

THE CARNAL MAN

1 CORINTHIANS 3:1-3

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INTRO: What a blessed joy it is to see someone trust Christ as personal Savior. To have the opportunity to lead a person to Christ is an experience almost beyond the ability to convey in words. How we rejoice when we see someone come from sin to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ alone. When a person first receives Christ as Savior, he or she is a "BABE IN CHRIST." The NEW BIRTH has just been experienced and the growth to SPIRITUAL ADULT HOOD has begun. **WHAT A JOY IT IS TO SEE PEOPLE GROW IN CHRIST AND WATCH THEM COME INTO A GREATER UNDERSTANDING AND LOVE FOR THE LORD!** However, it is **VERY SAD TO SEE ONE COME TO CHRIST AND REMAIN A SPIRITUAL BABE.** When that happens, I believe God's heart is broken because God wants to use that new believer, but a BABE IN CHRIST is very limited as to where to be used. During our last study we saw what the scripture says about THE NATURAL MAN. Now we are going to see what the Bible has to say about THE CARNAL MAN. As we begin our study, remember this...GOD IS EXTREMELY DISAPPOINTED WITH THE CARNAL CHRISTIAN. WHY? BECAUSE THAT CHRISTIAN HAS FAILED TO APPLY THE WORD OF GOD TO HIS LIFE EFFECTIVELY AND CONSEQUENTLY CANNOT BE USED BY GOD AS GOD DESIRES.

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DEFINITION OF THE WORD "CARNAL."

1) Webster's Dictionary

- a. Pertaining to persons characterized by the passions and appetites of the flesh.
- b. One who is not spiritual but is temporal, sensual and worldly.

2) The Scripture

- a. Having the nature of the flesh, i.e., sensual and governed by the human nature rather than the Spirit of God. (SARKIKOS)
- b. Pertaining to the flesh, being unspiritual and full of earthly wisdom.

THE CARNAL CHRISTIAN IS LIVING A SINFUL RATHER THAN A SPIRITUAL LIFE.

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I. THE CONDITION OF THE CARNAL MAN VS. 1

"BABES IN CHRIST"

A. The Carnal Christian is Alive in Christ - "Babes in Christ."

B. The Carnal Christian is born again, but SPIRITUALLY IMMATURE.

OBSERVATIONS:

- 1) The Christian in this state usually has no commitment to Christ.
- 2) The Christian in this state has no desire to serve Christ consistently.
- 3) The Christian in this state has very little interest in the things of the Lord.
- 4) The Christian in this state has a high interest in the things of the world.
- 5) The Christian in this state has limited involvement in the local church.
- 6) The Christian in this state is seldom a soul winner.
- 7) The Christian in this state usually cannot get along with others
- 8) The Christian in this state cries and complains like a baby

II. THE CHARACTER OF THE CARNAL MAN VSS. 2,3

A. The Carnal Christian must be fed with **SPIRITUAL MILK** and not with **SPIRITUAL MEAT** because he cannot handle the spiritual meat. Vs. 2

1. Being fed with spiritual milk and not with spiritual meat means that the Carnal Christian may have a basic understanding of the Bible, but **NO INDEPTH COMPREHENSION OF SCRIPTURE**.

2. Being fed with spiritual milk and not with spiritual meat is the condition because the Carnal Christian does not **DESIRE** the spiritual meat. Eating Spiritual meat **IS A CHOICE!** He fails to study the Word of God, rejects the idea of discipleship and refuses Christian fellowship and thus **REMAINS A SPIRITUAL BABY**.

3. Being fed with spiritual milk and not with spiritual meat results in **LITTLE TO NO SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT**. This often leads to spiritual deficiencies. For instance:

- a. He or she welcomes and accepts mostly everything that is called "Christian."
- b. He or she usually adopts worldly methods to obtain spiritual goals which in turn will create greater spiritual needs.
- c. He or she usually has little concern or understanding of pure Bible doctrine and consequently falls into impure associations and activities.

ALL OF THIS IS TRUE BECAUSE THE CARNAL CHRISTIAN HAS LITTLE OR NO SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT TO KEEP HIM PURE BEFORE GOD.

B. The Carnal Christian is **"YET CARNAL"** and lives a worldly and sinful lifestyle, even after having been saved a long while. Vs. 3

1. Paul was saying to the Corinthian Christians, "I HAVE THE DESIRE TO FEED YOU SPIRITUAL MEAT, BUT YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO BEAR IT." In fact, Paul says to them in verse 3: **"Ye are carnal and walk as men."** This means that they were living as **UNSAVED PEOPLE!** Note the specific actions listed in this context:

- a. They were envious
- b. They were filled with strife
- c. They were divided among themselves

A study of the **GREATER CONTEXT** of the two books Paul wrote to Corinth, you will find at least 13 carnal activities they maintained: Divisions, Worldly Wisdom, Godless Philosophy, Incest, Taking other Christians to Court, Fornication, Marriage Troubles, Misunderstanding of Idolatry, Improper care of those in Ministry, Misunderstanding of Spiritual Gifts, Misunderstanding Ladies Ministry, Denial of the Resurrection, and Improper attitudes toward Giving.

ILLUSTRATION:

III. THE CONSUMMATION OF THE CARNAL MAN

- A. The Loss of Blessing in this Life
- B. The Loss of Reward in Heaven
- C. The Loss of Glory given to God

ILLUSTRATION:

IV. THE CORRECTION OF THE CARNAL MAN

- A. Repenting of the sin of Carnality
 1. Turn to God in Total Obedience
 2. Turn from any form of Sinful Carnality

B. Responding in Spiritual Growth

THE FORMULA FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH IS FOUND IN HEBREWS 5:12-14:

TIME + KNOWLEDGE = SPIRITUAL GROWTH

-Time with the Lord

-Knowledge of the Scriptures and exercising spiritual discernment

-A Grown up relationship in the Lord

ILLUSTRATION:

APPLICATION: IF GOD HAS CONVICTED YOU OF SPIRITUAL CARNALITY, THANK HIM FOR SHOWING YOU YOUR CARNALITY, AND GIVE YOUR LIFE TO HIM NOW. DO NOT DELAY!