

Did Jesus Go to Hell? The Soul

Acts 2:14-36

Introduction: What Is The Soul?

Remember, we're studying the doctrine of Jesus going to hell after He died on the cross. Is this a true statement? Did the soul of Jesus go to hell? You can go to pastors all over this world and some will say yes and some will say no. Some will even call it heresy.

""**Acts 2:27**

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.""

""**Acts 2:31**

He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.""

Did the soul of Jesus Christ go to the fiery hell as described in the Bible? That verse says, "That his soul was not left in hell." This speaks of the soul of Jesus Christ. That means we need to know what this is speaking of here in the Bible. What is the soul of Jesus Christ that was not left in hell?

The soul is a **core doctrine**, and you'd better know what it is, because one day **your soul will stand before God**.

We preach salvation of the soul. We preach about losing your soul. But most Christians couldn't give a Bible definition of the soul if their life depended on it. The soul is not a poetic concept—it is a core doctrine, and you'd better know what it is, because one day your soul will stand before God.

""**Mark 8:36-37**

For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? 37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?""

We open the Word of God and ask:

What is the soul? We're going to study this in detail right now.

Biblical Usage of the Words "Soul" and "Souls" in the KJV

The word soul and souls is in the Bible hundreds of times so it's important to understand.

How Many Times?

- The word “**soul**” appears **459 times** in the King James Bible.
- The word “**souls**” appears **78 times** in the King James Bible.
- That’s a total of **537** occurrences.

This is a major Bible theme—far more than words like *grace*, *baptism*, or *repentance*. God talks about the soul **constantly**, and we should too.

1. The Soul Is The Person

The soul is sometimes used to mean the **whole person**—a living being, a human life. This is important to understand because this can definition can affect major doctrines in the Bible.

Some people might say that "his soul was not left in hell" meant his entire person was not left suffering, as an example.

But listen, hell, at this time, is a spiritual place. A soul, not the entire person, goes to hell when there is sin reckoned to that soul. Ezekiel 18:4 says: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But, within the Bible, there are Scriptures that speak of a soul as a person. The soul is the person.

""**Genesis 46:26**

All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six.""

""**Acts 2:41**

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.""

So, in the same chapter as Acts 2:31, just 10 verses later, you see three thousand souls being saved. If my soul is saved, you can say that Josh is saved and that would be a true statement. My soul is Josh. My soul is who I am.

When the Bible counts souls, it's counting people. Your soul is you.

We know that the soul of Jesus was not left in hell. We know that His body didn't go to hell. But some people will attempt to say that the word hell there means grave. They are saying that "his soul was not left in hell" means his body wasn't left in the grave or the tomb. But was risen from the dead.

But, a dead body is never described as a soul. The first use of the word soul in the entire Bible helps with this:

""**Genesis 2:7**

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.""

Notice the words exactly. "Breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a LIVING SOUL." In the Bible, it's always living people that are called souls. Dead bodies are called bodies and never called souls within the Bible.

""**Genesis 35:18**

And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin.""

Her soul was in departing. This means the soul leaves or departs the body at death. A dead body is not called a soul therefore "His soul was not left in hell" can't mean the dead body of Jesus Christ in the tomb.

In a saved person, the soul lives on after death of the body.

I want you to see how the Bible clearly defines the doctrine of the soul for us. The soul is the inner man—the real, living person.

""**1 Kings 17:21-22**

And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. 22 And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.""

The spirit and soul are closely intertwined.

""**Luke 8:54-55**

And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. 55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.""

At death, the spirit and soul depart the body. That means, for sure, that a dead body is not called a soul. There is not one example of that within the Bible.

2. The Soul Is The Inner Man

The **soul is the seat of your identity**—your innermost self. It's the **real you** behind the body and beyond the mind. It's where your deepest thoughts, affections, and decisions dwell. The soul is not just your feelings—it's the **core of your consciousness**: what you love, what you choose, what you grieve, and what you hope for.

This is why the Bible often uses "soul" when speaking of a person's very life or essence.

""**Psalm 42:5**

Why art thou cast down, O my **soul**? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.""

David isn't just having a bad day—his **inner man is shaken**. The soul gets cast down when it loses sight of truth. Yet notice what he does: he **preaches to his own soul**. Why? Because your soul is **capable of hearing, hoping, and choosing**. That's not emotion—it's volition. It's faith rising up in the midst of despair.

""**Deuteronomy 6:5**

And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy **soul**, and with all thy might.""

This command reveals how central the soul is to a true relationship with God. He doesn't just want your **obedience**—He wants your **affections**, your **intentions**, and your **desires**. The soul is where real **worship** happens. It's where love becomes more than a word and turns into a way of life.

""**Psalm 103:1**

Bless the LORD, O my **soul**: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.""

The soul is called to worship. It can **praise or rebel, believe or doubt, love or harden**. And what happens in the soul shapes the rest of your life. The body follows the soul. The mouth speaks from the soul. The mind serves what the soul desires. That's why when someone is saved, it's the **soul** that gets saved first—the very person of who they are.

""**Luke 1:46-47**

And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.""

Mary's soul **magnified**, meaning her inner man enlarged the glory of God. Her spirit **rejoiced**, empowered by the life within. Again, soul and spirit are distinct, yet beautifully intertwined. One praises, the other rejoices. One chooses, the other lives.

So understand this: **your soul is your spiritual battleground**. It can hunger and thirst after righteousness—or lust after the world. It can be restored (Psalm 23:3), or it can be destroyed (Matthew 10:28). This is why David prayed:

""**Psalm 139:23-24**

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my **thoughts**: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.""

The soul is not just your feelings—it's the **place where God deals with you**, where eternity is decided, where repentance begins, and where faith takes root. That's why Jesus said:

""**Matthew 11:29**

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your **souls**.""

Only Jesus can give **soul-rest**—not rest from work, but rest from **weariness, sin, and striving**. He speaks not to your schedule but to your soul.

This is the inner man. This is the soul. And **this is who God wants to save, sanctify, and strengthen** for His glory.

3. The Soul Is Distinct From Body And Spirit

The Bible shows man as a **three-part being**—body, soul, and spirit.

""**1 Thessalonians 5:23**

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.""

""**Hebrews 4:12**

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.""

Your body is flesh. Your spirit is the breath of life. Your soul is who you are—the eternal identity and inner being that feels, thinks, and chooses.

When a soul is saved, the spirit or life never separates so the soul lives forever with that same spirit of life. In an unsaved person, at death, the spirit separates from the soul and the soul goes to hell. A spirit always returns to the Father in heaven who gave it.

""**Ecclesiastes 12:7**

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.""

The spirit is the life. "The body without the spirit is dead." Spirit and soul are closely intertwined, but they are not the same. Your body is the physical part of you. The spirit and soul cannot be seen with human eyes.

4. The Soul Is Immortal

The soul doesn't disappear at death. It goes somewhere.

""**Matthew 10:28**

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.""

""**Revelation 6:9**

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:""

Your body dies, but your soul lives on, in a way—either in Heaven or in Hell. Their bodies were killed but their souls lived on in heaven.

A soul is dead in hell but still conscious. A soul is alive in heaven and still conscious.

""**Luke 16:22-24**

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.""

A soul is considered dead in hell but is still conscious. The spirit or the life has been separated from the soul. How does that work exactly? I don't know. But an unsaved soul loses its life in hell and is in torment.

5. Jesus Had A Soul

The Lord Jesus, though fully God, had a **human soul**—proving it's not just poetry. It's real.

""**Isaiah 53:10**

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.""

The Bible says thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. This could mean the person Jesus is the offering for sin, and we know that He is OR it could mean that His soul went to hell as an offering for sin. We will look at this in more detail in the future.

""**Matthew 26:38**

Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.""

This is Jesus speaking in the Garden of Gethsemane. He says, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful."

""**Acts 2:31**

He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.""

If Jesus had a soul, and His soul suffered and was sacrificed, then you can't brush this off as just emotion or metaphor. The soul is serious.

But, even before the cross, in Gethsemane, his soul was exceeding sorrowful. But I don't believe this is called his soul in hell. And I don't believe the agony of the cross is referred to as his soul being in hell, though.

Jesus suffered greatly before the cross and while on the cross, but the Bible never refers to this being hell for Jesus. But the Bible clearly says the soul of Jesus was not left in hell.

Now, here's the question. What happened to the soul of Jesus in hell? This is where we can't add to the word of God. That's what this series is going to answer. We're going to study this in detail.

6. False Definitions Of Soul To Reject

The soul is **not just the spirit**.

""**Hebrews 4:12**

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.""

Obviously, the soul is not just the spirit.

The soul is not your brain. Some people confuse the soul with the brain—as if your thoughts and feelings are just the result of neurons firing. But when your body dies, your brain decays in the grave and returns to dust like every other organ. Yet your soul keeps on living. Why? Because the soul is not material. It's not chemical. It's spiritual.

You are more than a body with a brain—you are a soul made in the image of God. Your soul can love, sorrow, choose, and worship. Your soul will stand before God long after your brain is dust in the casket.

The soul is **not poetic language**. God uses the word "soul" to describe real, eternal substance—not symbolism. It's not just flowery language the Bible uses to describe feelings. God doesn't deal in metaphors when it comes to eternity.

When God says a soul will be lost, He's not speaking in riddles—He means that real, conscious, eternal part of a person will be cast into Hell.

The Bible says, *'The soul that sinneth, it shall die'*—not the poem, not the metaphor, but the person. And if that's not enough, God's own soul is spoken of in Scripture:

"My soul shall have no pleasure in him..." (Hebrews 10:38)

"My soul abhorred them..." (Zechariah 11:8)

Are we to believe God's soul is just poetic too? No sir. The soul is real, and it is eternal. And one day, **your soul** will stand before God. The only question is—will it be saved?"

Conclusion: What Is The Soul?

The soul is **you**. It's your **person**. Your **will**. Your **emotions**. Your **eternal identity**.

It can love, hate, be troubled, be saved, or be lost.

And once you die, your soul will go to **Heaven** or **Hell—forever**.

CALL TO ACTION

""Hebrews 10:39

But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.""

If you're saved, your soul is already secure. But how many others are walking around—rich, powerful, famous—**yet their soul is lost?**

Let's go win some souls.

Let's feed our souls with the Word.

And let's preach the truth about what the soul really is.

We're going to keep digging deeper and deeper into the statement of the soul of Jesus not being left in hell. Let's take a close look at the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. All of this is of great importance. We ask for God to give us wisdom, not add to the word of God, and not take away from the word of God. Holy Spirit, please help us.

Let's pray.