

JUST WHAT IS A "SOUL TIE"?

Let's start by considering the definition of a soul tie:

"A soul tie is the joining or knitting together of the bonds of a relationship. Godly soul ties occur when like-minded believers are together in the Lord: friends, marriage partners, believers to pastors, etc. Relationships that lack 'God-centeredness' can result in ungodly soul ties between friends, parents and children, siblings, marriage partners, former romantic or sexual partners, domineering authorities, etc. An unhealthy attachment with another can bring about a psychic control that can adversely affect the life, e.g. a mother who refuses to relinquish her hold on her children (tied to her apron strings), a person who refuses to release to the Lord the memory of an old romantic flame (withdrawing into nostalgia in times of loneliness), a person who holds a grudge or a judgment against another, someone who uses spiritual forces to control others (witchcraft), etc."

For two people to bond to the point of a soul tie often takes time, particularly in the area of friendships. Man's soul consists of his mind, emotions, and will. A soul tie involves the joining of minds, ideas and views, as well as emotional unions in the feeling realm. Soul ties can range from being laid back and fairly loose to quite intense and overpowering. For example, think of a piece of thread, a string, a rope, and finally, a length of cable. Each tie is progressively stronger than the one before.

A 'thread' relationship would simply be an acquaintance, someone you greet at your job every day. You know their name and where they work, but that's about it. A 'string' relationship would perhaps be an associate who you're more intellectually tied to, someone with whom you have certain things in common. A 'rope' relationship would be a good friend, a companion and confidant, one in whom you would be free to 'be yourself' and share things about your life that are somewhat vulnerable. Finally, a 'cable' relationship would be someone to whom you're related: your wife, your kids, and your immediate family.

Now, breaking a piece of thread is not difficult. In the same way, losing a casual acquaintance is not a big deal emotionally. Breaking a string may take some effort, and so the loss of an associate would affect you to some degree, depending on the depth and length of the relationship. A rope or a cable, however, would require tremendous exertion to break, particularly if there was tension in the line. So it is that the loss of an intimate friend or family member can affect your soul tremendously.

Healthy soul ties stabilize the soul. The more you open up to the intimacies involved in relationships, the more you experience the freedom to be yourself. Let's consider healthy and godly type soul ties described in the Bible:

MARRIAGE SOUL TIES

The first mention of a "soul tie" in the Word is found early in Genesis:

"So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; because she was taken out of man, she shall be called 'woman'. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife, and they will become one flesh." (Genesis 2:21-24)

This is the famous "leave and cleave" passage concerning marriage. From the very beginning God's intention has been that the man and woman's soul ties with their parents should be broken prior to marriage. Why is that? Because few things are as destructive to a marriage as when one partner or

another is still emotionally tied, and often as a result, manipulated and controlled, by a meddling parent. So, interestingly enough, we see that the first Bible reference to a soul tie is an admonition to break a soul tie.

FRIENDSHIP SOUL TIES

Another example is found in the book of Ruth. In fact, this verse is often found in the liturgy of weddings. Naomi had two sons and two daughter-in-laws. After her sons died, she told her daughter-in-laws they were free to return to their people. One of them, Orpah, did just that. But the other, Ruth, refused to leave.

“...Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth clung to her. “Look,” said Naomi, “your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her.” But Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, severely if need be, if anything but death separates you and me.” (Ruth 1:14-17)

Ruth was bonded to Naomi like glue. In fact, the Hebrew word for ‘clung’ (dabaq) is a word similar to the one used in Israel today for ‘glue’. So, we see they were “glued together” in a loving and faithful relationship of mother and daughter-in-law. Let’s consider another example of a friendship-type soul tie:

“..when he had made an end of speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.” (1 Samuel 18:1)

Jonathan, the son of King Saul, had great respect and love for David, the future king. The friendship was so deep that we’re told their very souls were ‘knit’ together. This bonding served them both well in the days to come. Jonathan did his best to protect David from Saul’s rage and David, when he became king, went to great lengths to care for Jonathan’s only remaining son.

SOUL TIES WITH OTHER BELIEVERS

“I beseech you, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” (1 Cor. 1:10)

“I would that you knew what great conflict I have for you...that your hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God the Father and of Christ;” (Col. 2:1-2)

In these verses, believers are encouraged to knit their lives together like threads in a garment, each thread intricately woven with each other thread. This is a picture of how God wants the body of Christ to be. However, soul ties among believers should really be called spirit ties. Believers are ‘spirit tied’ before they’re ‘soul tied’. When you experience spiritual rebirth, you become one in Spirit with every other believer. As a result, bonding in the mind and emotions becomes far easier, because of the spirit union already there.

This is the reason believers can meet somebody they’ve never met before and feel like they’ve known them for many years. Believers “bear witness in their spirit” when they meet someone who loves Jesus. Satan cannot fake real joy or peace. And he particularly cannot counterfeit the love of God that flows spirit to spirit between true believers.

SOUL TIES WITH PASTORS OR SPIRITUAL LEADERS

“So every man of Israel left David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem.” (2 Sam. 20:2)

Here we see the men of Judah bonding with their leader David. This depicts the soul tie that's needed between believers and their spiritual authorities. Again, the Hebrew word here is 'dabaq' for 'glue'. The men were glued to their authority. We see a similar tie of devotion between Elijah and Elisha, Moses and Joshua, and Jesus and His disciples.

Such a bond is essential for a pastor or spiritual leader to pass on anointed ministry to those submitted to him in the Lord. There has to be a soul trust - a soul tie that's rooted in a shared passion and sense of vision. As a pastor, I've found this to be true time and again over the years. When such a trust bond was lacking, the results were invariably disappointing. But, when I've been privileged to 'have someone's heart', then that person was able to 'catch the vision' and run with it in a way that those without that 'soul trust' could not.

SOUL TIES BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN

"When I come to my father, and the lad is not with us, seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life, then he will go down to his grave with sorrow and die.." (Gen. 44:30-31)

In this verse, we see a picture of a father so tied with his son that, were his son to fail to appear, he would go down to his grave with sorrow. Few ties are as tight as those between parents and their children, particularly between a mother and her child. God ordained such natural bondings, knowing that child rearing is difficult. At times, were it not for such soul ties, many parents might be tempted to give up. But with such ties, a parent can sustain a level of unconditional love essential for the proper development of the child.

UNGODLY SOUL TIES

A soul tie is a 'channel'. Think of a soul tie as a soda straw through which flows mental and emotional things. Spiritual things can pass through as well, be they from the human spirit, be they psychically induced, demonically inspired, or genuine and edifying from the Lord. Because demonic spirits can transfer so easily through soul ties, it's essential to identify and destroy those that are ungodly, controlling, or emotionally binding. Let's look at an example of ungodly ties between a father and his sons:

God said, "Why do you kick at my sacrifice and my offering and honor your sons above me...? For I will judge his house for ever....because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them." (1 Samuel 2:29, 3:13)

UNGODLY PATERNAL SOUL TIES

God was rebuking the prophet Eli because of his unwillingness to correct his sons for their sins against the Lord. The sin of Eli was parental permissiveness. As a result, God's judgment came upon his house. In spite of their best efforts, parents can be soul tied to their kids in unhealthy ways. Due to their own insecurities, parents can develop soul ties of indifference, permissiveness, idolatry, compromise and control (and in many other areas). Let's consider some of the symptoms and results of ungodly soul ties between parents and their children.

Symptoms of Unhealthy or Absent Parent / Child Bonding

- Periodically swinging from angry correction to guilt.
- Manipulative, dishonest in dealings with their child.
- Unreasonably controlling.
- Resistant to counsel concerning their child rearing.
- Defensive for the child when others speak of his / her failings or shortcomings. This is always an indicator of a problem: A Sunday School teacher approaches a parent and says, "I'm hesitant to tell you this, but your child has been a real disruption in our class lately." Mom replies, "Not my child! This just can't be true! He's not like that. It must be the effect the other children are having on him." With such words, an unhealthy tie is confirmed.

- Unhealthy dependence on the child's part for the parent (often the result of "spoiling"). One indication of unhealthy dependence is excessive clinginess and crying whenever mom or dad leave to go somewhere. Often, unhealthy dependence is fostered out of a sense of guilt on the part of the parent. The results can often be as damaging as neglect. God's balance can be seen in nature. As a piece of fruit ripens, so does the tie that connects it to the tree. If you try to remove an apple while it's still green, you'll need to twist and pull to snap it loose. However, when the apple is fully ripe, it will fall off with just the slightest tug. So it should be with children. The dependence that was so essential in the early years needs to gradually give way to a parent-to-child respect that will enable them to leave the nest on their own when it's time.
- Tendency to yield to the child's manipulation, thus making consistent discipline difficult.
- Allowing the child to dictate and control the parent's activities and relationships. At this point, the soul tie between the parent and child has become quite unhealthy. There's even a passage Isaiah that describes such a state and the curse that goes with it:

"As for my people, children are their oppressors and women rule over them. Oh my people, they which lead you cause you to err...." (Isaiah 3:12)

Results of Unhealthy or Absent Parent / Child Bonding

Unhealthy (or absent) parent-child soul ties can produce lifelong insecurities in the child. This invariably results in their pursuing unhealthy relationships with others of similar personality weaknesses. At the same time, when a healthy bonding is lacking, a child may spend the rest of his or her life looking to have it fulfilled.

This is one reason why a woman will end up marrying a man who displays the same abusive tendencies as her dad. Because she never properly bonded with her father, she finds herself, often without realizing it, attracted to men like her father. Why? Because she's trying to 'close the gap' in her soul caused by the lack of a healthy paternal soul tie. She's still trying to find his love. When a boy is not properly bonded with his father or with his mother, a similar thing happens. He'll find himself bouncing from relationship to relationship, ever seeking the deep bonding he lacked as a child. This is one of the reasons divorce is so rampant today. The 'grown up child' is trying to find the soul tie that never properly formed in the rearing years. The good news, though, is that Jesus can bring healing and restoration. David tells us in the Psalms:

"When my mother and my father forsake me then the Lord will take me up." (Psalm 27:10)

There are two things absolutely necessary in raising children: parameters and consistency. Clearly define the rules, then be consistent in enforcing them. In other words, build a fence and don't waver with the consequences when the fence is crossed. Most child-rearing problems stem from either the lack of established rules of conduct, or inconsistent insistence that the rules be observed.

SOUL TIES IN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

"Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man do not go: otherwise you'll learn his ways and get a snare to your soul." (Prov. 22:24-25)

"Go from the presence of a foolish man, when you perceive not in him the lips of knowledge." (Prov. 14:7)

"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion has light with darkness? What concord has Christ with Baal?...Come out from among them, be separate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you and will be a Father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. 6:14-18)

We are clearly admonished in scripture to be wise in our relationships. We're told to avoid close associations with those that are angry, with those acting foolishly and with those that are unbelievers. Understand that we're not prohibited here from having any relationship with such persons. Rather, it's just

that such relationships should not be able to form unhealthy soul ties where one's witness and walk with the Lord is compromised.

To bond with someone emotionally or spiritually who is unrepentantly angry, or someone who is given over to a vice, can be extremely dangerous. The evil spirits at work in them can then pass through the soul tie to affect you. The result would be that you might find yourself at some point justifying and rationalizing their actions and eventually joining them. Birds of a feather tend to flock together, we're told.

How then should you relate to such persons? Simply keep your discernment tuned in when you're around them so that if there's any transferring of spirits, it will be the Holy Spirit from you rather than an unclean spirit from them.

One way these principles are often compromised is in the area of "missionary dating". That's where a believer gets romantically involved with an unbeliever and justifies it on the basis that they are helping that person "come to the Lord". Such reasoning is extremely faulty. The truth is, when one has romantic feelings for someone, they are the last person with any kind of "ministry" to them. Why? Because the emotional tie in the relationship prevents them from any objectivity and discernment to the other's true spiritual state. Since, as the saying goes, "Love is blind", missionary dating is often nothing more than the blind leading the blind. And Jesus said when that happens, they both fall into the ditch.

So what should you do if you're already romantically tied with an unbeliever? Break the soul tie! It can and must be done. Submit yourself to the Lord, fast for a few days and have someone pray under the anointing to sever the bonds of emotional attachment. By doing this you won't have to go through a lengthy process of "pining away" as you let the relationship die. Complete obedience in this area will bring about the Lord's deliverance from a dangerous and ungodly soul tie.

SOUL TIES THROUGH IMPURE SEXUAL ACTIVITY

"Dinah the daughter of Leah went out to see the daughters of the land. When Shechem saw her, he took her, lay with her and defiled her. And his soul clave to Dinah, and he loved the damsel, and spoke kindly to her." (Gen 34:1-3)

"King Solomon loved many strange women....concerning which the Lord said, you shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in to you: for they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave to these in love." (2 Kings. 11:1-2)

"Don't you know that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? Don't you know that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, says He, shall be one flesh." (1 Cor 6:15-16)

God's plan for a man and a woman is not at all like that of the world. First, He would have them come together and bond in the area of the spirit. Over time, as they get to know one another, a bonding of the mind and emotions would occur. Then, only after solemn vows of commitment in marriage, would any bonding of the body be permissible.

The world has it backwards. Generally, the first thing to bond is the body through sexual indulgences of various degrees. Then, due to strong physical attraction, a couple will get married (if they even do that anymore). After a while, they come to know one another in their soul, mind and emotions. That's when they begin to discover that they're really not so compatible after all. The woman discovers that her attractive husband has an abusive, violent streak. The man finds that the sweet lady he married is full of insecurity and control.

The way of the world is totally backwards. That's why the way of the Lord is the only way to go. When you prioritize the things of the Lord over the issues of a relationship, you'll ultimately find both. Jesus said,

"Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added unto you." (Matt 6:33)

SOUL TIES WITH THE DEAD

"David covered his face and cried with a loud voice, "O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!" And Joab came into the house, and said to the king, "You have shamed this day the faces of all your servants.....for I perceive that if Absalom had lived, and we all had died, then it would have pleased you well." (2 Sam 19:4-6)

King David had an unhealthy soul tie with his son, Absalom, who rebelled against him and contributed to the deaths of thousands. David's tie was undoubtedly rooted in guilt, for in many ways he had failed in his son's rearing. The result being that after Absalom was killed and his armies routed, David shamed his own armies by pining away.

As strange as it may seem, it is possible to be soul tied to the dead. The Biblical prescription for mourning was to be seven to thirty days (see Genesis 50:10 and Deut 34:8). Then you were to put your grief behind you and go on. God knew that excessive and lasting grief would only open one's soul to heaviness, gloom and despair. We've all heard stories of a heartbroken parent who, after a child's death, keeps his room exactly like it was for many years. Such excessive grief brings heaviness and gloom to others in the house. It's as if the spirit of death were invited to remain.

The same thing can happen with women who have had an abortion. Even after they've asked and received forgiveness for the deed, guilt and shame often remain. This is generally an indication of a soul tie with the aborted child. Until and unless the soul tie is broken, the mother will be subject to bouts of depression and guilt. But when that bond is severed, they're able to put it behind them once and for all, and live life free from the failure of their past.

SOUL TIES WITH THE DEMONIC

"Cleave unto the Lord as you have done this day....take good heed that you love the Lord your God. Else if you do turn back and cleave unto these ungodly nations...then know that the Lord will no more drive them out; but they will be snares and traps to you, scourges in your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which the Lord has given you." (Jeremiah 23:8-13)

The prophet plainly warns Israel here that if they "cleave" to the demonic nations around them instead of "cleaving" to God, then the Lord will let them reap what they sow! Let's consider this passage allegorically. Any and all involvement with idolatry or the occult sciences will result in soul ties with evil spirits. That's because such involvement is in direct opposition to the first commandment,

"Thou shall not have any gods before me." (Exodus 20:3-5)

Because Satan is the father of all liars, lying can also result in soul ties with demons (see John 8:44). Once you choose to lie to another or lie to yourself, you have, in effect, come into agreement with Satan. That, in turn, opens you to suggestions and deceptions of wicked spirits. Also, when you refuse to forgive someone you soul tie with a demon. Why is that? Because when you refuse to forgive, God will not forgive you. What He will do is deliver you to the tormentors until you do forgive (see Matt 6:15 and 18:35). Needless to say, understanding these things will hopefully encourage one to avoid them at all costs. If you find yourself even now in agreement with Satan because of lying, dishonesty, idolatry or unforgiveness, then quickly repent. The Lord will then grant you the grace to disentangle yourself from the bonds of the demonic.

SYMPTOMS OF UNGODLY SOUL TIES

- Obsessive preoccupation with another, to the neglect of the things of the Lord.
- Tendencies to be domineering and controlling in a relationship.
- Tendencies to be passive and apathetic in a relationship (easily manipulated).
- Inability to truly forgive from the heart.
- Another person's voice playing over and over in the mind like a tape-recorder.
- Inability to bring a relationship under the godly order and control of the Holy Spirit.

- Patterns of anger, blame and accusations in a relationship.
- Fear of “being real with” or speaking truth to another (intimidation and fear of man).
- Psychic or occultic phenomena within a relationship.

STEPS TO BREAKING UNGODLY SOUL TIES

1) Confess any and all ungodly ties to the Lord. Repent from your heart for violating God's ordained boundaries in your relationships.

2) Make a solemn commitment to the Lord to break off any relationship that is not pure or righteous in His eyes. Become accountable to others to help you keep that commitment. Until you do that, any prayers for freedom are in vain. I've actually had people ask me to break their unhealthy soul ties so that when they got together again (in their illicit relationship), they wouldn't feel all those bad spirits. However, God is not mocked. Reinforce your requests to the Lord with a commitment to obey.

3) Before praying, do whatever is necessary for the anointing of the Holy Spirit to come. This is so important. Pray, wait, forgive, or worship. Once His presence and anointing is present, then proceed with the soul tie breaking prayer. It's the anointing that breaks the yoke. The ties won't break with a simple prayer from the mind. The anointed power of the Holy Spirit must be present to be effective.

SOUL TIE BREAKING PRAYER

“In the name of Jesus Christ I now renounce, break and loose myself from all demonic subjection and any ungodly soul ties and unhealthy bondings with the following people: (break soul ties with each person that comes to mind)”

“Lord, I ask you to do whatever it takes to break me of my tendencies to: obsessive preoccupations, domination, control, passivity, apathy, unforgiveness, anger, blame, accusations, fear, intimidation and disobedience in relationships.”

“Finally, in the name of Jesus, I declare every demonic hold in my life that has come as a result of unhealthy soul ties null and void. Satan, I renounce you and your demons and command you to depart from my spirit, soul and body!”

“I, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation where you are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Eph. 4:1-3)