



40 DAYS OF FAITH

*S O U L*  
*K E E P I N G*

# Looking Inward Exercise

- Take a moment to look inward. Get in touch with your inner life.
- Think of a time when you felt unsafe or unhappy, and you tried to fix it on your own. What happened?
- Think of a time when you felt unsafe or unhappy, and you turned to God. What happened?
- What differences did you notice?

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How to Have a Healthy Soul

# What Is a Soul?

In addition to *soul*, *Nephesh* and *Psuche* are sometimes translated:

- *living being*
- *life*
- *self*
- *person*
- *desire*
- *appetite*
- *emotion*
- *passion*

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# What Is a Soul?

Humans *are* souls...

Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person. (Genesis 2:7 NLT)

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# What Is a Soul?

Our soul can:

- Love God
- Obey God
- Turn to God
- Follow God
- Seek God

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# What Is a Soul?

- The soul is precious
- It's possible to lose our soul
- The soul can be destroyed in hell

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# What Is a Soul?

In Scripture, the soul is the part of us that connects to God—or doesn't.

- In as much as we're connected to God, our soul is healthy, contented, and effective.
- In as much as we're *not* connected to God, our soul is lost, restless, and ineffective.

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# What Is a Soul?

“What is running your life at any given moment is your soul. Not external circumstances, not your thoughts, not your intentions, not even your feelings, but your soul. The soul is that aspect of your whole being that correlates, integrates, and enlivens everything going on in the various dimensions of the self. The soul is the life center of human beings.”

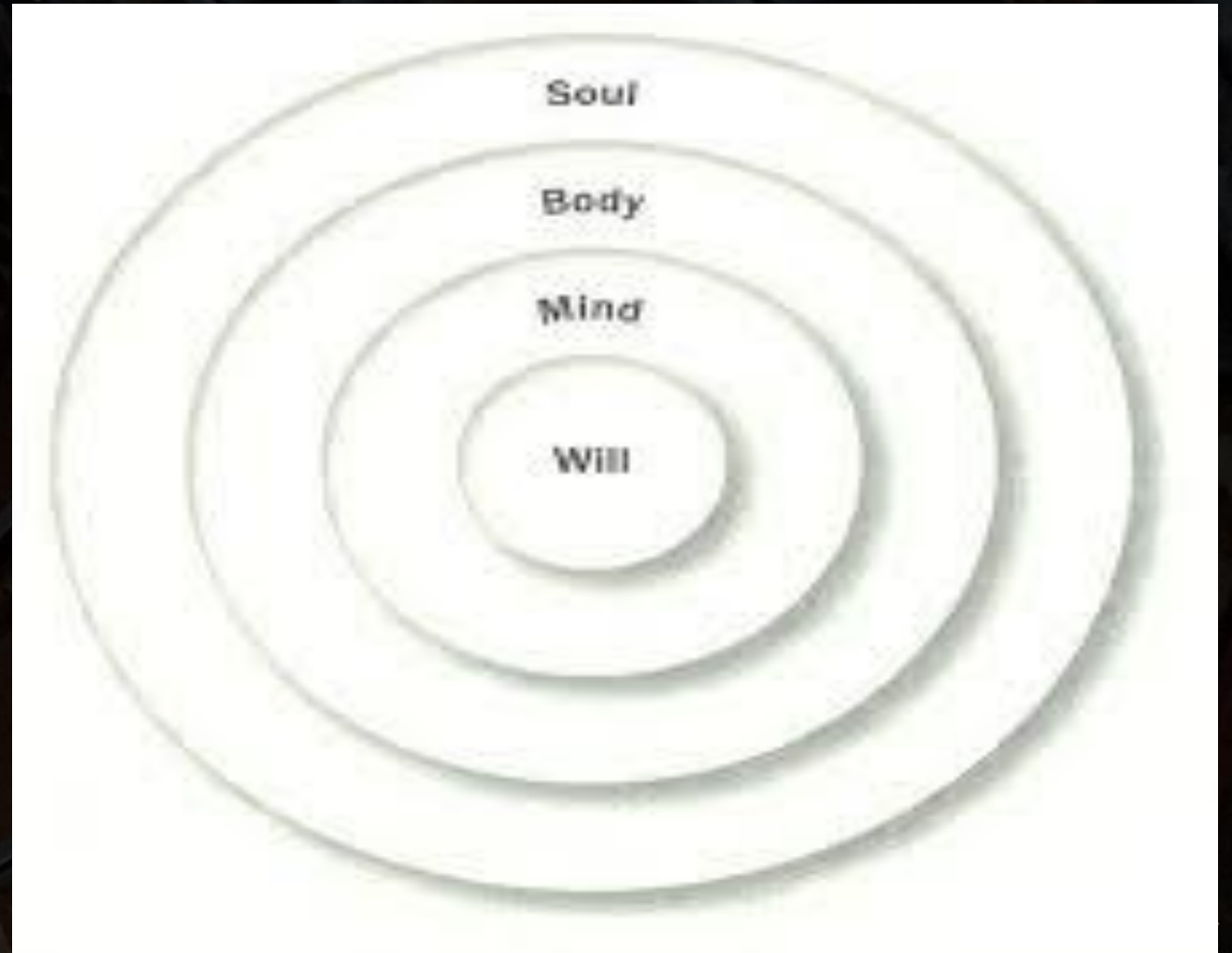
Dallas Willard

Ortberg, John. *Soul Keeping* (p. 38). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

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# What Is a Soul? Will

- Our capacity to choose
- Not really that powerful
- “Habits eat will power for breakfast.”
- Not the path to the good life

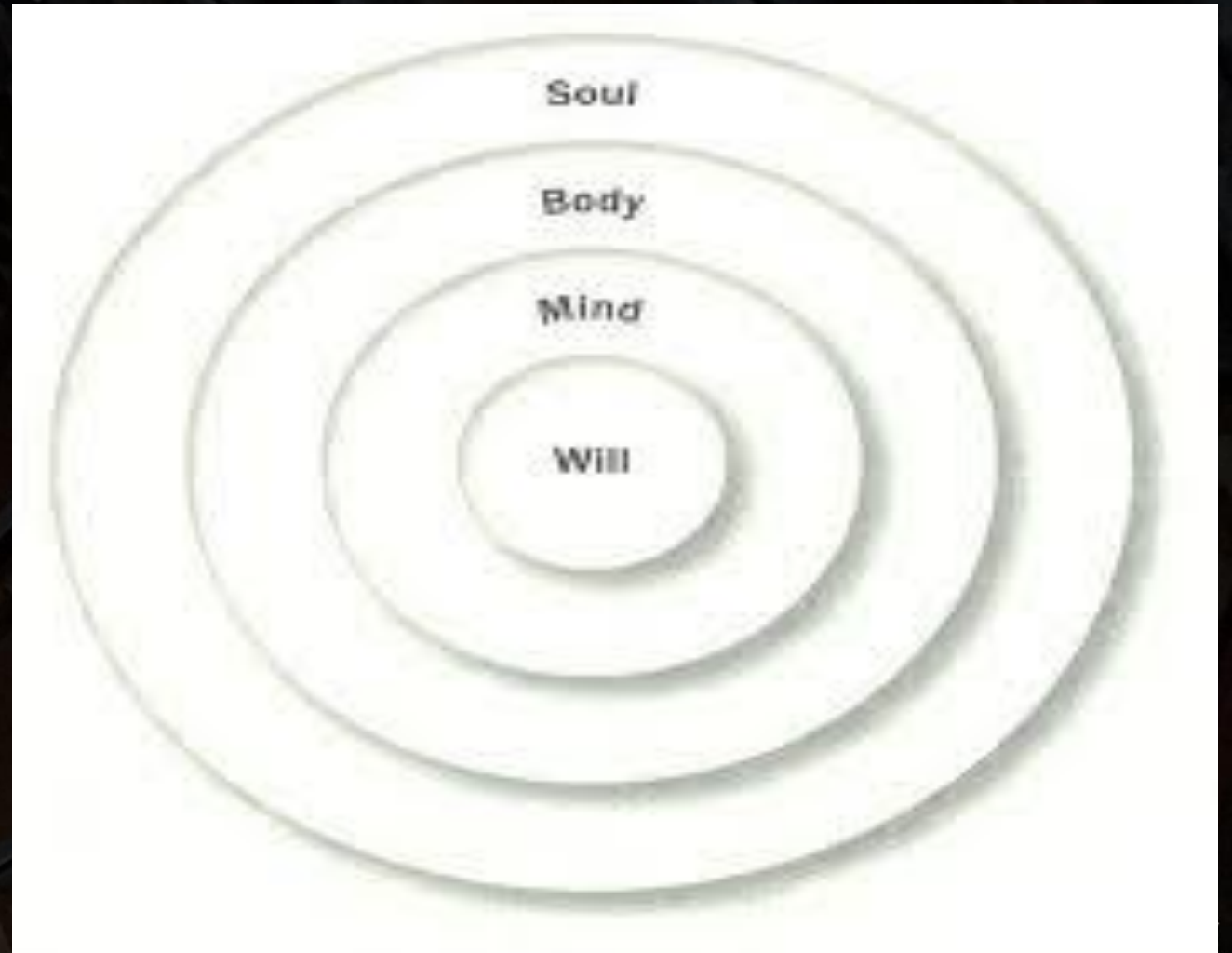


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# What Is a Soul?

## Mind

- Home of thoughts and feelings
- Part of us that's aware
- Part of us that decides what we believe

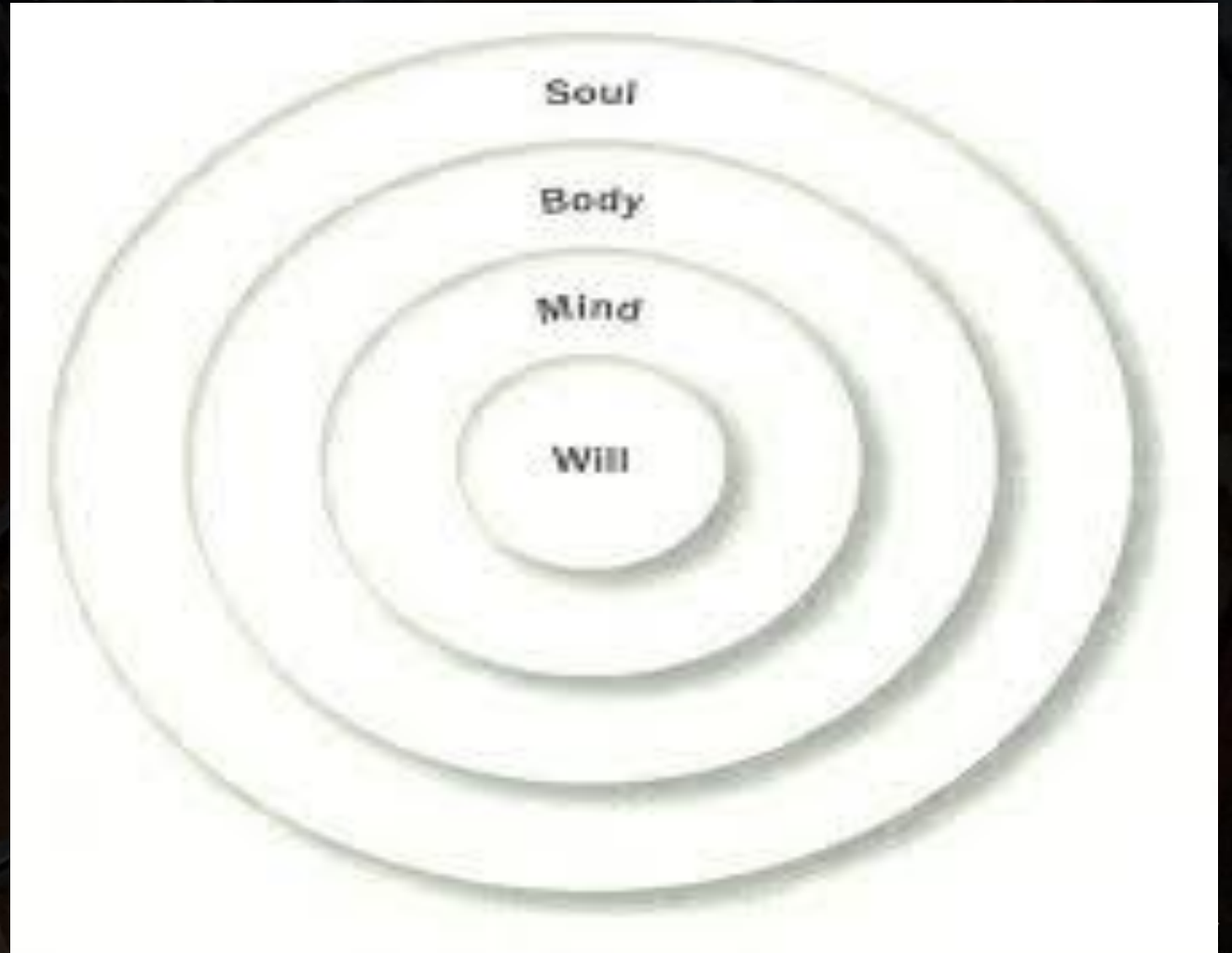


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# What Is a Soul?

## Body

- Home of our senses
- Part of us that interfaces with the world around us
- Our domain

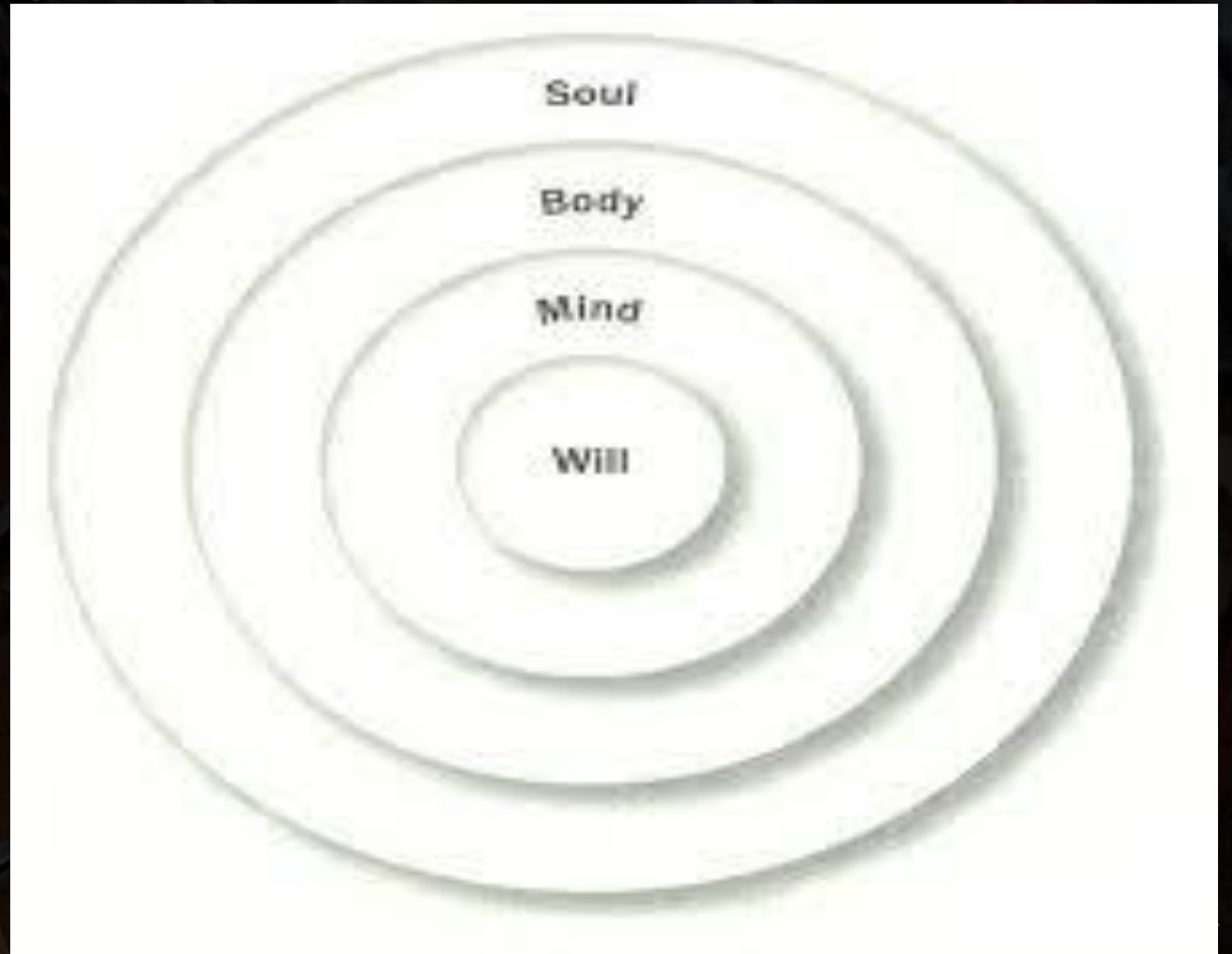


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# What Is a Soul?

## Soul

- A healthy soul integrates our will, mind, and body
- An unhealthy soul leaves them disintegrated



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# A Healthy Soul and an Integrated Life

- Will, mind, and body all work together toward the same goals
- “In the zone”
- A finely tuned driving machine

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# An Unhealthy Soul and a Disintegrated Life

- Will, mind, and body are disconnected and opposed to each other
- “Out of whack”
- A flat tire

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# How Does a Soul Become Healthy or Unhealthy?

<sup>15</sup> Then he asked them, "But who do you say I am?" <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." <sup>17</sup> Jesus replied, "You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being."

(Matthew 16:15-17 NLT)

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# How Does a Soul Become Healthy or Unhealthy?

From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead.

<sup>22</sup> But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things. "Heaven forbid, Lord," he said. "This will never happen to you!"

<sup>23</sup> Jesus turned to Peter and said, "Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's."

(Matthew 16:21-23 NLT)

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# How Does a Soul Become Healthy or Unhealthy?

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. <sup>25</sup> If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. <sup>26</sup> And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul? <sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man will come with his angels in the glory of his Father and will judge all people according to their deeds.

(Matthew 16:24-27 NLT)

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# A False Self Disconnected from God

Each of us has a *false self*—an approach to life that we've developed and that we believe will keep us safe and make us happy.

What makes it *false* is that it no longer works because it didn't come from God.

- Money
- Power
- Control

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# Peter

## False Self

- Control
- Being the one in charge

## True Self

- Died to false self after he denied Jesus
- Received his true self when he was filled with the Holy Spirit

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Me

False Self

- Try harder

True Self

- Relax, be present, and trust

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# You?

## False Self

- Always right?
- Charm?
- Withdrawal?
- Something else?

## True Self

- Surrender: “If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it...”
- Trust and obedience: “...But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.”

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# The Cost of Living Disconnected from God

“And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul? <sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man will come with his angels in the glory of his Father and will judge all people according to their deeds.” (Matthew 16: 26-27 NLT)

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# The Reward of Living Connected to God

- A healthy soul
- An integrated life—horizontally and vertically

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# Psalm 131

O LORD, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me.  
<sup>2</sup> But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me. <sup>3</sup> O Israel, hope in the LORD from this time forth and forevermore. (Ps. 131:1-3 ESV)

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# Soul-Keeping Exercise

1. Pay attention this week to your inner life—will, mind, and body. How well do they seem to be working together? How are you at odds with yourself? What does that tell you about the condition of your soul?
2. Pay attention to your connection with God. How much are you trusting and obeying God versus trying to manufacture your own safety and happiness?
3. What could you let go of this week in order to die to yourself and come alive to God?

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