

## Special Collections and Archives

### Brown Library

### Abilene Christian University

This document is from the Landon Brady Saunders Papers, Center for Restoration Studies Manuscripts #575.

The Saunders Papers are held at the Brown Library in Abilene, Texas, and include Saunders' personal and organizational records of Heartbeat. This digital asset was generated by Heartbeat and/or ACU archives staff and preserves the original formatting, spelling, punctuation, and other features as it was created, or as close to the original as possible.

This and other material can be viewed and downloaded from the ACU online digital repository at <https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/saunders/>



# ACU\_Saunders\_MS575\_5087

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

soul, Spirit, God, give, life, word, joy, heart, difference, audiences, day, religious, address, term, suffering, presentation, Gospel, Scripture, coordinates, genuine

00:02

Let me go through some of the questions here. And then we'll take the remaining moments and open it up. There are two that are sort of related, explain the difference between soul and spirit. Can you have one without the other. And the other is sort of along that line explained the difference between soul Holy Spirit, God and conscience. You know, I don't I don't really know if I can explain the difference between soul and spirit. At the beginning yesterday we sort of gave the way we were using the idea of soul that Scripture uses, dividing asunder, soul and spirit joints and marrow. And as the designer of the thoughts and intents of the heart, it uses language like that. But when you take words like this, so spirit, particularly, and then even breath gets added into that. Scripture doesn't do much with the concept of self. That's that's that is used more in a later sense. Or being we could put the Scripture does do something with the concept of essence, or a being, that I don't quite know how to how to do the fine shadings between these terms. And I'm not, I'm not trying to get away from the question, I just, I just don't know how I've read tons of material that attempted to try to get to that. And it just, it's really traveling in circles. That what I think all of this refers to, is what we've sort of referred to loosely as the interiority of a human being, or a life of the human being, in essence, in the human being, that is not comprehended by body, or by breathing, that there is there is a part of us made in the image of God that is described with words like this. Now, coming from that, biblically, historically, spirit has, in more recent years been the dominant religious term that is used in ancient times, particularly at the time of the Greek soul, was the predominant term, if you read, for example, the writings of Seneca he used his soul just freely and in his little meditations and discourses. But again, I'm not sure that what Christian means by spirit and what the Greek meant by soul, it'd be very difficult. If there is a difference historically, it is that soul tends to be a bit more connected to Earth, a bit more connected to, to dirt, a bit more this worldly, less apt to look forward into an eternal future, that as this as the word is just used, this one will be used more in terms of everyday life, and hence, we'll use words like Soul music, and we've got a number of ways that that we will use it the airlines, incidentally, still, at least now I think it's giving way just a little but you know, the airlines for years always describe those who were lost as souls, so many souls were lost and space. So I'm using I'm using this one, this is absolutely an arbitrary choice on my part, with with groups of outsiders, because somehow this soul, or this word connects more quickly and more easily, and allows me to get to this in a in a kind of new way, that challenges some of the old categories. And what I found is that that with the religious people, that it really does some of the same thing. If it arouses some confusion, then I think that's part of the reason we use it. I think it is to kind of challenge and awaken some of this language that just lies there and that hasn't gotten much attention. And then the other reason for it, is to hopefully by using a term with which we might not be quite as familiar, that we we We get a greater sense of of a location for the Spirit of God. That that is in a way that touches down at mealtime that touches down with suffering, that touches down in relationship that touches down in all these other areas. It is so easy to use the word spirit in a

way that is so otherworldly. That it just seems like it's it's, it's it's a difficult word to just make really concrete. Anybody want to add anything to that?

05:41

I guess what can you say? So, basically, if you upload the entire concept of spirit and all the essences that they involve, are the same. But as you know, people use terminology. They're only dealing with harps. They're not dealing with the entire embodiment

06:06

of the burqa, and maybe you shouldn't be using an earthly partner for every bar,

06:12

or whatever, that I think that's it. Yeah. Yeah. Is it? Are we is that a place where we're

06:22

can the young soul flavored by the Spirit metaphors? In other words, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, or the spirit of saving for the world? In their interaction in that way? I see a bit of a solution there. If that would be possible,

06:45

that the Spirit of God would so is something that everyone has, okay.

06:52

Interaction with, or leakage with the spirit realm?

06:57

Okay. With the Spirit of God. Okay. Yeah, that that spirit that's and that's a that's that may be about as clear a theological presentation as there is that the soul may be a bit more comprehensive of the sort of body and the earthiness of life, and that the spirit is viewed religiously as a little bit more of the connector between God's Spirit and the total life. Yeah. It's just it's just it's a very difficult thing. And like I say, I've read and seen the articles, and I've, we've had long discussions about it. And it's just, this is very difficult. The thing that I'm certain about is that these words are used to describe a part of the self that is enormously significant to a human life. And that believes that the sort of analysts and observers of society believe that in this country, particularly, that we are suffering from what they call soul loss, that we are more dependent on professional terminology and technology, that we are more dependent upon mechanical technology. Every day, that more and more we are looking for cures for what ails us, outside of ourselves, with a new whole army of therapists, and so forth, that, that, that the country itself, is showing evidences of losing some sort of real personal sense of soul. And that's certainly what I feel, and the travels now that there is an emptiness. And that's another way to describe it. There's an emptiness of heart, an emptiness of interior life, a detachment from interior life that is unparalleled in the history of this country. And so we we work to, because without that the gospel is it's got no way really to connect. And so I view the work that I'm doing right now with outsiders, as sort of sewing and paving the way for this other and larger discussion. There was another question here. Yes, let's go ahead and deal with this one that deals with the souls perspective. It says how, how to mesh the souls

perspective and dealing with people and the absolutes, that my gut tells me need to be addressed. And again, If we're connecting in this conversation, what I'm what I'm suggesting is that no matter how much the absolutes need to be addressed doesn't make any difference. How right that gut feeling is. And I think I have the same appreciation for the absolutes that the author of the question did. The problem is, if nobody wants to have that conversation, do I just sing it out into space? And what we're suggesting is that, at one point, in our own history in this country, the absolutes were a perfectly good space, a good place to start a conversation. It's hard to get into a good old fashioned argument about these things with anyone today. They just nobody will debate anymore. We've got our satchels full of arguments, but nobody seems to be a say, Oh, okay. You know, and that's just, it's just all dismissed. Now, with the soul's perspective, there is a possibility of establishing richer, more respectful and respected relationships with people, that that in which the differences in your life will be great enough that they will sense something in you that they do not feel as a part of their lives, and will then begin to ask for the difference. Now, I must say this, that one of the questions that that that is plaguing that you don't even want to think about is whether or not and I can't answer this, I can only pose it, whether or not the general run of the religious and our fellowship or who's ever fellowship, whether or not there is really a deeply held conviction, that the way we think about and go about our everyday life and our habits, is really different enough to get anybody's attention. It's possible, that we have settled for a level of spirituality, that indeed, impresses no one. And when we stress as hard as we started out, expressing these, and with with concomitant challenges, that it's not enough to hear the words, they won't do it. But whether or not we can take the fruits of the Spirit, for example, and not take them for granted. Whether or not we can take a set of coordinates, whether it's these are, or affect the list a little bit. And make it so deep within our lives, that even we become unconscious that we are that kind of people so that we get past the sort of pretending that we're that. But it is so real, that we have become we're not even aware of that difference ourselves. We have long since gotten past that.

13:47

The Gospel is the power of God. Salvation pretty quick, this way, there's a gospel that changes lives or the gospel of change lives through a lie. Yes, that's right. The gospel has been presented. That's correct. That's correct.

14:08

One of the problems that, for example, I've got in the communications that I do is I'm always very vulnerable. And I'm always in grave danger of sort of being wiped out by a very aggressive religious person. Because they do not hear the language with which they're familiar. And that did not hear me go the whole way. You know, I don't go out to the field, and clear the brush, plow the field hair or the field, plant the seed and harvest it in one night. You know, I just I don't know how to do that in this society. And so I'm always in danger and vulnerable that there's somebody standing in the wings, they'll hear a presentation of mine and will not recognize the redemptive message that is within that presentation, they won't even recognize it. Because it is not dressed in their language, they don't even recognize. I shall never forget giving a presentation one night to a religious audience, in which by actual count on the tape, there were like 53 passages of Scripture that had been quoted. But for some reason, I did not reference and was accosted at the door, about a totally non biblical message. didn't recognize any of those passages, but simply didn't hear sort of book chapter and verse. And, and yet, in Scripture, you've got that use of Scripture. Now, it's just, we didn't have the chapters and verses until what year

1200 or 1500, even the site, but it's a this is a, this is a difficult thing. And it is, and I'm acknowledging it, and I'm I want to pay total respect to it. This is a very difficult age that we're in. And this is an attempt to address it, as honestly, as I know how, but I wouldn't tell you for a second, that this wouldn't bring down a lot of criticism. I believe in it, I see its merits. And I'll die with it. I believe in it that much. And so I'm, I'm there for the duration. And we'd like to see others, at least give it a fair hearing. Because I do think that we're in some trouble. Okay. There was another one on joy, finding joy in all circumstances, and whether or not there was a danger and in the way that I presented joy, that there would be a sort of complacency or a facade of joy, in which in all circumstances, you pretend that you have the joy, but that that joy is not real. And that's a very, very valid point to raise. And there is no way and we just simply didn't go with it. Usually, I put Joy slash tragedy. Because I think the way to genuine joy is through the path of suffering, and pain and tragedy. And there is nothing that is uglier than a Christian person who goes into a place where there's been real loss or real suffering, and smiles and says, everything is wonderful, you know, and plaster sit over when the appropriate thing would be to go in and sit down and weep with the people. And so those who sort of flagged that are absolutely correct, that any sort of pretended joy, any facade of joy, is you may as well forget it. It'll be spotted that quickly and will mean nothing. We're talking about getting to something, as we said a moment ago, that is so deep within us. And maybe we should address how that happens in a moment. But it's so deep within us that we are no longer even conscious that it's there. And I think that's what you have in Matthew 25. I think in Matthew 25, you've got one group on the right, you've got another group on the left. Those who are admitted. Those who are denied entrusts entrance, says, Lord, when did we see you this way? If we had known it was you, we would have ministered to you? That's not so surprising. What's really surprising is when those who are granted entrance into heaven came and said, Lord, when did we see you that way? When did we do that? That's that's when it reaches that level of sort of unconsciousness to where you're no longer acting simply with a label. But when it's become so much a part of your life, that you don't even know that you're doing it. That's the best Christianity and the whole world. Do you have any suggestions on how we combine life and so this list is not a list that can be taken, for example, these coordinates. They're not something that can be taken and just done tomorrow, I'm going to do that. Rather, these are things that are to be lived with. These are things that are to be reflected upon. And I think that we're, it's so easy for us to be disposed to sort of a quicker solution, we've got a major problem and major problems usually don't respond to quick solutions, this is going to take some time. And it's going to take some thought, but it is not absolutely impossible to address it. And I think that if, if I live with this, for example, I have these things before me every day. And have for a long, long time. I can't say today that I'm guided very well. But these coordinates, I will say that these are the stars in my sky, and that I try to navigate my life by these. And I fill in all the fruits of the Spirit on the skeleton, because those are the things that fuel those coordinates. But I don't go out in a day, and I don't make a trip, and I don't get before audiences unclear, unconfident and unsure. I get before audiences today, with real certainty, and real confidence and real assurance, I believe with all of my heart. And that belief is as genuine as my skin is real. And when I can't do it that way, I will flag it and tell the audience that I don't know about this, or that I can't bring my full heart to it. I want to communicate only with my full heart. Because that's what Jesus ought to have. Is that kind of a communicator. Whew, righteous life and soul material. Mike, did you write the ones I did today? I do have people that that are working on this one person in particular in New York, that I've collaborated with a lot of years, and who is very skilled and very talented in areas like this. And we can sit down and have conversations and bad ideas. And he can go off and just put it down and sharp little things so that

we've got a truly collaborative effort. And without people like that, why there wouldn't be enough hours in the day to do what I do. There's another one here, Joshua, speaks of Joshua telling those who committed were committed who had just committed to serving God that they were not able to do so. Because God's holy and just nature, they were serving foreign gods, unless they threw away the foreign gods, they could not serve the true God. What are the foreign gods, the 90s, that may be keeping us from serving the true in the living God? Probably if we knew all the gods that they were serving, we've probably got everything that those gods represent by different names. I think one of the gods today certainly must be named success.

24:00

I just think that this is a society that is totally drunk on success. And I would even dare to just venture a little slight criticism of very popular book on Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. There's a lot of really good stuff in that book. But I don't know about that title. God has not made effectiveness, a requirement for human life. Now in business, I understand. But now we're getting over into families and homes. And I think God has made effectiveness, a requirement. If effectiveness is a requirement, then there's an awful lot of people that's going to be hopeless. One of the great things about the gospel is that you can be saved even if you aren't very effective. That's what That's what grace is so powerful. And what it's it's so much about. Are there any other any other questions? I don't I think I've about got these. Okay.

25:18

Nope. Yeah, this is good. I'm really glad you raised this one. Well, that's yeah.

25:30

All stories are consequential.

25:34

Yeah. The question is love that. That love is not. It's not in that list. It's not on it as a word. There are several reasons for that. One of the reasons is that love in this society is a word that is just so without content. Yeah. That it's just a it's a difficult word really to connect with. And what I chose, really through giving, that's where I would address it, with audiences who are on the outside, that at the heart of giving, is this unconditional sort of love, or agape love. Non selfish? Yeah. I think the absence of it always gives an opportunity, because people, the non believing crowd were raised the question. And it gives a way to use the word intentionally as a way of just, instead of just throwing it out when

26:44

you say not believe in

26:49

me more agnostic, or more, more practical, instead of philosophical atheism, people who are sort of generally living as if there's no God, or people who are not necessarily connected with anything that's, that's really spiritual. Some would be open to the possibility

27:13

of use this concept. So to start that connection, it's very difficult

27:21

to talk to somebody, the biggest challenge was having to talk to us and second.

27:32

That's a big question. Yeah. I don't allow the differences to make a difference. I just absorb anything that anybody has to say about these holy, eternal verities. And we just we shovel, we just put them aside and I put them over here, and we'll get to that and put them there, and stay with the real connectors. And so far, if the if the real connect, if I connect humanly in a genuine way, then if there is any possibility to introduce the divine, I'll have that opportunity. The great difficulty is if I begin with the divine, I'm liable to get to loggerheads real quickly. And I think that's surely part of the explanation for the incarnation. And for Jesus, being very careful about his identity. I'm very, very cautious in the marketplace, with my identity. People have to really pull out of me exactly where I'm coming from. But because again, you get target, you get labeled. And it's just, it's just over.

29:03

Now, this is you're talking about preparing a seminar, is that right? So you offered to business people and others, they come they pay to, to come for this kind of training and awareness of the soul.

29:16

Yes. Yeah. Or will you we're giving it we're free. We give it to them free. Now, but But nonetheless, that's, that's what it is.

29:28

Start off with the premise of the soul says, Are you dealing with people who

29:32

I give them a piece, an assumption that it exists? And I'll do they find it fascinating. You know, they will rarely leave. They'll find it fascinating. And and then it goes from fascination sometimes to real intrigue, because I give them ways to get on board, even if they're very very skeptical or if they're agnostic, just in practical everyday was I'll go back to the death of my mother. And and I will talk about the difficulty of death being the end. And I will just I'll let I let it hang and let them catch the full force. And then at some point during the presentation, we'll I'll usually say, this is where this is my faith. Now, I'm not requiring that of you right now. But so that you will be clear what my frame of reference is, this is what I believe. I believe there's a continuing center of consciousness survives death period. And then I might even get to after death, sort of the after death experiences, you know, I've, I've had some personal experience with some mighty odd little situations, he know when you get ready to sort of depart. And I might even give them a bit of that personal experience, then put all kinds of disclaimers on it to get them on board. This is really challenging for me, and I appreciate your patience today. And I hope that there have been things here that you can use and that you can accommodate into your own spiritual walk. The aim of all of it is to make a strong from the bottom up, not just strong in our head, and not just strong by taking a set of propositions and saying, I'm going to be that, but really to let it build every single day and make

your heart and life and mind and soul and spirit. Something that's really real and really genuine, because that will really make a difference in our associates.