

# The Dynamics of the 3-Dimensional Aspects of Human Nature

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## The Path to Enlightenment

It is here proposed that we look at the makeup of Man as covering three-dimensional parts of our nature – biological, psychological and spiritual – each is impacting on the states of the others and each is determined by different sets of factors. It is universally recognized and accepted that when our health (biological) is poor it would affect the way we behave (psychological) and when we feel stressed and depressed (psychological) it affects our health (biological); and when the two of these (biological and psychological) are imbalanced they affect our spiritual state, and in turn when our spirit is high with the emotions of happiness and love and in a state of peace, within limitations, then the health (biological) and our psychological state can be improved. These three forces thus interact with each other giving us our ‘psych’, ‘self’, or ‘soul’ – depending on the kind of discourse – psychological, philosophical, or religious. The delineation into these three realms of understanding of human nature has become clear and it makes us realize and aware of the three forces that bind us.

Man’s state of being is influenced by these three forces – our **biological state** which is determined by the biological (and physiological) conditions of our body, including the brain (predisposed by our genetic makeup) and it obeys the physical laws of nature; the **psychological state** which has an individual and a social component by which our personality and character are shaped; and the **spiritual state** which has no concrete identifiable source but nevertheless present at birth, most significantly comes into play in time of crisis and at a later stage of our lives. The interaction of our personality with our value systems as part of our spiritual growth gives rise to our character and in turn affects our ‘psych’, ‘self’ or ‘soul’, modifying it.

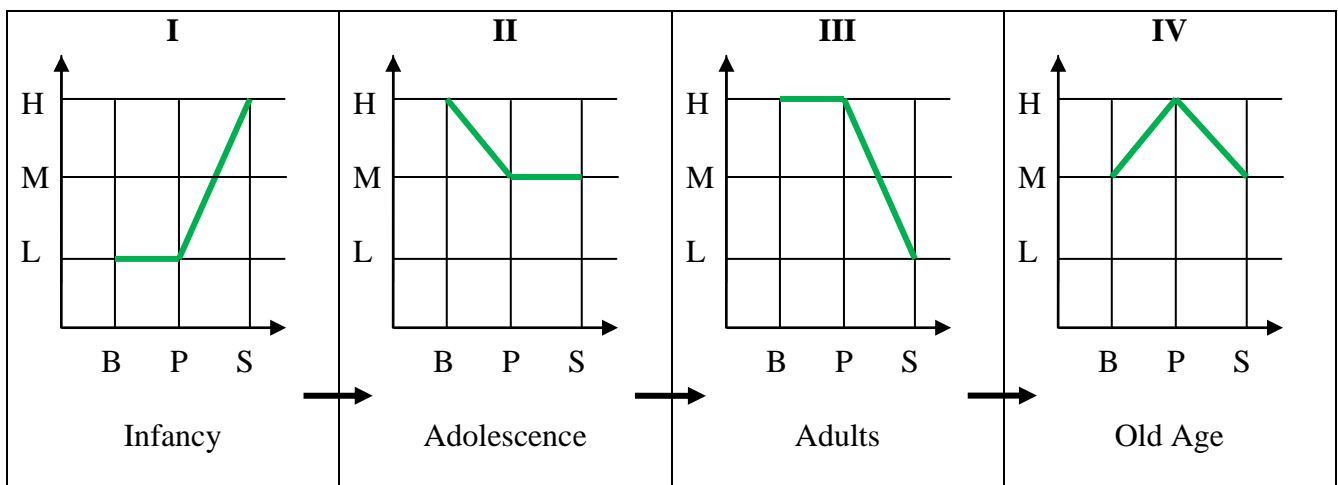
The effects of our biological and psychological conditions occupy and overwhelm our lives and that is why this aspect of our being occupies centre-stage in our investigation, with the results that many believe that is all we are. Because of the overwhelming forces of our biological and psychological makeup we have lost touch with our spiritual nature; and not knowing the priority of these forces in terms of influences and importance it is very difficult for anyone to overcome their effects to achieve ‘nirvana’, or to be ‘like Jesus’ or any other heighten spiritual states, since at a human level there is still doubt about our spiritual nature. Some even contend the existence of our spiritual nature which is less of a demand and least understood while we live on earth, independent of our biological and psychological states, much of which have no source of satisfaction in the physical sense, but the above presentations (earlier chapters) hopefully have successfully addressed some of these contentions. The spiritual part of our being is as real as our biological and psychological makeup and it is only through this that the meaning of life can be sought, because **our biological and psychological natures terminate with death and its meaning dies with it**. In our quest for our spiritual self we are burdened by our biology and psychology, very often incorporating these as part of our humanity to mirror the ‘image of God’ in us, forgetting that God is only spiritual, who by definition does not have our biological and psychological natures and therefore not affected by them.

The spiritual state is universal and can be conceptualized as an independent entity from the biological and psychological states, although in our present state of existence we cannot help but to be shaped by our biology and psychology - it is an impossible task for the spiritual state to achieve total independence from them. These three forces may be independent from each other as entities in themselves, but are being affected by each in varying degree. In today’s world of materialism our biology may or may not affect our psychological and spiritual states to the same extent as of old. We are more comfortable, better fed, better entertained, and there are many other conveniences, but do

these things enhance our psychological and spiritual wellbeing? In fact living in an urban environment, with all these conveniences, creates more stress, detrimentally impacting on our psychological state. In a poor community, the people suffer biologically because they are more biologically deprived, but they may be less stressful and psychologically more balanced than those who live in an urban society. They may even be more spiritually ‘healthy’ than those who have all the luxuries of life. Biologically people living in an urban society may be better off, but psychologically and spiritually they may be worse off. Thus from our vantage position we can then understand the ‘justice’ in terms of the spiritual state quite apart from the biological and psychological conditions.

As humans these three aspects of our nature are present with us throughout life, but their dominance is dependent upon the stages of our development in our life span. From the developmental viewpoint, the biological conditions have the greatest impact on how we behave when we are growing up from infancy to adolescence; the psychosocial conditions will have the greatest influence in our adulthood when we attempt to find a place in society and our role in it; and the spiritual part of us seems to emerge dominant for some people when they mature and reflect on the meaning of life, after having passed through the first two stages. It is now easier to understanding why the young people are more preoccupied with looking good, demonstrating their physical prowess, indulging in pleasures of the flesh like eating, looking good, sexually more active and for some, finding physical pleasures indulging in sports and drugs. As they enter into working life, they are faced with all the psychological problems that come with competition and the pursuit of power, wealth, and career advancement. Through this process there are layers of psychological defenses that build up as a way ‘to succeed’ and to express our biological desires, making it extremely difficult for us to connect to our spiritual nature especially in the face of overcoming the taboos about sin. Thus the larger part of our lives is dominated by our biological and psychological forces at work. Towards the retirement years, there will come a time when the biological nature has less physical influence because of its deterioration, the person may be psychologically spent and exhausted, then the spiritual part of our being starts to emerge stronger and poses a challenge, a challenge to find the meaning of life amidst the avalanche of our biological and psychological baggage which we acquired through the process of life experiences.

There are four distinct stages of dominance corresponding to the different stages of our life in terms of the influences and strengths of our biological (B), psychological (P) and spiritual (S) forces at work, giving rise to the following 4 BSP profiles, which can be illustrated in a three point scales Low (L), Moderate (M) and High (H), thus:

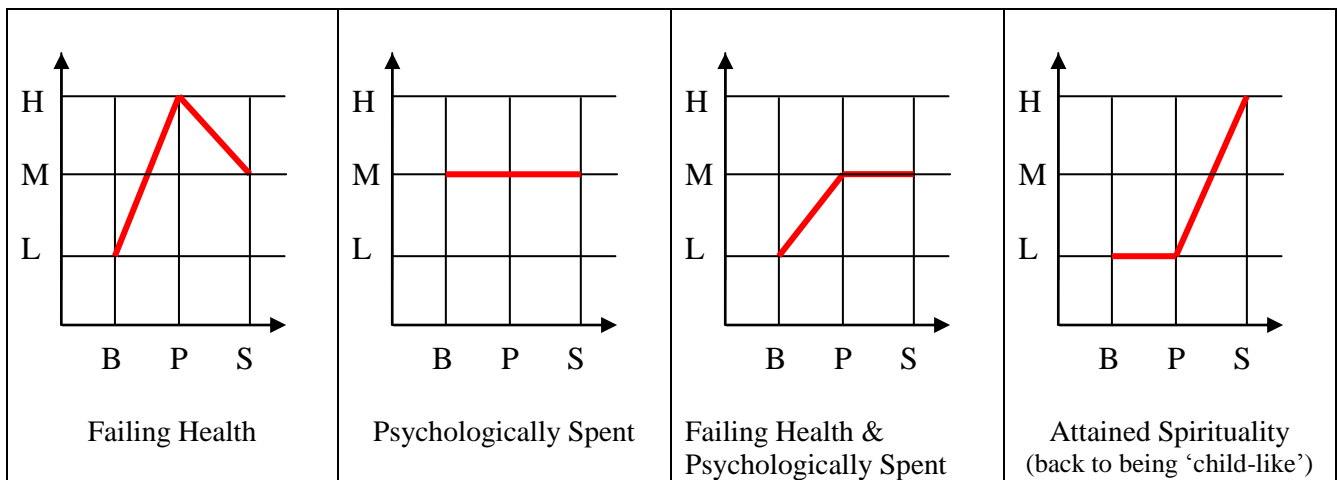


Lead To  
The Path to Enlightenment (see chapter 31)

Our Creator, in His infinite wisdom has given everyone the space and time to choose in uniting with Him through our awareness of our spiritual nature – the choice is ours and the concept of ‘free will’ is more pertinent in this respect. It is a freedom of realization where no derivative can bind us, instead of conceiving it as freedom to act as individuals in whatever ways we like. These stages should be seen as a continuum in terms of their dominance in a normal life span in majority of cases and not to be considered discreet in themselves, operational at the exclusion of the others, although the order of dominance may be re-prioritized depending on individual’s life experiences and the revelations they bring. The spiritual aspect of our nature may dominate early in our developmental stages for some individuals as for a few who are actively pursuing and committed to the quest for the meaning of life earlier.

In the previous chapter on ‘understanding human nature’ (chapter 13 with excerpts as above) we have presented the different stages of development of the biological, psychological and spiritual states, where our spirituality was at the highest point and the biological and psychological states were at the lowest influence when we were born, up to the stage of infancy. We must therefore have to return near to the state of being ‘child-like’ in order to satisfy the requirement for entry into God’s kingdom. At the dawn of the age during the degenerative years, we have a choice to choose to strengthen our spiritual state, or allow the degenerative aspects of the biological and psychological to take their course and depending on the use of the ‘free will’ will results in the restructuring of the following BPS profiles at the point of death:

(Continue from Chapter 13)



Which one do you choose in the process of ‘becoming’? There are many who failed to pursue the ‘path for enlightenment’ or undergo a process of ‘becoming’ and remain at stage III or IV of the corresponding BPS profile in the normal maturation process (see previous diagrams), or variations of these.

The universal path to enlightenment is to focus on developing the spiritual part of our nature and that is to return to the state of our propensity to love as we were first born to do. Jesus has stated very

clearly that unless we become like little children we cannot enter into His Father's Kingdom. He said (Matthew 18:3-5): **“Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me.”** Also in Matthew 19:14-15: **“Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”** See also Mark 9:33-37; 10:13-16 and Luke 9:46-48.

To be like children is not to be child-like in our biological and psychological states but only in the spiritual sense. When Nicodemus asked Jesus what He meant by being born again in order to enter the Father's Kingdom (John 3:1-21) Jesus gave the following discourse:

**“Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. He came to Jesus at night and said to him, ‘Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you are doing unless God is with him.’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.’ Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can a person once grown old be born again? Surely he cannot re-enter his mother's womb and be born again, can he?’ Jesus answered, ‘Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and spirit. What is born of flesh is flesh and what is born of spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I told you, ‘You must be born from above’. The wind blows where it wills, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes, so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.’ Nicodemus answered and said to Him, ‘How can this happen?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘You are the teacher of Israel and you do not understand this? Amen, amen, I say to you, we speak of what we know and we testify to what we have seen, but you people do not accept our testimony. If I tell you about earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has gone up to heaven except the one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life; for God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through Him. Whoever believes in Him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because He has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.’”**

Thus one has to be reborn again through the spirit, to do God's works in abiding to the truth of Christ's teaching that enlightenment can be obtained. To interpret this in the universal sense, to be reborn in the spirit (**‘born from above’**) one must follow the **‘light’** that **‘came into the world’** and **‘whoever lives the truth comes to the light,....’**, the truth being what He personifies (and not directed at Himself as an egocentric entity); and **‘...so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God’** to be doing God's work, as **‘The wind blows where it wills, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes, so it is with everyone who is born of the spirit.’**, thus for those who live the truth God's wind will blow for those who are born of the spirit. Jesus said that He came from heaven and this means that He knows what the spiritual requirement for entry into His Father's Kingdom is. He came as the **‘Son of Man’**, thus successfully interfaced with humankind in the biological and psychological platforms to preach the spiritual truths that are universals, but recognizing the **‘fallen nature’** as caused by our biological and psychological natures thus **‘...the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because**

**their works were evil'** (evil in the sense that we are overwhelmed by our biological and psychological desires at the expense of damaging our spiritual state). To embrace the truths nevertheless requires the biological and psychological manifestations of living the truth through being reborn by the symbolic representation of water that should signify the reborn of the spirit in the context of the Jewish culture ("**What is born of flesh is flesh....**"). Ultimately it is the reborn of the spirit through 'baptism of fire' ("**...and what is born of spirit is spirit.**"), internally overcoming the evils represented by our 'fallen nature' that counts. The 'light' is represented by our 'love of neighbors' which is spiritual and the 'darkness' is represented by our 'fallen nature' which is biological and psychological in nature. Thus the truth, interpreted from the spiritual perspective with the understanding of human nature from our vantage position, is for us to return to our spiritual state in which we are created in God's image and when this happens the 'wind will blow' in whichever circumstances and talents we are endowed to be doing God's works. **Thus the path to enlightenment is to return to being 'child-like', a state of love in which we were born, through a psychological process of 'becoming', eventually to love God through love of Jesus or, in the absence of knowing Jesus, the love of neighbors by doing God's work upon the talents and circumstances one is placed and to abide by 'nature in the order of things'.**

The God that Jesus personifies is not a judgmental God, nor one that is egocentric in character that draws everything onto Himself as a condition of salvation '**..for God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through Him**'. To be child-like in the spiritual sense does not require one to understand why he or she simply loves, or that he or she must acknowledge Jesus as the savior. To 'be saved through Him' refers to what He personifies of the truths that He had revealed and the truth is found in the spiritual dimension of our nature. It is not the intellectual or cognitive component of understanding He was referring to, thus it is not the theological understanding and practices that count. **His statements must be interpreted as statements of truth rather than statements of condition.** Realizing the biological and psychological forces at work He has to use Himself as personifying those virtues and representation of the 'light' in order for Man to relate to the spiritual messages that He preached, thus '**For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life.**' And '**...whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.**', emphasizing only for **those who live the truth.**

The problem in seeking out the path to enlightenment as adults when we traversed through life experiences where our propensity to love has been subjugated by our biological and psychological natures at work is to find the 'Way', to return to that state of spiritual love that we were created when we were 'child-like', and there are many ways that have been practised by many religions and ethical philosophies of the world. The path to enlightenment is therefore universal, but the greatest path for all adults is to accept and realize that the Creator or the Higher Being has now come in the person of Jesus Christ, who has dwelt among us so that we can at once understand what spiritual love is all about and to be able to relate to the Creator, the Ground of Love, directly through Him.

As analyzed before, the greatest of spiritual love as far as humans are concerned can only be established through the virtues of the object of love and Jesus' is the greatest of all virtuous human being that ever walked upon this earth. To learn **to love Jesus** is to understand the great love that He personifies and be able to successfully establish a love relationship with the Creator through this pathway. This pathway is therefore the greatest enlightenment of all the other enlightenments pursued by the other religious and philosophical teachings of the world; not that the other enlightenments cannot achieve 'salvation', but with greater difficulty.

The approach ought to focus on the spiritual state and the spiritual state is found in our natural love emotion and extending that beyond ourselves and those who are close to us. The path to enlightenment is then to cultivate the spiritual love emotion. When this is achieved, the actions and behaviors should automatically follow to reflect this disposition. Many religions and theologians approach the wrong way – they focus on changing behaviors through ‘threats’ and ‘rewards’, following a set of rules and guidelines, outlining what to do and give a model of ‘good behaviors’, without evoking and cultivating the spiritual love emotion. By this means, it is believed that by changing the exterior the interior state of love can be cultivated – this is a mistake, it gives rise to the Sadducees and Pharisees, hypocrites who outwardly appear to be holy, but inside is full of psychological complexes (examine in depth the different approaches adopted by the evangelists). Organized religions, including Christianity, have done injustices to the core of their religious theologies and in this sense all religions, subscribing to Bishop Spong key statement, ‘must change or die’; ‘die’ and ‘injustices’ to their purpose as in the sense that they failed to achieve the attainment of spiritualism in majority of their members by emphasizing on outward obedience of conduct, rather than adopting a vantage position where the importance of their spiritual state can be explained logically within a consistent framework and the means by which this could be achieved.

Understanding the psychology of Man we should focus on creating a society where the development of this ‘love of neighbors’ and the virtues of men (and women) can be facilitated, instead of focusing only on developing things that enhance our biological and psychological well-beings. This is perhaps what Confucius realized more than 2500 years ago and his philosophy was centered on developing a society that was harmonious where the virtues of men (and women) were encouraged to be developed by the system of education, moral teaching that apply throughout the hierarchy of society and a political system where the emperor and the ruling class were supposed to hold the ‘mandate’, whereupon this mandate could be taken away when this same set of virtues were abused. Such a society had become a ‘way of life’ where a uniform set of desirable values were embraced and they became the watch-dog for deviations of behaviors that are not in conformity with this set of values, instead of having a legal system of control amidst a pluralistic society. In today’s world where economic materialism rules amidst the embracing of pluralism as a way of life with the disturbance of nature in the order of things by exploiting the world resources far in excess of what is required, the process of ‘becoming’ is made more difficult because this system strongly cater for our biological and psychological natures and this will inevitably lead to the end-time.

Thus it is important in this type of milieu that we must consciously exercise our ‘free will’ to choose between returning back to our spiritual state or to be locked in with a materialistic world culture that caters for our biological and psychological well-beings at the expense of downplaying our spiritual self. The process of ‘becoming’ is thus made more difficult and challenging, especially when the religions of the world have outlived the time in terms of their teachings that are incompatible with what real life presents and the acquired knowledge of the contemporary time. In this sense perhaps Bishop Spong is right in making the statement that “Christianity must change or die”. The key is to know what need to be changed in order that Christianity remains relevant and valid in modern time.

The main theme that Christianity should change is to reinterpret the Gospels, the teaching of Jesus, to have universal application and look into the spiritual messages that are in conformity with the fundamental premise that Jesus is the Godhead in human flesh who created all of humankind, that He has been incarnated as Man to confirm those aspects of the universal states of the human soul that are valid among all of mankind. When we are able to relate to God through Jesus in these universal sets of values and states of the human soul the teaching of Jesus will then becomes more relevant and important in contemporary time, because His teaching remains the only source of hope for us to achieve our spiritual objective amidst the confusion of life. Through Him He has offered us a

biological and psychological pathway to establish a love relation with God. We need to do away with evangelism as it is commonly practised as a way to recruiting members for an 'exclusive club', but only to announce the 'Good News' that the Creator has come in the name of Jesus Christ, so that all human beings have the equal opportunity to relate to Him through Jesus.

Michael S.K. Toh  
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