

The points of agreement between the trichotomist and the dichotomist views exceed their differences. They both agree that man is complex or compound, that he is made up of separable parts. In contrast are various forms of the view that man is indivisible. Monism insists that man is not to be thought of as in any sense composed of parts or separate entities, but rather as a radical unity. In the monistic understanding, the Bible does not view man as a body, soul, and spirit, but simply as a self. The terms sometimes used to distinguish parts of man are actually to be taken as basically synonymous. Man is never treated in the Bible as a dualistic being.

According to monism, to be human is to be or have a body. The idea that a human can somehow exist apart from a body is unthinkable. Consequently, there is no possibility of post death existence in a disembodied state. Immortality of the soul is quite untenable. Not only, then, is there no possibility of a future life apart from bodily resurrection, but any sort of intermediate state between death and resurrection is ruled out as well.

On page 537, Erickson proposes his model:

The full range of the biblical data can best be accommodated by the view which we will term "conditional unity". According to this view, the normal state of man is as a materialized unitary being. In Scripture man is so addressed and regarded. He is not urged to flee or escape from the body, as if it were somehow inherently evil. This monistic condition can, however, be broken down, and at death it is, so that the immaterial aspect of man lives on even as the material decomposes. At the resurrection, however, there will be a return to a material or bodily condition It is not the immortality of the soul or the resurrection of the body. In keeping with what has been the orthodox tradition within the church, it is both/and.

Lewis and Demarest, in Volume 2, p.160 of their *Integrative Theology* state:

To sum up, the whole person metaphysically is a complex agent, a unity of an inner (spiritual) and outer (physical) being with a multiplicity of capacities for developing excellence and ruling the world (Gen. 1:16, 28) intellectually, morally, emotionally, volitionally, and relationally. In other words, a human person is an accountable agent made up of an interacting dichotomy of spirit and body with a trichotomy of three relationships -- to the earth, others, and God. The truth in dichotomy is in two substances; the truth in trichotomy is in three major relationships. In Scripture the whole inner person relating to God is most frequently designated spirit. The whole inner person relating to oneself, others, and things is most frequently called soul. But the one inner person thinks, feels, wills, and relates, whether "vertically" or "horizontally". Humans in themselves do have great (but not infinite) potential for sharing God's vital fellowship, relationships, and work.