



The Soul of the Person: A Contemporary Philosophical Psychology

Adrian J. Reimers

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Does the human being really have a soul? Is the idea of 'soul' a matter of religious faith? If science cannot detect the soul, how can reasonable people speak of it?

The Soul of the Person is a contemporary account of the metaphysical basis for the transcendence of the human person. In being directed toward truth, beauty, and goodness, the human person transcends the physical order and reveals himself as a spiritual, as well as a material, being. The metaphysical principle for this transcendence is what we call the soul.

In this book, Adrian Reimers presents a rereading and interpretation of Thomas Aquinas's account of human nature. The book's argument is based principally on two modern thinkers: Charles Sanders Peirce and his theory of habit and sign, and Karol Wojtyla and his notion of the transcendence of the acting person.

According to Reimers, the person is constantly in the process of self-realization, which occurs through the rational adoption and development of habits. "Rationality" is not a purely mental phenomenon; rather, it imbues our entire being. The human person forms his behavior—habits—rationally according to his ideals of what is truly good, even if that vision of the good is flawed, incomplete, or unacknowledged. This development of habits directed toward values is the root of the person's consciousness of self. Furthermore, the values by which one forms his life define the self that he more clearly becomes as a person. The rational principle by which he develops these habits is called the soul. The text concludes with an explanation of the immortality of the soul.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Adrian J. Reimers is adjunct assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Notre Dame. He is the author *An Analysis of the Concepts of Self-Fulfillment and Self-Realization in the Thought of Karol Wojtyla, Pope John Paul II*.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:

"One of the underlying concerns animating the writing of this book is the challenge posed by the pervasive contemporary agnosticism concerning the existence of the soul. Many students today, including Catholics, consider the soul to be a purely religious matter, a mere tenet of personal faith. Reimers is sensitive to this challenge, and *The Soul of the Person* is his answer. While parts of the book are technical and obviously

intended for philosophers, most of it should be accessible to any educated and attentive reader. . . . In this respect, probably not since David Braine's *The Human Person: Animal and Spirit* (1992) has there been such a thoroughgoing analysis of philosophical anthropology based on such a thoroughgoing synthesis of the contemporary literature. . . . [T]he book is also distinguished by Reimers's impressive gift for providing numerous helpful illustrations and sometimes humorous examples . . . and his extensive discussion of various scientific, mathematical, and logical cases. One gets the sense that Reimers is most likely an engaging instructor in his classroom." — Philip Blosser, *The Thomist*

"He has produced a helpful contribution to the literature on the soul, aiming to steer a course between the two poles of mind — body dualism and materialism and to come up with a holistic solution which recognizes both the spiritual and material nature of human beings. . . . I recommend this book to all who are interested in the fundamental question of what it means to be a person." — Rodney Holder, *The Journal of Theological Studies*

"[An] important contribution to contemporary philosophical psychology. . . . In this book, Reimers has, in the present reviewer's view, made a significant contribution to present debates concerning the human person. . . . This work deserves a wide readership. Those who wish to promote a culture of life ought to take it up straight away." — Kevin E. O'Reilly, *Review of Metaphysics*

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