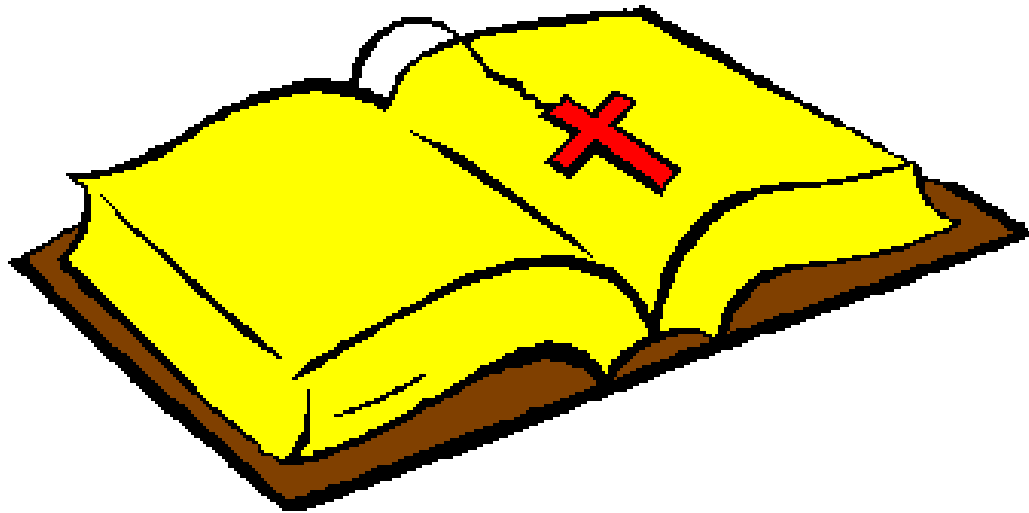


# THE SPIRITUAL MAN



by  
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## THE SPIRITUAL MAN

Please open your Bibles to I Corinthians two and verse fourteen. I would like to preach a message entitled "The Spiritual Man."

When I use the word "man" today, I am using it to include all human individuals. That is, men, women, boys, and girls, and not just men. In I Corinthians 2:14-3:3, the Bible says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

We are going to notice several things—number one, the natural man; number two, the carnal man; and number three, the spiritual man. After that we are going to notice four biblical qualities that characterize the spiritual man. Are you a spiritual man? You say, "Preacher! When I look around the room this morning and compare myself with my brothers and sisters in Christ, I am a spiritual Christian." I did not ask you that. Are you a spiritual man? As a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you ought to be. You ought to be a spiritual man.

Please notice number one: the natural man. In I Corinthians 2:14, the Bible says, "But the natural man...." (You could say "the unsaved man" here and do no harm to Scripture because the natural man is an unsaved man.) And the Bible goes on to say that he "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."

The unsaved man could be the neighbor next door. He could be the family member that you live with. He could be the friend that you spend time with. He could be the guy that you work with. He may be a person who is religious. He may be a person who is morally good. He may be a person in this room tonight who does not grasp, comprehend, or understand spiritual truth. It would be absolutely impossible for him to do that because the Bible says the natural man, the unsaved man, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

What is the Bible saying? The Bible is saying this: The natural man does not grasp, comprehend, or understand spiritual truth because spiritual truth is spiritually discerned. That's the natural man. He needs to be saved; he needs to be born again in order to grasp, comprehend, and understand spiritual truth.

Let me ask you this. Are you saved? Are you born again? In John 3:7, Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." Ye must be born again in order to grasp, comprehend, and understand spiritual truth.

You say, "Preacher! What must I do to be saved?" The very first thing you must do is realize the fact that you are a sinner and in need of a Saviour. In Romans 3:23, the Bible says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Because you are a sinner, you are condemned to die. In Hebrews 9:27, the Bible says, "And it is appointed unto men once to die." In Romans 6:23, the Bible says, "For the wages of sin is death." That includes eternal separation from God and the people of God in an awful place called hell. You will never be able to work your way into Heaven. God does not have a scale in heaven whereby He weighs good and bad works. In Ephesians 2:8-9, The Bible says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

God loved you so much that He gave His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to bear your sin and die in your place on the cross. He became your substitute. In II Corinthians 5:21, the Bible says, "For he hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." And if man would simply believe on Christ, he could be saved. In John 6:47, the Bible says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." In Romans 10:9-10, the Bible says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." In Romans 10:13, the Scripture says, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

If you have never been saved, if you have never been born again, you need to be saved. You need to be born again so that you can begin to grasp, comprehend, and understand spiritual truth; and, with that, you will receive forgiveness of all your sins, eternal life, and a home in Heaven when you die.

So that's the natural man. The natural man needs to be saved; but notice number two: the carnal man. The carnal man is a saved man. The carnal man is a born-again man. But he is dominated by his flesh; he is ruled by his flesh; he is dominated and ruled by the old sin nature, the old flesh nature, that he has. Therefore he is a carnal Christian. Now the Bible defines carnality for us. In I Corinthians 3:3, the Bible says, "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" In other words the carnal Christian may look like the spiritual Christian. He goes to church. He goes to Sunday school. He looks good on the outside. But he is dominated by his flesh; he is ruled by his flesh; he is dominated and ruled by the old sin nature, the old flesh nature, that he has, that he was born with; and the results of that are such things as envying, and strife, and divisions. Therefore, you have the carnal man dominated and ruled by his flesh.

Notice number three: the spiritual man. If you have a carnal man, there must be a spiritual man. Every Christian is aware of the old sin nature, the old flesh nature, operating in him. It does exist. The spiritual man is a Christian who has the old sin nature, the old flesh nature, operating in him, existing in him; but he is not dominated and ruled by its existence. The spiritual man is a Christian who is

dominated and ruled by the Holy Spirit of God and the Word of God; and thus he is a spiritual Christian. We are not going to examine the natural man or the carnal man any longer. I want us to zero in on the spiritual man and examine him today.

As a child of God you're going to be dominated and ruled by the Holy Spirit of God and the Word of God, and thus be a spiritual Christian; or you're going to be dominated and ruled by your flesh, and thus be a carnal Christian. You're going to be a spiritual dad, a spiritual mom, a spiritual husband, a spiritual wife, a spiritual young person, a spiritual Christian; or you're going to be a carnal dad, a carnal mom, a carnal husband, a carnal wife, a carnal young person, a carnal Christian. It is that simple.

Now you ought to be a spiritual dad. You ought to be a spiritual mom. You ought to be a spiritual husband. You ought to be a spiritual wife. You ought to be a spiritual young person. You ought to be a spiritual Christian. But you say, Preacher! How can I determine that? How can I determine if I have the qualities that characterize the spiritual man?

With the time remaining, we are going look at four biblical qualities that characterize the spiritual man. I want you to examine yourself and see if you have these four biblical qualities that characterize the spiritual man.

Please notice number one: the spiritual man discerns. In I Corinthians 2:15, the Bible says, "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." What does this verse teach? It simply teaches us that the spiritual man discerns. He will pray. He will investigate. He will seek out. He will discern. It is not good enough for him that something feels right. It is not good enough for him that something looks right. It is not good enough for him that something seems right. The spiritual man will examine all things in light of the Word of God and then distinguish between right and wrong to make a right choice. He does not discern on the basis of his own personal experiences. He doesn't do that. He discerns on the basis of what the Word of God says. He discerns on the basis of what the Word of God teaches.

The spiritual man is a student of the Word of God. In II Timothy 2:15, the Bible says, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." He knows how to take the Bible and determine what is right and what is wrong to make a right choice.

Brethren! That's the spiritual man. You will never hear the spiritual man saying, "Well, it doesn't bother me. So if it doesn't bother me it must be okay." You will never hear the spiritual man saying that. That is the mark of carnality. You will never hear the spiritual man saying, "I watch nudity and listen to profanity on TV, and it doesn't affect me. So if it doesn't affect me, it must be okay." You will never hear the spiritual man saying that. That too is the mark of carnality. You will never hear the spiritual man saying, "Well, folks are getting saved; and if folks are getting saved, it must be of God because anything at all that results in salvation must be of God." You will never hear the spiritual man saying that. That too is the mark of carnality.

The spiritual man does not judge on the basis of his own personal experiences. He does not judge on the basis of results. He does not judge on the basis of opinions. He judges on the basis of what the Bible says. He judges on the basis of what the Bible teaches. He understands the Word of God; and, by using the Word of God, he discerns. He discerns what the Word of God says and what it does not say. He discerns what the Word of God teaches and what people say it teaches. Not every thing that comes across the TV or radio, or across the pulpits by preachers is "thus saith the Lord." So please don't you be so naive as to think so.

Now, I want to say, God did not save you that you might live for yourself and do what you want to do, and leave you with no Bible verse to guide your actions. The spiritual man would examine the Word of God and see if that is what the Bible teaches; and if it does not teach that, if it does not say that, then the spiritual man lets it go in one ear and right out the other. But if the word of God teaches that, if the word of God says that, then the spiritual man is to be a hearer and doer of God's Word. What did I say? I simply said that God did not save you that you might live for yourself and do what you want to do in this life. The Bible is very clear on this. In II Corinthians 5:15, we read, "They which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." That is one of the clearest passages in all the Word of God which teaches that God did not save you that you might live for yourself, and do what you want to do, but that you might live for Christ.

So the spiritual man discerns what is right and what is wrong in order to make a right choice; and by doing that, he is now able to give godly advice to others. So don't you dare get your advice from the ungodly crowd. In Psalms 1:1, the Bible says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly."

Get your advice from the spiritual man. The spiritual man can discern between what is good, what is better, and what is best. He realizes that there are many things that are good, but that they are not superior. He learns to discern between what is best over what is good. The spiritual man discerns between the good from the better from the best and gives his life to doing that first. In Matthew 6:33, Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The spiritual man realizes that there are a lot of noble things that he could give his life to; but he must determine what is first, and then do it first. He is not guided by his emotions. He is not guided by his experiences. He is not guided by results. He is not guided by opinions. He is guided by biblical principles set forth in the Word of God. He tests out what he thinks, what he is told, what he sees, what he hears, and what her feels, by the biblical standards set forth in the Word of God. He gives liberty where God grants it, but he requires restriction where God demands it.

I submit to you that the spiritual man discerns. If that's a quality of spirituality, are you a spiritual man?

Notice number two: the spiritual man acknowledges. In I Corinthians 14:37, the Bible says, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

The spiritual man acknowledges the authority of the Word of God on his life. The Bible is not just a good book to him. The Bible is not just a good book of biblical principles to him. The Bible is a book of binding biblical principles to the spiritual man. He acknowledges the authority of God on his life. He acknowledges the rule of God on his life, as it is expressed in the Word of God. In other words, he gladly submits himself to God. In James 4:7, the Bible says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God."

You say, Preacher! How can I do that? How can I submit myself to God? The only way you can submit yourself to God is to bring yourself under the authority of God, under the rule of God, as it is expressed in the Word of God. You must realize that the biblical principles set forth in the Word of God are not just up for grabs, but they are the binding rule for your life. The spiritual man would say something like this, "You tell me what the Bible says or help me find out what the Bible says; or I will find out what the Bible says, and whatever it says, I am going to do because I realize that the Word of God is binding in its authority upon me as a child of God."

Listen! If there is anything, anything at all that would cure most of your problems in your home, in your church, in your life, in your business, in your marriage today, it is bringing yourself under the authority of God, under the rule of God, as it is expressed in the Word of God.

Let me ask you this. Do you gladly submit yourself to the teachings of the Word of God? Do you gladly submit yourself to the principles of the Word of God? Do you gladly submit yourself to the commandments of the Word of God? If you are a spiritual Christian, you do. If you are a carnal Christian, you do not. It is that simple. If a Christian does not submit himself to the authority of God on his life, to the rule of God on his life, as it is expressed in the Word of God, then he is a carnal Christian. No matter who you are today as a child of God, unless you come to that place of submission to the authority of God on your life, to the rule of God on your life, as it is expressed in the Word of God, then you are not a spiritual Christian. You are a carnal Christian.

I submit to you that the spiritual man acknowledges. If that's a quality of spirituality, are you a spiritual man?

Notice number three: the spiritual man restores. In Galatians 6:1, the Bible says, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." A Christian who is taken over in a fault is usually trying to live for the Lord. He is usually trying to live for God; but for whatever reason, he winds up in a life of carnality. The Bible says, "Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

Don't you see? The spiritual man judgeth all things. He examines all things in light of the Word of God. He discerns on the basis of what the Word of God says. He discerns on the basis of what the Word of God teaches, and then he distinguishes between right and wrong to make a right choice. He acknowledges the authority of God on his life. He acknowledges the rule of God on his life as it is expressed in the Word of God. And he gladly submits himself to the teachings of the Word of God, to the principles of the Word of God, to the commandments of the Word of God; and, in that position, he is now able to help restore a carnal brother or sister in Christ.

Brethren, the spiritual man ought to be the first one to help out by saying, "What can I do to help you get back on track?" The carnal Christian would say something like this, "If that's the way my brother in Christ is going to live; if that's the way my sister in Christ is going to act, I am not going to help out. I am not going to get involved." You will never hear the spiritual man saying that. That too is the mark of carnality. The spiritual man ought to be the first one to help out by saying, "What can I do to help you get back on track?"

Now the spiritual man considers himself, as it says in Galatians 6:1, "lest he is also tempted." He does not compromise the Word of God to help. He does not compromise his convictions to help. He does not compromise his standards to help. But, outside of that, he does whatever he can to help restore that carnal brother or sister in Christ.

I submit to you that the spiritual man restores. If that's a quality of spirituality, are you a spiritual man? You ought to be.

Notice number four: the spiritual man matures. In I Corinthians 3:1, Paul writes, "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. " Don't you see the carnal Christian here? He was not maturing. He was not growing. He was not moving forward in his spiritual growth. However, the spiritual Christian was maturing. He was growing. He was moving forward in his spiritual growth. Why is that?

The spiritual man is feeding upon the Word of God every day. Don't you see that the spiritual man judgeth all things? He examines all things in light of the Word of God. He discerns on the basis of what the Word of God says. He discerns on the basis of what the Word of God teaches and then distinguishes between right and wrong to make a right choice. He acknowledges the authority of God on his life. He acknowledges the rule of God on his life, as it is expressed in the Word of God. And he gladly submits himself to the teachings of the Word of God, to the principles of the Word of God, to the commandments of the Word of God. And he is seeking to help restore carnal brothers or sisters in Christ.

Let me ask you something. Are you maturing? Are you growing? Are you moving forward in your spiritual growth? As a child of God you ought to be. You ought to be maturing. You ought to be growing. You ought to be moving forward in your spiritual growth. You ought to be further along in your spiritual growth than you were when you first got saved. You ought to be further along in your spiritual

growth than you were a year ago, a month ago, a week ago. As a matter of fact, you ought to be further along in your spiritual growth than you were just yesterday. Are you living in the reality that one day you are going to stand before Jesus Christ and give Him an account of how you lived your life? You will give account of how you lived your life from the very moment you embraced Him as your own personal Savior and Friend until the day you die. Listen to the Bible. In Hebrews 9:27, it says, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." In Romans 14:10, the Bible says, "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Why? The Bible tells you why in Romans 14:12, which says, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

You ought to be growing. In II Peter 3:18, the Bible says, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." What keeps you from maturing? What keeps you from growing? Is there a sin in your life that keeps you from maturing? Is there a sin in your life that keeps you from growing? Listen folks! Whatever sin keeps you from maturing; whatever sin keeps you from growing, it is keeping you locked into carnality, and you don't have to live that way. You say, Preacher! What must I do? You need to confess and forsake all known sin in your life. In I John 1:9, the Bible says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

I submit to you that the spiritual man matures. He grows. He develops in his Christian life because he is not content to live with any sin in his life. He demands that he do right. When he discovers sin in his life; when he finds inconsistency in his life, he deals with it. He deals with that sin. He deals with that inconsistency. Why? So that he can move forward in his spiritual growth. You will never find the spiritual man shrugging his shoulders saying, "That is just the way I am." You will never find the spiritual man doing that. That's the mark of carnality. The spiritual man says, "That may be the way I am; but, by God's grace, I am not going to stay that way."

I submit to you that the spiritual man matures. If that's a quality of spirituality, are you a spiritual man? By that I mean this: Are you a discerning Christian? Do you judge all things on the basis of what the Word of God says, on the basis of what the Word of God teaches? Are you an acknowledging Christian? Do you acknowledge the authority of God on your life, the rule of God on your life, as it is expressed in the Word of God? Do you gladly submit yourself to the teachings of the Word of God, to the principles of the Word of God, to the commandments of the Word of God? Are you a restoring Christian? Do you help to restore a carnal brother or sister in Christ? Are you a maturing Christian? Are you growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

Be honest with yourself, and determine within yourself, based upon these four biblical qualities of the spiritual man, are you a spiritual Christian? You should be able to ascertain whether or not you are a spiritual Christian. Are you discerning? Are you acknowledging? Are you restoring? Are you maturing? As you examine yourself, think on these things: Are there sins in your life that are hindering you from the spiritual growth you want? Whatever sin keeps you from

maturing, whatever sin keeps you from growing, is keeping you locked into carnality; and you don't have to live that way.

## How is a Person Saved?

Salvation is all of God. God does the saving. Just take God at His Word and claim His salvation by faith. You will never be able to work your way into heaven. God does not have a scale in heaven whereby He weighs your good and bad works. That is a lie of the Devil – Romans 3:24; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:18; Romans 5:8.

Salvation is as simple as believing on Christ as the one who bore your sin, who died in your place, who was buried, and whom God resurrected from the dead – John 1:12, 3:16, 6:47; Acts 16:31; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 10:9-10; Romans 10:13.

Simply admit that you are a sinner and believe on Christ as your crucified, buried, and risen Saviour. You will receive forgiveness for all of your sins. You will receive His free gift of eternal life by faith – Romans 3:10, 23; I Corinthians 15:3-4.

Jesus did a wonderful thing for you some 2,000 years ago on Calvary's cross. He died for you. He was buried for you. He rose again the third day for you, and nothing would thrill Him more than to save you today.

Won't you go to Him right now in prayer and tell Him in your own words that you will trust Him as your Saviour? Or pray this simple prayer: Dear Lord, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died for me and that He arose from the grave. Here and now I ask You to forgive me of my sin and save me. In Jesus's name. Amen.

If you prayed that simple prayer, I would like to hear from you. Please contact me by e-mail or phone (813) 760-4028.

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