our flesh. The flesh has no capacity to think, but the flesh which makes up the body (**“body of flesh,”** Colossians 1:22, 2:11) has needs such as hunger, thirst, weariness, pain, sleep, joy, etc. The flesh communicates those needs efficiently.

Our soul is a combination of the body and spirit in man (Genesis 2:7, 1 Corinthians 15:45). That combination gives us our individual consciousness and our personality. Together they form our “soul.” It is our soul that is subject to judgment (Psalm 109:31, 139:2; Jeremiah 17:10; Hebrews 4:12). See Dr. Martin’s [“Chapter 13: Just What Are Human Beings?”](#) from his book [Essentials of New Testament Doctrine](#).

The English word “soulsh” is a good translation of the Greek adjective *psuchikos*, from the noun *psuche* in Greek, which should consistently be translated “soul” in English. How would the adjective *psuchikos* be translated except “soulsh”? Describing our human nature as “soulsh” is precisely accurate. The following verses in the King James Version translate the adjective “natural” or “sensual” but the Greek word is *psuchikos*, meaning “soulsh.”

**“But the natural [*psuchikos*, soulsh] man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”**

• **1 Corinthians 2:14**

**“It is sown a natural [*psuchikon*, soulsh] body; it is raised a spiritual [*pneumatikon*, spiritual] body. There is a natural [*psuchikon*, soulsh] body, and there is a spiritual body [*pneumatikon*, spiritual]. And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam was made a living soul [*psuche*, soul]; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit [*pneuma*, spirit].’ Howbeit that was **NOT** first which is spiritual [*pneumatikon*, spiritual], but that which is natural [*psuchikos*, soulsh]; and **afterward** that which is spiritual.”**

• **1 Corinthians 15:44–46**

**“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descends not from above, but is earthly, sensual [*psuchikos*, soulsh], devilish.”**

• **James 3:13–15**

**“These be they [mockers] who separate themselves, sensual [*psuchikos*, soulish], having not the Spirit.”**

• **Jude 1:19**

Note in these verses the adjective “soulish” qualifies and describes the nouns “man,” “body,” “wisdom,” and “mockers” (in Jude 1:18). There is a precise distinction between the soul and the spirit which is made clearer by a proper understanding of “soulish.” The adjective “soul-ish” (*psuchikos*) is different from the King James rendering of “nature” which is derived from the Greek *phusis*. (However, *phusis* most often is associated with the flesh or fleshly nature).

### **Another Question about Man’s Nature**

**A further question** was asked: What would be wrong with understanding the phrase “human nature” in those verses above? Very little, so long as you distinguish between the Greek terms. Reading texts of Scripture requires precision often lacking in the KJV. There is a phrase that can be properly rendered as “human nature” (from two root words *phusis* and *anthropinos*), but the KJV confuses the matter by translating the Greek word *phusis* by two different English words within the same verse. However, the phrase “human nature” occurs only once and has to do with the distinction between humans and animals:

**“For every kind [*phusis*, nature] of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and has been tamed of mankind [*phusis anthropinos*, literally, ‘human nature’].”**

• **James 3:7**

Note how a consistent translation of “nature” clarifies that verse. This phrase formed from *phusis* (nature) and *anthropinos* (human) is best expressed as the “nature of humans,” or “human nature.” *Phusis* occurs in 11 verses: James 3:7 (2x); Romans 1:26, 2:14, 27, 11:21, 24, 1 Corinthians 11:14; Galatians 2:15, 4:8; Ephesians 2:3; and 2 Peter 1:4. It is translated “nature” in all, but James 3:7. The adjective *phusikos* is used in 3 verses (2 Peter 2:12 and Romans 1:26–27). The noun and adjective occur together in Romans 1:26.

### **The Change in our Nature**

Someday our human nature will change to be like Christ’s, a divine nature instead of a soulish nature. Then we shall have a divine nature as Christ has at present.

**“According as his divine power [*theios*, divine + *dunamis*, power] has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that has called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature [*theios*, divine + *phusis*, nature], having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”**

• **2 Peter 1:3–4**

**“Beloved, NOW are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, [1] we shall be like him; for [2] we shall see him as he is.”**

• **1 John 3:2**

We will wait until our resurrection to have these blessings.

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