

VI. — God Will Bestow Salvation upon the Whole Nature of Man, Consisting of Body and Soul in Close Union, Since the Word Took it upon Him, and Adorned with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, of Whom Our Bodies Are, and Are Termed, the Temples.

1. Now **God shall be glorified in His handiwork**, fitting it so as to be conformable to, and **modelled after, His own Son**. For by the hands of the Father, that is, by the Son and the Holy Spirit, man, and not [merely] a part of man, was made in the likeness of God. **Now the soul and the spirit are certainly a part of the man, but certainly not the man; for the perfect man consists in the commingling and the union of the soul receiving the spirit of the Father**, and the admixture of that fleshly nature which was moulded after the image of God. For this reason, does the apostle declare, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect," (1Co_2:6) **terming those persons "perfect" who have received the Spirit of God, and who through the Spirit of God do speak in all languages, as he used Himself also to speak**. In like manner we do also hear many brethren in the Church, who possess prophetic gifts, and **who through the Spirit speak all kinds of languages, and bring to light for the general benefit the hidden things of men, and declare the mysteries of God, whom also the apostle terms "spiritual,"** they being spiritual because they partake of the Spirit, and not because their flesh has been stripped off and taken away, and because they have **become purely spiritual**. For if anyone take away the substance of flesh, that is, of the handiwork [of God], and understand that which is purely spiritual, such then would not be a spiritual man but would be the spirit of a man, or the Spirit of God. **But when the spirit here blended with the soul is united to [God's] handiwork, the man is rendered spiritual and perfect because of the outpouring of the Spirit**, and this is he who was made in the image and likeness of God. But if the Spirit be wanting to the soul, he who is such is indeed **of an animal nature, and being left carnal**, shall be an imperfect being, possessing indeed the image [of God] in his formation (in plasmate), but **not receiving the similitude through the Spirit; and thus is this being imperfect**. Thus also, if any one take away the image and set aside the handiwork, **he cannot then understand this as being a man, but as either some part of a man**, as I have already said, or as something else than a man. For that flesh which has been moulded is not a perfect man in itself, but the body of a man, and part of a man. Neither is the soul itself, considered apart by itself, the man; but it is the soul of a man, and part of a man. Neither is the spirit a man, for it is called the spirit, and not a man; but the commingling and union of all these constitutes the perfect man. And for this cause does the apostle, explaining himself, make it clear that **the saved man is a complete man as well as a spiritual man**; saying thus in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, "Now the God of peace sanctify you perfect (perfectos); and may your spirit, and soul, and body be preserved whole without complaint to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." Now what was his object in praying that these three — **that is, soul, body, and spirit** — might be preserved to the coming of the Lord, unless he was aware of the [future] reintegration and **union of the three**, and [that they should be heirs of] one and the same salvation? For this cause also he declares that **those are "the perfect" who present unto the Lord the three [component parts] without offence**. Those, then, are the perfect who have had the Spirit of God remaining in them, and have preserved their souls and bodies blameless, holding fast the faith of God, that is, that faith which is [directed] towards God, and maintaining righteous dealings with respect to their neighbours.

2. Whence also he says, that this handiwork is "the temple of God," thus declaring: **"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man, therefore, will defile the temple of God, him will God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which [temple] ye are."** (1Co_3:16) Here he manifestly declares the body to be the temple in which the

Spirit dwells. As also the Lord speaks in reference to Himself, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. He spoke this, however," it is said, "of the temple of His body." (Joh_2:19-21) And not only does he (the apostle) acknowledge our bodies to be a temple, but even the temple of Christ, saying thus to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot?" (1Co_3:17) **He speaks these things, not in reference to some other spiritual man; for a being of such a nature could have nothing to do with an harlot:** but he declares "our body," that is, **the flesh which continues in sanctity and purity,** to be "the members of Christ;" but that when it becomes one with an harlot, it becomes the members of an harlot. And for this reason, he said, "If any man defiles the temple of God, him will God destroy." How then is it not the utmost blasphemy to allege, that the temple of God, in which the Spirit of the Father dwells, and the members of Christ, do not partake of salvation, but are reduced to perdition? Also, that our bodies are raised not from their own substance, but by the power of God, he says to the Corinthians, "Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. But God hath both raised up the Lord and shall raise us up by His own power." (1Co_6:13-14)

~Irenaeus- Against Heresies Book V Vol. 1