

IN GOD WE LIVE, MOVE AND HAVE BEING



DEVOTIONAL
YOUR SOUL

By Ann Herbert

Day of Wonder

In God We Live, Move and Have Being

Your soul is alive and well!

Have you ever wondered what is meant by your 'soul'? There are different responses to this concept. Here, your soul refers to the part of you which relates deeply with the divine.

I will never forget the day I first saw my eldest child. I was in the first trimester of my pregnancy and having an ultrasound to check all was going well. When I looked at the monitor, I encountered the magnificence of her tiny life. I watched her perfectly formed arms and legs and thought she looked exquisite.

It was such a special moment, reminding me of Psalm 139:13-16:

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb ... You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book.³

As I drove home following the ultrasound, I sang in celebration of the newly conceived soul forming within me – so precious to me, and so precious to the Creator God who formed us both. At the top of my voice, I kept repeating,

*Oh Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder,
consider all the works thy hands have made ...
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee,
How great Thou art ...*

In the Bible, the Hebrew word most often used to describe the soul is '*nephesh*,' a word that depicts human existence and its relationship with the divine⁴. The Psalms draw attention to our souls as being where we experience emotion and the yearning for deep and meaningful connection with God. It is integral to connecting our physical life and spiritual experience.

Fulfillment for your Soul

When Paul went to Athens, he discovered a statue to the 'unknown God'. He told the Athenians that this God is the Creator of all things and gives life and breath to all people. Importantly, *God has done all this, so that we will look for him and reach out and find him*, though he is not far from each one of us. *For in him we live and move and have our being* (Acts 17:22-28).

Jesus taught that our soul only finds true fulfillment when we put our life into God's care; when we trust and love him with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. Jesus warned against prioritising material wealth over

³ From *The New Living Translation*

⁴ <https://divinenarratives.org/the-soul-in-biblical-scripture-definitions-roles-and-significance/>



spiritual richness. He warned against being so preoccupied with *getting* that we can't respond to God's *giving*.

In Matthew 6:22-34 Jesus makes the choice clear for each of us:

*Your eyes are windows into your body. If you open your eyes wide in wonder and belief, your body fills up with light ... Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out ... God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes.*⁵

PRAY

Creator God, thank You that my life is precious to You. Sometimes, I need reminding that You have always loved and cared for me, and You always will. May I open my soul to the wonder of Your Presence in my life. Thank You, that it is in You I live and move and have my being. Amen.

REFLECT

- When you look in the mirror, who do you see? Do you see someone whose soul—the whole of who you are—has been and always will be precious to God?
- What kind of things preoccupy your thoughts? Do you spend a lot of time worrying about having enough money, or wishing you had a different body image? Ask Jesus how you should respond to these questions.

RESPOND

1. Calm your breathing, close your eyes and imagine yourself as a vessel into which the Breath of God flows. The holy breath of life.
2. As you breathe in, imagine the Holy Spirit flow in and around your body, energising you. In this moment, you are filled and enveloped by God, who loves you.
3. As you breathe out, think about the Holy Spirit moving out from you as you connect with the people you spend time with today.
4. As you go through the day, at any time and any place, draw yourself back to God's presence as you focus on your breath. Use the words '*In him we live and move and have our being.*'
5. Remind yourself that God is closer than the air you breathe.

FOR DEEPER REFLECTION

- Acts 17:22-28 (God created the universe and in him we have life)
- Ezekiel 18:4 (The souls of all people belong to God)
- Isaiah 43:1 (God calls his children by name and they belong to him)
- Matthew 6:19-34 (Open your eyes wide in wonder and belief)

⁵ From *The Message* translation

