

Soul Ties

You will not find the phrase “Soul Ties” in scripture.

It is a modern term that seeks to describe how people connect in relationships, both healthy and unhealthy.

Scripture teaches (1 Thess. 5 v23) that we are body, soul and spirit. In this context we take soul to mean the mind, the will and emotions.

Scripture teaches us to speak to our soul, David (Psalm 42) saying “*why are thou cast down O’ my soul*”. David knew that he had to live from his spirit, not just his mind, will and emotions. Sometimes our souls have to be called back to their right place “*hope thou in God*”. This more than just ‘will power’, it is a spiritual re-alignment of the right authority of our spirit.

In this context we take soul tie to mean the connection between 2 people, most often a strong emotional connection. Soul ties (connections) are essential for healthy relationships in which case it is important that they are ‘appropriate’.

Perhaps the best example is a married couple, who commit themselves to each other with vows and covenants and become ‘one flesh’ when the marriage relationship is consummated.

Becoming ‘one flesh’ can also be very inappropriate (sinful) when it takes place outside the covenant of marriage. Sexual relationships are so much more than a mere physical act, they involve emotional connection, create memories in the mind and make you ‘one’ with another person.

To do so repeatedly will inevitably create difficulties for the person concerned as they give and join themselves to multiple others. (1 Cor. 6 v16)

These kinds of connection are not only sexual and so are not exclusive to marriage. David & Jonathan’s relationship was deep and intentional. Jonathan preferred David above himself, but not out of self-interest in a way that controlled David, but rather enabled and released David to be all that God has called him to be and do. Scripture describes it this way in 1 Samuel 18 v1-4, “*Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself. ² Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father’s house. ³ Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. ⁴ Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armour, including his sword and his bow and his belt*”.

These types of soul connection happen in almost any relationship, what makes them healthy or unhealthy will depend on if they are appropriate for that specific relationship.

Signs and benefits of healthy connections might include some of the following;

- Staying committed to working through difficulties
- Seeking the best interests of the other person while not subjugating themselves
- Encouraging the other person
- Confronting without attacking and not taking offence
- Mentoring and coaching, as in the Paul & Timothy relationship.
- Promoting people, as Jonathan did with David
- Believing the best without being blind to areas for improvement
- Both individuals are stronger 'putting 10,000 to flight', rather than one being strong at the expense of the other.

Signs of an unhealthy connection might include some of the following;

- Staying in or repeatedly returning to an abusive relationship,
- Unable to make decisions on their own.
- Allowing themselves to be manipulated and controlled by the other person
- Despite having left a relationship, thinking about that person obsessively
- Thinking about that person when having sex with your husband / wife
- Giving them too much authority over your life
- Co-dependent relationships
- Unable to commit to one person as they keep speculating about a past relationship
- Recurring dreams about that other person
- Emotionally dependent, even mirroring the other person's mood and health
- Jealousy when one of you develops other friendships
- Not 'being yourself' out of fear they will leave, be upset, punish you.
- You feel their problems are your fault / responsibility.

Mostly, such connections are with people, partners, spouses, bosses and leaders. It is these types of unhealthy connections that Bethel Sozo would deal with under the generic term of Soul Ties.

Within the culture and in keeping with the values of a Sozo session, we would walk through a process that would include some of the following;

- Repent of partnering in unhealthy ways
- Break the soul tie
- Sever the influence
- Take back what they gave away
- Give back what they took from the other person

In almost every situation, this is a brief process with very limited displays of emotion. It is essentially a spiritual transaction.

As a follow up we recommend the book "Boundaries" by Cloud and Townsend.