**FUNCTIONAL TICHOTOMY (DENVER 1ST)**

Functional trichotomy is a term that I first heard in a discipleship program from Denver First Church of the Nazarene, when Don Wellman was the Lead Pastor. It basically means that we are a “dichotomy” in terms of the “flesh” and the “spirit” to use Romans 8 as an example, but that in between the two lies our “soul”. The creation story in Genesis 2:7 tells us, ***“Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living person (literally soul.)*** The idea of trichotomy is that while we are of this earth in our body, and of eternity in our spirit, we have this soul of mind, emotion, and will that in some sense partakes of both body and spirit.

The file “functional trichotomy 002” that I have sent with this mailing is a picture of how the discipleship program viewed this. If you can picture the black part of the picture as a “cone” that incases the person in this earthly life—the body that we live in as long as we are on this earth—and the soul of mind, emotion, and will in the center of the cone, and the heart, or spirit at the other end of the cone, you get the idea that it is of huge importance whether our mind, emotion and spirit is focused on this earth and the flesh, or on eternity and the spirit.

Jesus illustrates this with his conversation at the well with the Samaritan woman. He is not caught up in this world—where we worship, etc.—but with the spirit of our lives and worshiping God in spirit and truth….

**John 4:20-24 *“Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and yet you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one must worship.” Jesus said to her, ‘Believe Me, woman, that a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, because salvation is from the Jews. But a time is coming, and even now has arrived, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”***

The purpose of all this is that we should only **glance** at the things of this world, but **gaze** at eternity. Either this world will damage our view of God and eternity, or our view of God and eternity will cause us to have a different view of this world.

I don’t think Rosemead School of Psychology is now or was aware of this teaching, but it is interesting that they did develop an illustration which is very similar (triangles instead of circles). They added one additional thought you might want to consider, considering the soul. They divided each of the circles of mind, emotion, and will into two parts: the conscious mind and the subconscious mind, the conscious will and the subconscious will, the conscious emotions and the subconscious emotions.

No picture or drawing or understanding is perfect, but I hope this presentation of functional trichotomy helps you understand why our souls need to be cleansed by the Holy Spirit so that our minds, emotions and will can be focused on eternity rather than temporal matters. Only then will the separation God wants for us be accomplished (II Corinthians 6r:14-7:1) and will the pursuit of holiness be ours to enjoy throughout our time one earth here—and in heaven!