

“Bill” of Rights

SURRENDERING RIGHTS TO GOD

NATHAN SHARPES

HOUSEKEEPING

- Good morning everyone, my name is Nathan Sharpes, and I'm one of the Elders here at CrossRoads Community Church.
- Pastor Bob and Ginnie are visiting family this week, so I'm happy to honor them by allowing them precious time with family, and I'm privileged that you'd hear my teaching today.

INTRODUCTION

- The scripture I'd like to begin with, today, is the gospel of John chapter 1 verses 1 through 13. So if have your bibles I'd invite you to turn there with me. If you don't, I'd exhort you to not take for granted that you have the freedom to own a copy of Scripture, nor neglect the skill of navigating God's Word. In any event, the verses will be on the screens as an aid. John 1:1...
- **John 1:1 (ESV): In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**
- **John 1:2 (ESV): He was in the beginning with God.**
- **John 1:3 (ESV): All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.**
- **John 1:4 (ESV): In him was life, and the life was the light of men.**
- **John 1:5 (ESV): The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**
- **John 1:6 (ESV): There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.**
- **John 1:7 (ESV): He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him.**
- **John 1:8 (ESV): He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.**
- **John 1:9 (ESV): The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.**
- **John 1:10 (ESV): He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.**
- **John 1:11 (ESV): He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.**
 - And now for our focus verses of today John 1:12-13...
- **John 1:12 (ESV): But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,**
- **John 1:13 (ESV): who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.**
- May God add a blessing to the reading and the hearing of his holy word.
- The main thing I want to focus on today is an examination of "rights". Scripture says that all who believe in the name of Jesus are given a right to become children of God. Not children by birth, or the will of the flesh (we'll talk about what that means) but born (or perhaps you could say "born again") of God.
- Now what I just read you, you could call the preamble, the introduction, to the gospel of John.

- Perhaps some of you memorized, this preamble to John at a church camp or Vacation Bible School, but I’d imagine when I say the word “preamble” a different piece of writing comes to mind. It’s probably the more common experience that most of you at some point memorized, or were made to memorize, the preamble to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE / BILL OF RIGHTS

- I bring up that topic because a pretty cool thing is happening this week. July 4th 2026 is the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4th 1776, and what we consider as the birth of our country. Leaning into this topic of rights, I’d like to read a bit of the Declaration of Independence, starting with the preamble, which goes like this...
 - “When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.”
 - “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed”
- Now, cutting through all the formal and grand language, what was the 2nd Continental Congress really saying in Declaration of Independence?
 - It comes down to an issue of rights, doesn’t it? That’s my reading of the preamble, along with the rest of the document (its not very long, I’d recommend you read it this week). They’re arguing (in my own words) that rights come from God, governments are then instituted amongst people to secure these rights, and a government that makes a habit of not securing rights is then rightfully overthrown. Finally, Congress makes an appeal to God as the “Supreme Judge” as to the “rectitude” or moral correctness of their intentions in declaring independence from Great Britian.
- What’s more, why I conclude that rights were the central issue in the birth of our nation, is that after the ensuing Revolutionary War ended in 1783, the Constitution of the United States was created in 1787 which famously included the first ten amendments known as the Bill of Rights.
 - Rights are a central issue to us a nation from our very founding even to today. There’s constant talk, if you choose to listen to it, about the right to this, or the right to that. You can fill in the blanks.
- But this isn’t a civics lesson, it’s a sermon, so let’s dig a little deeper into “rights” and how it relates to us a Christians.

WHAT ARE RIGHTS?

- Firstly, what are rights? That’s one of those words we throw around a lot, like everyone understands what it means, but “right” is one of those words that is really versatile and can mean a lot of different things. “Right” can be an adjective, a noun, an adverb, or a verb, with multiple definitions for each depending on the context.
 - But in the sense we’ll be talking about, a right can be defined as:
 - Something that one may properly claim as due
or
 - A privilege to which one is justly entitled
- Now when I think about an entitlement or something being due, that brings, to my mind at least, the thought of a “bill”, which is another one of the words that has a whole set of meanings.
 - But again narrowing it down to our focus on rights, “bill” can be defined as:
 - An itemized list of particulars. These particulars could be
 - A list of charges
or
 - A list of laws
- So boiling it down, Nathan’s definition of a “right” in our context is “something that you must have” and if you don’t get it, then you’re entitled to “bill” the supposed withholder of the right with charges, based on the “bill”, that is the law or authority, that secures that right in the first place.
 - I’m going somewhere with all this, I promise.

FLESH AND HEART

- The last time I preached, back in February, I did so on our identity in Christ, and as part of that I presented the theory of trichotomy, as a helpful way to think about the different aspects, both physical and spiritual, that make up your identity.
- To recap that teaching, I said we’re made up of three parts, body, soul, and spirit.
- **The body** is the physical part of you. It is the temporal part of you. The soul, once created, exists on into eternity, and the Spirit always was, but our bodies are temporary. The body, has the five senses that take in information, and manifests the will of the soul through the members of the body.
- **The soul** is what I’d call the biggest part of “you”, what really makes you who you are, uniquely, in the eternal sense. Your body is unique based your DNA but your soul is unique through your emotions, mind, and will. Processed emotions, abstracted in the mind, form a desire, a will, that the soul then communicates to the body to manifest the will.
- **The spirit** is the most important part of us. The presence or absence of which determines, in the most essential sense, our identity. There are two options here; there’s the lack of spirit you were born with, that’s what the Bible calls being “in Adam”. Those “in Adam” attempt to fill the void in their spirit from the outside in with things of the world that lead to death. The other option is, by faith, believing in God, accepting the sacrifice of Jesus, and receiving the Holy Spirit in you, is to be

“in Christ”. Those “in Christ” are filled with the Spirit which radiates life to the soul, manifesting in the fruits of the Spirit we see actioned by the body.

- I want to now focus on two additional places on the trichotomy diagram I didn’t speak on before, and those are the interfaces between the layers.
 - I’m an engineer by training, and I can tell you, a lot of engineering is concerned about interfaces. In aerodynamics the interface between the air and a solid body, called the boundary layer, and how its flowing or not, is hugely important to how a wing, for example, will perform. In Lithium-ion batteries, the Solid Electrolyte Interface between the electrolyte and the anode is what allows batteries to be rechargeable, without degradation, for many charge/discharge cycles. And the list goes on. Point being, interfaces are critically important and determine the effective functioning of any system.
 - Back to our trichotomy diagram, I’ll call the interface between the spirit and the soul, the heart, and the interface between the soul and the body, the flesh.
- And before I talk about the heart and the flesh, I’ll preface this like I did last time, that this trichotomy diagram isn’t strictly biblical, knowing this isn’t necessary for salvation, however, based upon the best of my biblical interpretation, I think this is fairly accurate (if indeed our essence could be broken down so simply into a diagram), and it’s immensely helpful for understanding what’s going on within our being and what Scripture is referring to when it talks about the different aspects that make up who we are.
- **The heart**, Hebrews 4:12 says
 - **Hebrews 4:12 (ESV): For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**
 - Once you have divided the spirit and the soul, you expose the interface between, which I’m arguing is the heart, and indeed scripture says the word of God does that revealing of the heart and the thoughts and intentions within.
 - What are these intentions of the heart? Well there are two options; you can have a hard heart or a soft heart. Prophesying to an exiled Israel, God proclaims through Ezekiel:
 - **Ezekiel 36:26 (ESV): And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.**
 - **Ezekiel 36:27 (ESV): And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.**
 - So a heart of flesh, that is a soft heart- and flesh here just means like muscle and soft tissue, not to be confused with “The Flesh” which we’ll talk about in a minute. Having a soft heart allows you to obey

the commandments of God, through the Spirit, which you can imagine radiating light into your soul.

- A hard heart, on the other hand, that is a heart of stone, you can imagine, would effectively prevent the Spirit from being able to shine through the heart into the soul. You can't shine a light through a rock. Light shines well through flesh, though. That's how pulse oximetry works, if you've ever had to wear one of those on your finger.
- Having a hard heart is what I'd call quenching the Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 5:19 explicitly says,
 - **1 Thessalonians 5:19 (ESV): Do not quench the Spirit.**
- Full stop. That's the whole verse. It says straight up, 'don't do that'. A Christian ought not have a hard heart, a heart of stone, and thus quench the Spirit. That fire within, that light of the Spirit, can't get out, like its meant to, if you're blocking it. This is what Jesus was talking about in the sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapter 5.
 - **Matthew 5:14 (ESV): “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.**
 - **Matthew 5:15 (ESV): Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket [that is quench the spirit], but [rather they put it] on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.**
 - **Matthew 5:16 (ESV): In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.**
- So I hope you're seeing this idea take shape. The purpose of the heart is to be that conduit for the Spirit to shine into your soul, illuminating our will, giving us the mind of Christ, and manifesting good works to bring glory to our Father in heaven.
- One last illustration of this that I think is just so beautiful. It comes from Romans chapter 5...
 - **Romans 5:1 (ESV): Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.**
 - **Romans 5:2 (ESV): Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**
 - **Romans 5:3 (ESV): Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,**
 - **Romans 5:4 (ESV): and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,**
 - **Romans 5:5 (ESV): and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.**
 - This is one of the most beautiful illustrations in scripture, in my opinion. The Holy Spirit pouring the Father's love into our hearts. I imagine a cup representing the Heart and the Spirit pouring water

into it, and if you’d let it, it’d just keep pouring and pouring until it overflowed. If there were any impurities in the cup, they’d dissolve and float up to the top and flow over the sides of the cup and you’d just be left with crystal clear water.

- I’ll pray that sometimes... that God would fill us with an abundance of his Spirit such that it would displace anything in us that’s not of Him and that we’d be filled with this Living Water of God’s love.
- As much as I’d love to keep talking about God pouring love into our hearts, the reality is there’s another interface we need to talk about, what Scripture calls “The Flesh”.
- **The flesh** is on the other side of the Soul from the heart, and I’d define it as the interface between the body and the Soul. Like I said before, “The Flesh” is not to be confused with “flesh”, just meaning soft tissue. Rather, “The Flesh” (usually described with the definite article “the” in front of it), “The Flesh” is described in Galatians 5 this way...
 - [Galatians 5:16 \(ESV\)](#): **But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.**
 - [Galatians 5:17 \(ESV\)](#): **For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.**
 - So you see the flesh is at odds with the Spirit, and the battle ground is your soul. The flesh is trying to get you to walk after the flesh, that is to look externally, to the world, for fulfillment, while the Spirit, if the condition of your heart is right, is trying to satisfy your soul with God’s love. So if you’re finding your satisfaction from God, you won’t be looking for satisfaction from your flesh, and trying to somehow pull in temporal pleasures from the body to satisfy your eternal soul (which is impossible by the way).
 - Walking in the Spirit means to live every day in total dependence on God, having fellowship with and reliance on the Holy Spirit to do what he came to do, and indeed what only he can do in you, which as we just learned is to express God’s love into your heart and for the purpose of nourishing your soul to produce good works and bring God glory. And again, its impossible to run that process in reverse.
 - However, at some point we get the idea that the Christian life is a matter of somber determination. You get up in the morning you take a deep breath, look yourself in the mirror, and determine in your heart that “today I’m going to live for Jesus”. As noble as that goal might sound its not the way God intended we live our lives. And if you keep that up for very long, you’ll be exhausted and looking for a way to resign.

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- Living as a disciple of Jesus is not an issue of determination, its an issue of dependence. It's not trying, its trusting.
 - We think the disc-i-pline part of being a disc-i-ple means we're doing or not doing something in our own power. Determining by our own will the right way, or the wrong way, to honor God, and that sounds a lot to me like original sin, deciding for ourselves what is good and what is evil.
- Living as a disciple of Jesus is not an issue of trying hard enough, it is an issue of trusting. Its not about trying hard enough, as if we could, it's about trusting in our Savior to work in and through us by the Spirit. If there is any amount of determination, its making the decision to depend-on and trust-in Jesus, and then walk in that decision, moment by moment. Not looking back to the mistakes of the past in a depressive state, or agonizing about what the future might bring in a state of anxiety, but moment by moment living out the decision we made when we accepted the gift of the Holy Spirit, to live dependent on the Spirit, to have Jesus Christ as our source to meet all our needs.
- It is not our trying to somehow manufacture all the manifestations of the fruits of the Spirit by our own energy and determination. If you try to do that, you'll be left feeling defeated, because its an impossible task. And being defeated, by trying to do God's job ourselves, the Enemy is close behind to interject feelings of guilt in us.
- 1 Peter 5:8 tell us our Enemy, "the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." Have you ever seen National Geographic where they show lions hunting? What do they do? They break up the herd of gazelles or whatever and then pick off the weak one. Why do you think the Bible says Satan is prowls around like a lion? That's what he does to us. He gets to trying to walk after the flesh, become exhausted, become depressed and anxious, living in the past, living in the future, not appreciating the here and now, not living moment by moment walking by the Spirit, feeling guilty- then the attack comes, and in your diminished state, you fall into sin.
- And its frustrating. I'm frustrated by my flesh, and as you're Elder I'm frustrated by your flesh too. But the frustration is a good thing. It's a terrible thing to be at peace with your flesh.
 - A.W. Tozer puts it this way: "Every advance that we make for God and for His cause must be made at our inconvenience. If it does not inconvenience us at all, there is no cross in it".
 - I try to be very reserved with claims like this, but I might put it a little more bluntly, "If you're not having struggles in your life, then perhaps you're not a Christian". At the very least you're as a Christian ought not to be, with a hard heart, quenching the Spirit, making peace with the flesh, and when you do that there not a whole lot of outward difference between someone who's a Christian or not.

- Struggling with the flesh isn’t evidence that you’re a bad Christian, its quite the opposite.
- The Apostle Paul in the midst of a long and difficult teaching on sin spanning Romans 5-8, in Romans 7 he exclaims:
 - **Romans 7:18 (ESV): For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.** [That is by our own power in the flesh, we need to power of the Spirit in us to do that]
 - **Romans 7:19 (ESV): For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.**
- John MacArthur once said, “When people ask me what appeals to me about heaven, it isn’t the streets of transparent gold or gates made of pearls; it’s the absence of sin. I’m tired of sin.”
- But why do Christians still struggle with sin? Well, it’s because you don’t lose your flesh when you become a Christian. Galatians 5:24 tells us that, “...those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”, but you still have the same body and the same soul, before you were saved as after, so the interface between them, the flesh, is still there, it’s just lost its power. Where we were once powerless but to walk after the flesh, before we became Christians, only having the option to look to temporal things of the world for fulfillment. Now we, if indeed you are a Christian, have the option to walk by the Spirit and not after the flesh. But as frustrating as it is, we need to remember this, that the flesh is still there, and the Enemy is skilled in getting us to walk after it.
 - You can imagine Satan having a profile of you, a cheat sheet if you will, with what’s most effective at tripping you up, how to make you stumble and keep doing the evil you don’t want to do. That’s why Ephesians 6:11 tells us to
 - **Ephesians 6:11 (ESV): Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.**
- But don’t be too discouraged by this. The flesh had a head start on the Spirit. Before you were saved your flesh had time to form what I’ll call “Life Messages”. These are conclusions you’ve come to believe about yourself based on your life experiences. Every bit of sensory data gets filtered through the flesh before it gets to your mind in your soul, where it gets mixed with feelings and emotions and you form a conclusion. Over time you stop processing your circumstances individually, rather only seeing affirmations of these life messages.
 - Psychologists call this concept “chunking”. It’s the same process that allows professional baseball players to hit a pitch. In theory there’s physically not enough reaction time for a hitter to see a pitch, make a decision, and swing. Rather, based on their countless hours of practice, they see a pattern (that is a chunk of information rather than

- individual pieces- they see a pattern) in a pitch and are actioning a swing without high level thought.
- The same is true for your life messages. You fall into these conclusions without thinking about it, like your tires falling into a rut in the road. Every new failure is just further evidence of the conclusions that your flesh has already chunked for you, just deepening the rut you’re in.
 - I didn’t get invited to that thing? Oh it’s because “I don’t fit in”, “I’m different”, “I’m not important”, “I’m not necessary”.
 - I failed at that thing I was trying to do? Its because “I’m not enough”, “I can never learn”, “I’ll never get better”.
 - These are just a few examples of life messages. And you know what, some of those conclusions might very well be true. Apart from Christ, you’re not enough. Apart from Christ you might not fit in. But I’ll tell you in Christ, they’re lies. In Christ you are enough, because the Spirit of Christ is in you and He is enough. In Christ you do fit in, because you are part of His Church and you’ve been uniquely gifted to serve in His Church.
 - But like I said the flesh remains, and over time you’ve most likely developed these deeply rutted life messages.
 - Now every time you encounter a certain situation, your flesh already has a patterned behavior ready to go to either generate love and acceptance or avoid pain and rejection. These are called a coping strategies.
 - Over-eating. Withdrawing. Laziness. Workaholism. Sex. Drugs. These are all ways the flesh tries to generate love and acceptance or avoid pain and rejection, using temporal means to satisfy your eternal soul, which as I said, is an impossible task, one only the Spirt can accomplish.
 - Alright. All of that teaching on rights, the heart, the flesh... all that to say, the flesh does not have “want” in its vocabulary, only “must have”. The flesh does not “want” love and acceptance, it “must have” it. The flesh does not “want” to avoid pain and rejection, it “must” avoid it. And if the flesh does encounter pain and rejection or does not get love and acceptance, then it must generate it itself, thus the life messages, thus the coping strategies.

SURRENDERING RIGHTS

- So I gave you my definition of a “right” earlier. I said: Nathan’s definition of a “right” in our context is “something that you must have” and if you don’t get it, then you’re entitled to “bill” the supposed withholder of the right with charges, based on the “bill”, that is the law or authority, that secures that right in the first place.
- That sounds a lot like the flesh doesn’t it... You must have something, and if you don’t get it then you’re entitled to cope based on your life messages... Yikes...

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- As such you could think about the flesh as a “rights manufacturing machine”. Whatever we want, according to the flesh, we have to the right to have it, based upon our own justifications. And whatever someone else is doing that we don’t like, well they have no right to do that...
- And I’ll pause for a moment to hopefully be very clear on two things.
 - 1) I brought up the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights earlier, which acknowledge rights are given by God, and we can debate if all the rights enumerated and implied are biblical, these documents aren’t Scripture so they’re fallible, but what is scriptural is that governments are instituted by God to reward good and punish evil, that’s what Romans 13 teaches. But Governments are run by people, and as such are inherently flawed, so they must have boundaries placed on them, which we call rights. And when you’re interacting with an imperfect human governance, that’s fine. We have the right, in the United States, to worship God, and if we were prevented from doing so, we then have the right to sue Harford County, or the State of Maryland, whomever was denying us.
 - 2) Its fine to want things. Its good to want to be enough, to want to perform your best, to want to be better, to want to be important and desired... the trouble comes when you let your flesh get ahold of these things, instead of surrendering them to God, which by the way is where everything you have came from in the first place to include the very air in your lungs, instead of surrendering your life to God, you allow wants to become musts, and then become, to you, a right. And when you, by your own merits, in the flesh, don’t measure up to a standard you created for yourself, (some might call that an idol), you what... you sue God? But God isn’t the government, he isn’t corrupt, he is perfect.
- Christian, how can you stand before God and demand anything? 1 Corinthians 6 tell us that “You are not your own, for you were bought with a price”, and that price was the blood of Jesus to cover your sins, and His resurrection to conquer the power of sin and crucify his agent the flesh, and the coming of the Spirit to give us freedom so you don’t have to walk after a dead flesh [Pastor Bob will be talking about freedom next week]. Its an error to think, to fall into the rut of thinking, that you have any rights before your creator.
 - [Isiah 45:9 \(ESV\)](#): **“Woe to him who strives with him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots! Does the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’ or ‘Your work has no handles’?”**
 - [Romans 9:20 \(ESV\)](#): **But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?”**
 - God formed each of us, like a potter with clay. Each of us with our own purpose and features as He saw fit. And it was good, because God did it, and He is the essence of good. He didn’t make a mistake with you. Its good you exist.

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- Its critical that you don’t make this error, standing before God, the creation standing before the Creator, that you think have the right to demand anything of God. And again, its fine to pray and ask God for what you need, Scripture encourages that, but any rights you think you’re entitled to are lies manufactured by the devil, twisted by your flesh, to manipulate your soul into hardening your heart, to quench the spirit, and deny God the glory to which He alone is due.
- But surely all of us have committed, are committing, or will commit this error of demanding rights before God. So what do we do about it? How do you get out of this rut of the flesh? How do we debug this error in our thinking?
 - First, and it’s a good first step for just about anything you do, humble yourself.
 - **James 4:10 (ESV): Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.**
 - Recognize the error in your assumption of rights, and humble yourself before God, and he will exalt you. Exalt means to elevate in position, meaning if you come to him humbly, willingly, meek, he’ll figure out your situation for you, and redeem it, and elevate it and restore you to where you need to be in relation to Him.
 - Second by forgiving.
 - **Ephesians 4:30 (ESV): And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.**
 - **Ephesians 4:31 (ESV): Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.**
 - **Ephesians 4:32 (ESV): Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.**
 - If you’ve been “billing God, bringing charges against God, more than likely you’re doing the same to your brothers and sisters in Christ, presuming they’ve wronged you, that they’ve violated your self-determined rights, and you deserve tangible or emotional compensation. Wrong. Forgive as you’ve been forgiven.
 - And I’ll say this too, I focused here on forgiving others, but you’ve been forgiven. Forgive yourself, too. Don’t hold it against yourself what you did in error.
 - Third you must surrender your supposed rights to God. It goes something like this
 - a) Acknowledge that you are in fact claiming a right or rights against God, that that is an error, and name the right or right(s).
 - If you do this, you’ll be doing better than almost everyone in the world. Most are blind to the fact that they’re even doing it or if they realize it, have too much pride to admit that they’re unable to live by their on merit. You must recognize the futility of relying on the flesh and your inability to meet your own needs, your own way, with your own resources.

- b) Repent by being willing to experience the conditions and emotions you were attempting to cope with in the flesh.
 - If you do this, you’re taking a step of maturity that even most Christians haven’t done. But you’re not allowed to stop here. If you stop here you’re committing the error of stoicism. I’m going to do without, and I’m going to try real hard, and bear it myself. That’s just back to square one with walking after the flesh, perhaps in a less destructive, but equally erroneous way.
- c) Trust the Spirit to be the source for whatever you were walking after in the flesh. This is truly walking in the Spirit, and frankly its an expression of faith, an expression of our hope in Christ, trusting that God in his sovereignty will provide for all your needs.
 - If you do this, you’ll have successfully surrendered your right to God. Surrender is an attitude that says “God, you can do with me whatever you want to”. Surrender settles the issue of who is best suited- God or me- to plan and provide for the life you’ve been given. Surrender is a level of spiritual maturity that God can use to further his kingdom. That’s where we want to be.

CONCLUSION

- I’ll conclude with this as the praise team comes...
- I’d like to bookend this message with John 1:12-13
 - [John 1:12 \(ESV\)](#): **But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,**
 - [John 1:13 \(ESV\)](#): **who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.**
- I said you have no rights before God, none save but one, to come to Him as His child.
- What rights does a child have? Can a child demand of their parents a certain standard of living? Can a child demand of their parents how they’re cared for? Can a child demand when they are to receive something from their parents? Those are all rhetorically, no. So, what rights does a child have, really?
- The answer is access. A child has access rights to their parents in a way no one else does, a relationship with them no one else can have, and a place in their house. Church this is our right as children of God, that we can come before him, that we can sit at His feet, that He hears us, and as Psalm 23 puts it, “that I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever”.



“BILL” OF RIGHTS



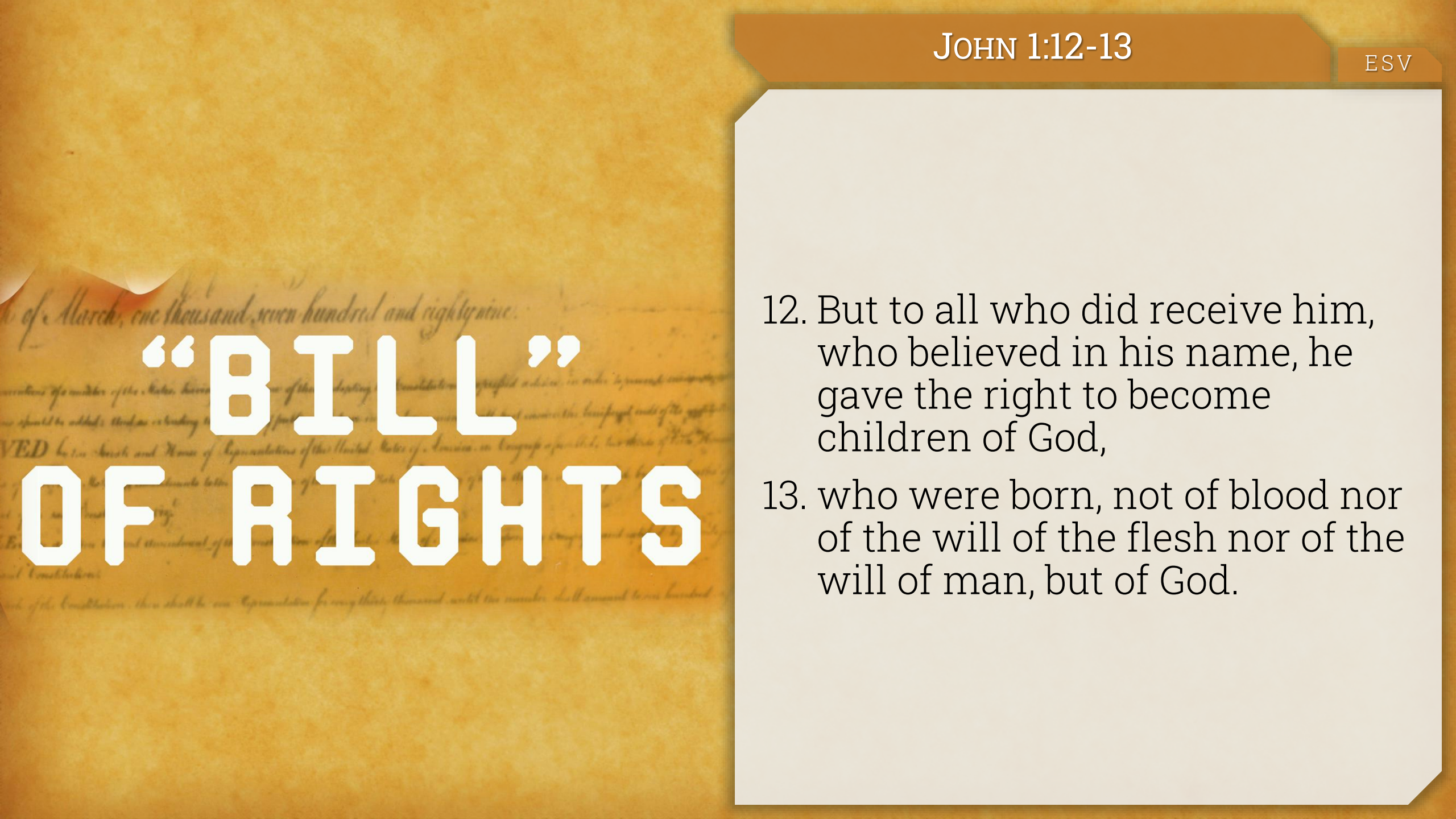
“BILL” OF RIGHTS

1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
2. He was in the beginning with God.
3. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.
4. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
5. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
6. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.



“BILL” OF RIGHTS

7. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him.
8. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.
9. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.
10. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.
11. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.



“BILL” OF RIGHTS

12. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,
13. who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

“BILL” OF RIGHTS

“When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.”

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

“BILL” OF RIGHTS

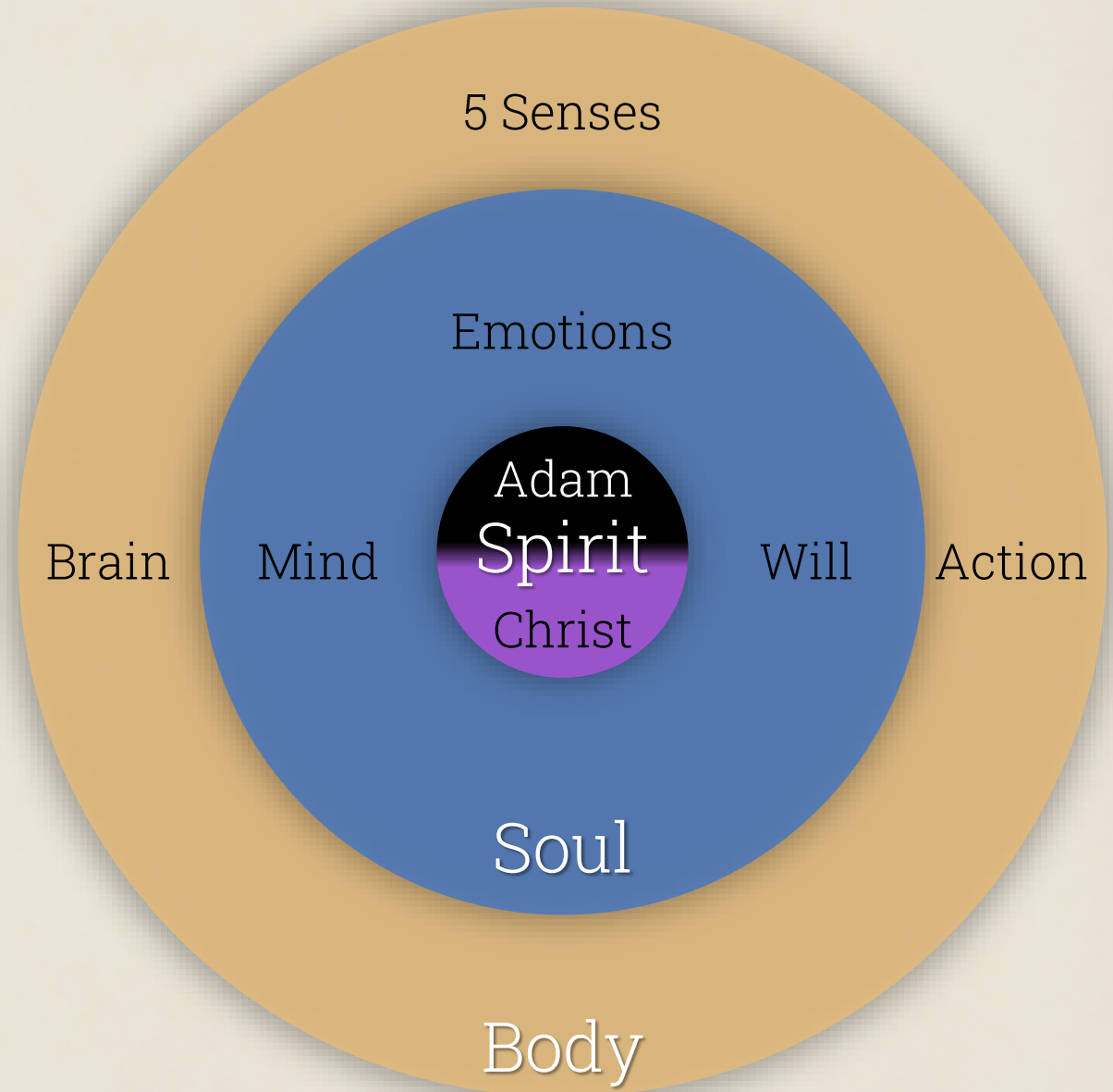
“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.-

-That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed”

"BILL" OF RIGHTS

TRICHOTOMY

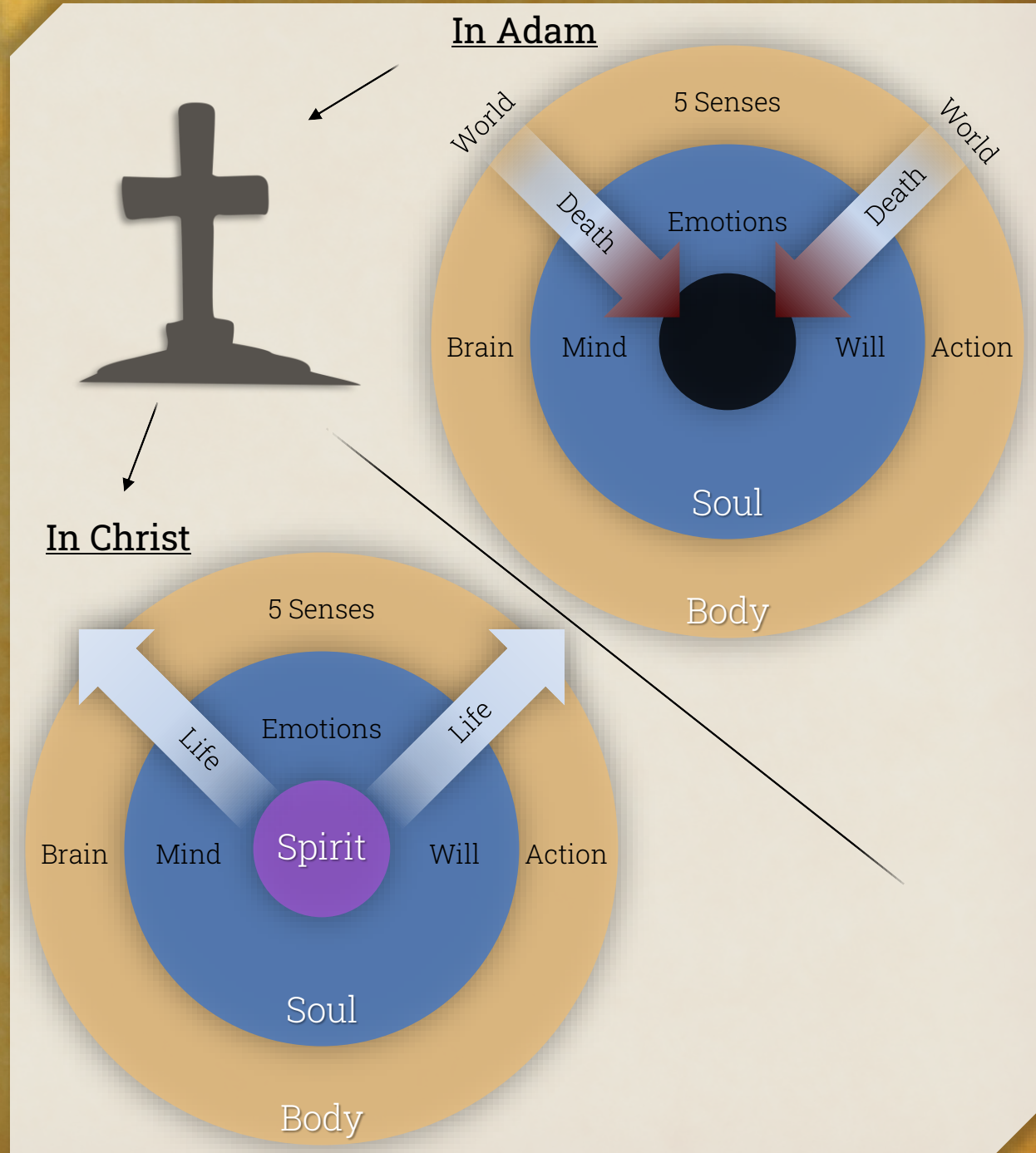
- **Body, Spirit, Soul**
1 Thessalonians 5:23



"BILL" OF RIGHTS

TRICHOTOMY

- **Body, Spirit, Soul**
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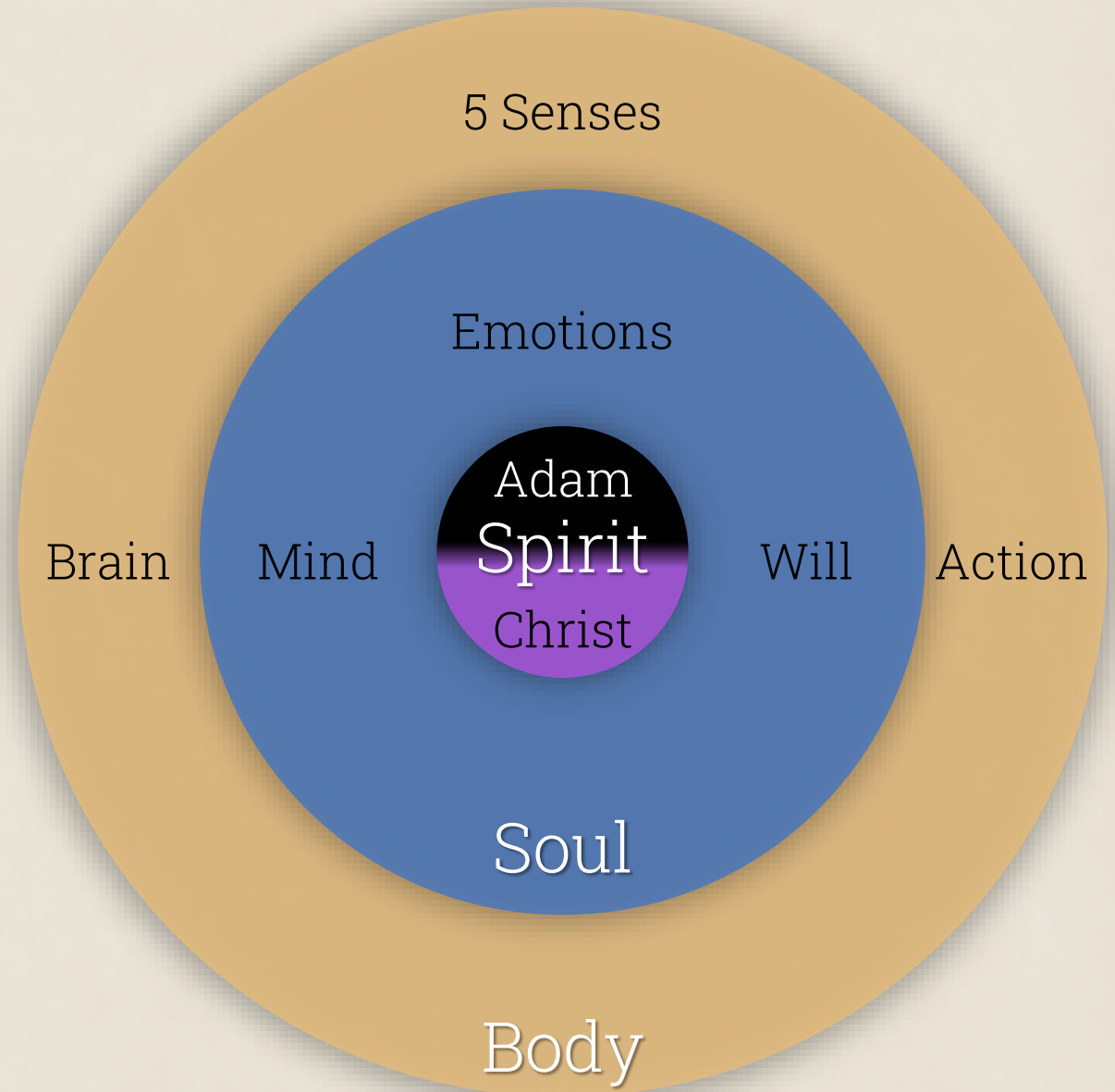


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TRICHOTOMY

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"BILL" OF RIGHTS

TRICHOTOMY

- **Body, Spirit, Soul**

1 Thessalonians 5:23

INTERFACES

- **Heart**

Hebrews 4:12, Ezekiel 36:26-27

1 Thessalonians 5:19

Matthew 5:14-16, Romans 5:1-5

- **Flesh**

Galatians 5:16-17, Romans 7:18-19

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12. For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

26. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

27. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

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19. Do not quench the Spirit.

14. "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.
15. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.
16. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

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1. Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
3. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,
4. and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,
5. and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

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16. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

17. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

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18. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.

19. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.

11. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

"BILL" OF RIGHTS

SURRENDERING RIGHTS

- Right = Something you must have, or else bill
- Flesh does not want, it must have, or else cope
- ∴ Flesh is rights manufacturing machine

■ Points of Clarity



Citizens rights (Romans 13:1-7)



Wanting good things (James 1:17)



Making demands of God

Isiah 45:9, Romans 9:20

■ Error Debugging

1. Humble Self (James 4:10)
2. Forgive Others (Ephesians 4:30-32)
3. Surrender Rights to God
 - a) Acknowledge Error
 - b) Repent (anti-cope) [Stoicism]
 - c) Trust the Spirit (hope)

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. — We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all reference hath hitherto been to the defects and abuses of the former, — not to the principles and forms of Government. — But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Tyranny, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. — Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former system of Government. — The history of the present King of Great Britain, is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct or indirect purpose, the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. — To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world. —

He has refused his assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. — He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation, till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. — He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of People, unless those People would relinquish the rights of Representation in the Legislature, a right inseparable to them and parcelled out to separate only. — He has called together legislative Bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their Public Records, for the sole purpose of embarrassing them with his measures. — He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the People. — He has refused for a long time after such Dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise, and the whole remains in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of anarchy from without, and convulsions within. — He has endeavored to prevent the Population of these States, for that purpose obstructing the Trade for Importation of Foreigners, refusing to encourage them to emigrate hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands. — He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers. — He has made Judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries. — He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their substance. — He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our Legislature. — He has affected to keep the Military independent of and superior to the civil power. — He has endeavored to obstruct the Trade of these Colonies, by stopping large bodies of armed troops among us. — For pretending to us by a mock Oath, from standing firm for any Masters which they should command on the Inhabitants of these Colonies. — For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world. — For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent. — For depriving us in many cases, of the benefit of Trial by Jury. — For transporting us to distant places to be tried for pretended offences. — For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies. — For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments. — For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with powers to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever. — He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us. — He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our People. — He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty, rapacity and insatiable thirst for blood, in the most barbarous and cruel manner. — He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands. — He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the insurrection of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions. — In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms. Our repeated Petitions have been answered by insult and injury. — At length, a more than royal character is thus marked by every act which may appear a Slight, is now to be the rule of a free People. — Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our commerce and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of conciliation. — We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. — And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

William Livingston
Lyman Hall
George Wythe

John Hancock
Samuel Adams
John Adams

John Jay
John Adams
John Adams

John Jay
John Adams
John Adams

John Jay
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SURRENDERING RIGHTS

[Right = Something you must have, or else bill
Flesh does not want, it must have, or else cope
→ ∴ Flesh is rights manufacturing machine

■ Points of Clarity

- 👍 Citizens rights (Romans 13:1-7)
- 👍 Wanting good things (James 1:17)
- 👍 Making demands of God
Isiah 45:9, Romans 9:20

■ Error Debugging

1. Humble Self (James 4:10)
2. Forgive Others (Ephesians 4:30-32)
3. Surrender Rights to God
 - a) Acknowledge Error
 - b) Repent (anti-cope) [~~Stoicism~~]
 - c) Trust the Spirit (hope)

9. Woe to him who strives with him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots! Does the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?' or 'Your work has no handles'?

20. But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?"

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10. Humble yourselves before the Lord,
and he will exalt you.

30. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of
God, by whom you were sealed for
the day of redemption.
31. Let all bitterness and wrath and
anger and clamor and slander be put
away from you, along with all
malice.
32. Be kind to one another,
tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
as God in Christ forgave you.

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Boulton, Gwinnett
Lynman, Hall
Geo Walton

Jno Hooper
 Joseph Hewes,
 John Penn
 Edward Rutledge

Amish Haven
Wm. Price
The Stone
Cyril Court of Russell's. G

Robt Morris
 Benjamin Franklin
 Wm. Franklin
 John Morton
 Clymer
 Jas. Smith

Phil. Livingston
Joan Quill
Lewis Morris

John Adams
Rev. Mr. Paine
Elbridge Gerry
Sturges

George Wythe
Richard Henry Lee
Th Jefferson
Wm Harrison
Th Nelson
James Lightfoot Lee
Carver Braxton

Geo. Taylor
James Wilson
Geo. Ross
Mr. Honey
William
Comdr. J. P.

Kirk, Stockholm
 Jas. Wickström
 Fred. Stoftholm
 John Hart
 Abra. Clark

William Ellery
Roger Sherman
John Huntington
John Williams
Oliver Wolcott
Matthew Tabor

“BILL” OF RIGHTS

1. **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**
2. **UNDERSTAND YOUR FLESH**
3. **SURRENDER “YOUR RIGHTS”**

John 1

12. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,
13. who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Q: What rights does a child have?

A: Access to and relationship with parents. A place in the home.

Psalm 23:6 “...that I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever”