

The Natural Man (1 Corinthians 2:14)

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We are living in a day of delusion, secular humanism, and the spiritual erosion of morals. It's interesting that the modern atheists of our day are so confused about morals or the principles of right conduct that they are backing human rights for apes! Richard Dawkins, in his crusade against God, could not say it more clearly: "There is no objective basis on which to elevate one species above another, chimp and human, lizard and fungus; we have all evolved over some three billion years by a process known as natural selection."

This is an incredible statement to be made from a rational person, who is said to be a scientist and scholar, but Dawkins is dead serious! Should a piece of fungus, a lizard, or a chimpanzee be treated in the same way as a human being? Today, insanity has become science! But the real question is this. Why are there atheists in the world today, like Richard Dawkins, who reject the existence of God and the truth of the Bible? Why does secular humanism exist in our culture? Why is there an increasing rejection and repudiation of Biblical teaching and immoral living in our world? Why are they rewriting the history books and trying to get away from the truth that this nation was founded on the Bible and a Christian ethic? The answer is found in the text of 1 Corinthians 2:14, which reads: "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."

This text reveals how an unsaved person cannot fit God and the Bible into their world view, or way of living. The verse appears in the context of a section of Scripture that deals with the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit. Paul had previously dealt with the Holy Spirit revealing and teaching Christians God's Word and wisdom (1 Cor. 2:9-13). Now the tables are turned and Paul explains that the unsaved natural man cannot spiritually comprehend or understand how the Bible is relevant to his everyday life.

He can't fit the Bible into his way of thinking or manner of living, since he has rejected the illuminating, or teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. This is why we have evolutionism, relativism, mysticism, modernism, and every other kind of "ism" plaguing our society today. People are not responding to the light of truth and the relevancy of Scripture. They are following their natural bent of sin and unbelief. In this study, we are going to learn about the natural man and why he is opposed to God and truth.

The natural man can be described in three ways.

I. He is the unsaved man.

The natural man is an unsaved man since he is set in contrast to the believer who is saved. In the previous section, Paul uses personal pronouns such as "us" (vs. 10) and "we" (vs. 12) as he addresses believers in Christ, who are taught by the ministry of the indwelling Spirit of God. Immediately following this section of Scripture, he talks about the natural man, who cannot receive the spiritual teaching of the Holy Spirit. This is because he has not been given regenerating life by the Holy Spirit, nor does he have the Holy Spirit indwelling in him.

Romans 8:9 gives this conclusion regarding the saved and unsaved: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." This is a very revealing passage of Scripture. An unsaved person does not possess the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit; therefore, he can only live in the realm of his flesh (sin nature). In other words, he has a constant position of living "in the flesh" and cannot manifest the life of Jesus Christ through the Spirit's presence.

An unsaved natural man is "sensual, having not the Spirit" (Jude 19). However, the opposite is true for the true believer. Every Christian has the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit; therefore, he will live a different way of life, as he is influenced by the Spirit's presence. He will experience a new position of life in the Spirit, which is one of victorious and transformed living ("after the Spirit" – Rom. 8:1), instead of maintaining a constant position of living in sin ("after the

flesh” – Rom. 8:1).

The fact that every Christian possesses the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14-16) would negate the teaching that a person can receive the Holy Spirit at a separate time after they are saved, by experiencing an alleged second work of grace. This is foreign to what the Bible says. When you are saved, you immediately receive the Holy Spirit's presence and have the full potential to live a life that is pleasing to God (1 Cor. 12:13).

The Bible is teaching in 1 Corinthians 2:14 that the natural man is the unsaved man, or the person who does not have the indwelling presence and illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit in his life. He is devoid of the regenerating life of the Spirit and also the teaching ministry of the Spirit of God. He is unlike the saved man in every way, since the regenerate man possesses the presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit within his life. The natural man is unsaved and therefore cannot understand how God's Word (the Bible) fits into his everyday life.

The most obvious distinction between the spiritual (1 Cor. 2:15) and natural man (1 Cor. 2:14) is that the spiritual person is saved, since he possesses the Spirit's presence, whereas the natural man is unsaved, since he does not possess the life and teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. If we miss this distinction; we will miss the main thrust in this text of Scripture.

As believers, we should remind ourselves how wonderful it is to be saved and have the Holy Spirit molding our lives into the likeness of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit impresses the values and virtues of Jesus Christ upon our hearts and begins to progressively change and conform us into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:18

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

It's wonderful when we have the Spirit's transforming work taking place in our lives, but it's equally sad to contemplate how the

unsaved, natural man is missing the true meaning and purpose of life. The motto of the unsaved natural man can be summarized in this way:

“Into this world to eat and to sleep,
And to know no reason why he was born,
Save to consume the corn,
Devour the cattle, flock and fish,
And leave behind an empty dish.”

II. He is the unchanged man.

I once heard a sports announcer talking about a new athlete that had just come up to the major leagues to begin his professional career in baseball. The man could run like a rabbit and jump like a deer. After watching him, the announcer said, “That fellow is a natural.” I know what the sports announcer meant by this statement. He was saying that this fellow had the natural abilities of an athlete and would do well in the professional sport of baseball. However, what the announcer said can also be applied to the realm of the unsaved world of mankind. The world of unsaved mankind is in one sense “natural.” He is called the “natural man” because he instinctively or naturally follows the old nature received at human conception. This verse is talking about man as he is born and what he is by nature. The natural man is an unchanged man who lives by the nature he has received from Adam (Rom. 5:12, 19). This is true concerning every child that is born in this world. He is born a natural man.

David declared in Psalm 51:5:

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”

This means your little “angel” that came out of your womb is actually a little sinner! This is why you don’t have to teach children how to lie, fight, and rebel against their parents. They are born sinners. Children are born in the realm of the natural, which means they follow the natural, sinful inclinations and bent of their human nature.

A person is born a natural man which means his soul is governed and guided by the dictates of his old, sinful nature. We can see this natural inborn tendency within the life of every child. The old nature

dominates their soul. Let's face the facts, we did not have to go to school to learn how to lie and be angry. We did not have to go to school and learn how to fight our sister or brother. We are born with a nature that is opposite of God's character and nature. We are born and grow up following the evil nature within us.

Little Suzy was riding in the car with her father. She decided to stand up in the front seat. Her father commanded her to sit down and put on the seat belt, but she declined. He told her a second time, and again she refused. Dad finally said, "If you don't sit down immediately, I'll pull over to the side of the road and spank you!" When the dad said this, the little girl obeyed. But in a few minutes she said quietly, "Daddy, I'm still standing up on the inside."

A. The reason for his unchanged life.

There are three reasons why the natural man remains unchanged.

1. He is soulish.

The term "natural" (1 Cor. 2:14) is literally rendered "soulish." The Greek word "psuchikos" points to a man's soul, which is the unseen or invisible part of a man's existence, where the old nature can operate and perform its wicked and evil duties. This word is actually derived from the root "psyche" which points to something that means a breath of air. "Psyche" is the word used to describe the immaterial or unseen part of man that is within him, which is called his soul (Matt. 10:28; Acts 2:27).

Every person that is born possesses a soul. You can't see your soul, but the soul is what makes you a real person. In Scripture, the soul is the seat of human personality (feelings, desires, affections, decisions) and points to who a person is in relationship to his human existence on earth. Man was originally created as a human soul possessing intellectual, emotional, and volitional aspects that reflected God's nature (Gen. 2:7). In the Genesis account, Adam not only received physical breath from God, but also spiritual life. This means Adam was not only created to be a living, breathing soul on the outside, but also a living soul on the inside, who could reflect God's life and nature. Adam was created to have spiritual contact and

communication with God through his inward human personality (soul). A physical creation occurred on the outside but a spiritual creation took place on the inside, which means Adam, as a living soul, received both a spirit and soul, so he could function as a complete human being, who possessed contact with God through human personality.

In his original creation and innocence, man received a godlike nature that was perfectly expressed through his own human soul, or personality. However, since the Genesis Fall, the soul is pictured as the lower part of a man's human existence (1 Cor. 2:14). It's the place where the sin nature resides, where man's lower or base nature operates, since it is distinguished from man's spirit (Heb. 4:12). According to Hebrews 4:12 soulish desires are distinct from spiritual desires. The soul is the area and arena of a person's human existence where carnality is expressed (1 Pet. 2:11).

Robert Gromacki makes this helpful comment regarding the natural man: "He is soulish or psychical (based on the Greek word *psychikos*). Jude characterized him as 'sensual [same word], having not the Spirit' (Jude v. 19). Within the immaterial part of man, a distinction is made between soul and spirit (1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12). The natural man operates within the soul realm because he is spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1)."

So here is the point; the natural man is the soulish man, since he follows the natural inclinations and instincts of his old, sinful nature, which operate in connection with the constitutional makeup of his soul (human personality). In 1 Corinthians 2:14, Paul is talking about man as he is naturally born, or man as he is governed by the old nature. The "soulish" man is the unregenerate man who can only be governed by the evil dictates of the sin nature (Rom. 3:10-20), which operates in relationship to his soul, creating a depraved personality and person.

The reason this man follows his natural, inborn, sin nature is because he does not possess God's life and nature (Eph. 2:1-2). He can only be governed by the sin nature and naturally will follow its prompting and passions. The natural man is the man unaided by God's life and untouched by the Spirit's teaching ministry. He is the man who simply

has an unchanged nature; therefore, he is an unchanged man.

You can wash and dress a pig for a blue ribbon contest, but in the end, you still have a pig. Why? You can't change the nature and natural instincts of a pig. A pig will always be a pig and eventually do the things that a pig likes to do – wallow in the mud, the muck, and mire.

2 Peter 2:22

“But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”

The natural man cannot change his way of living, since he does not possess a new life, or God's nature to govern him, and sadly, his soul is left to run the streets of life, without God's direction and guidance. I remember seeing a picture of a dog, who looked very skinny, running into a dark black alley in order to search for some food in a garbage dumpster. The night was eerie and the dark alley within the city was full of rats and other rodents. The dog was lost in the night as he went searching for some kind of satisfaction in that dumpy looking alley. I can't but help to relate this scene to the life of the natural man. The natural man is left to roam around in the back alleys of this world. He says he is free. Well, at least he thinks he is free! But in reality, he is searching for his next meal, and is constantly trying to find some kind of hope and satisfaction in life.

In John 6:35, Jesus promised the very opposite kind of life, from the natural or sinful way of living, when He said: “I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” Christ promises true spiritual fulfillment and satisfaction when we embrace Him as our Savior. However, the natural man lacks God's life, nature, help, and satisfaction. This is why people live like animals today going from one partner to another as they try to find satisfaction outside God's life and true contentment. I think this is why we have the great outbreak of pornography, abortion, and homosexuality today. The natural man wants to be free from morals or restraints and live by the dictates of his old nature received from Adam.

2. He is animalistic.

This builds upon our first point. Since this man lives according to his own sinful or soulish desires, he lives without many restraints attached to his life. The same word (“psuchikos”) that is translated “natural” (1 Cor. 2:14) is also translated as “sensual” in James 3:15 and Jude 19, which describes this man as living by his base nature or appetites. Today, man is relegated to be nothing more than an animal by the evolutionary myth, and it would seem that many are living like the animals today. The natural man is the animal man. He is the person who selfishly lives for himself as he lives by the dictates of his own sin nature. This is why people are living in unbridled lust and sin (1 Pet. 4:3). The existentialistic philosophy of today says, “If it feels good, do it.” This secular philosophy reflects the lifestyle of the natural man. The natural man lives in his own environment of sin and enjoys it. He does what he pleases without God’s truth guiding his life. Today evolutionists make the bold claim that we have come from the animals and that we are no different than the animals. It’s no wonder that we are living like the animals in our present generation! Secular colleges promote coed dorms and premarital sex among the young people. Some of the public schools offer condoms to the children. Where will it all end? It seems there is no stop to the moral depravity of the natural man who is following his own base sinful instincts.

3. He is unspiritual.

The natural man can also be regarded as the unspiritual man since he is only a soulish man operating from the realm of his corrupt nature. This is why he is contrasted to the spiritual man, who possesses God’s life and nature, through the presence of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:14-15). The natural man lives a life limited to the level of the soul, where the spiritual man is related to the Holy Spirit and lives in the realm of the Spirit. The unsaved man’s soul has been overtaken by the power of the sin nature, instead of the Holy Spirit, and he is governed without any spiritual contact with God (Eph. 2:12). As previously stated, he is “sensual, having not the spirit” (Jude 19). Therefore, his life remains unchanged. He is unspiritual in his approach to living.

Don't be confused when you see lost people doing good things. Even bad people can do good things from man's perspective. The natural man may be an outwardly religious man at certain times. He may do good things. He may be honest, kind, and courteous. He may get a degree of happiness when doing things for others. He may give to the Salvation Army at Christmas and help hurricane victims to get back on their feet. These acts of kindness which are done by the natural man are the result of the inherited conscience, or sense of morals, which all men have within their human nature or spirit (Romans 2:14-15). They are not the result of the life of God and the Holy Spirit operating within them.

Proverbs 20:27 says:

"The spirit of man *is* the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly."

God has placed a small light of conscience within each person, so they can know when they do certain wrong things. By this light of conscience, man can also be compelled to do good things for other people and refrain from certain sins. Ancient people called this a lamp. The conscience is something that God places inside man, which operates through the realm of man's spirit. This conscience keeps things from getting too dark or prevents man from getting too evil. A person who has a seared conscience (1 Timothy 4:2) becomes a person whose lamp has gone out (Proverbs 24:20).

We can conclude that the acts of kindness and morality from the life of the natural man spring forth from the sense of morals that God has placed within man. Unlike the spiritual man (1 Cor. 2:15), the natural man performs acts of kindness on his own power and without the assistance of God's life and nature. Furthermore, all of his good deeds are said to be actions that are tainted by sin, since everything that an unsaved man does is looked upon as being evil, instead of good, or righteous in God's sight (Rom. 3:13-18). Sinful inclinations are present in everything that a naturally depraved sinner does and practices. Paul described the words (Rom. 3:13-14), acts (Rom. 3:15-17), and attitudes (Rom. 3:18) of man, as being tainted by sin. Therefore, even when unsaved people do good deeds, these deeds are still soiled by sin in some way, and are seen to be as "filthy rags" (Isa 64:4). Unsaved people have sinful inclinations and motives for

doing even good deeds, whether it is to merit God's favor, or promote their own pride and personal agenda in life.

Dr. Harry Ironside once said:

"But other natural men take what has been called the clean side of the broad way, the higher way of the natural man, but it is still the way that leads to destruction."

The natural man may do some good things, but he has no thought or desire to really live for God, and allow God to govern his life. He has no desire to glorify God in all that he does. In whatever he does, he still lives for himself, and ultimately wants his own way in life. In fact, the natural man rejects Christ as Savior and rebels against the way of salvation. He does not want to acknowledge God's rule in his life. He leaves God out of the real scene of his life even though he may sit in the church pew on Sunday morning and piously look up at the preacher. In spite of the good deeds that this man may do, through his inherited conscience, he is still governed by the sin nature through his soul, since he lacks the regenerating life of God.

B. The record where the change took place.

Genesis 2:7

"And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

An atheist scientist and God were talking. After God created Adam from the dust or dirt, the atheist said to God, "That's nothing, I can do that." So the atheist reached down to get dirt and God said, "Get your own dirt!"

Going back to the original creation account and understanding what really happened to Adam will give us better insight concerning the natural/soulish/animalistic/unspiritual man who is living in the world today.

Several things stand out in this historical record.

1. God's gift of life

The Bible teaches that God created Adam as a living soul, or a living being with the spiritual capabilities or morals or God, and a capacity to worship God and fellowship with Him. This was accomplished by breathing into man the breath of life.

What was the breath of God? The infusion of God's breath into Adam's body was more than just the physical capability to breathe and take air into his lungs. If this is all that is meant by this statement, then man is nothing more than a physical being, who breaths in air. We know that man was much more than just a breathing hot air balloon!

When God made the animals (Gen. 1:20), he created them, "nephesh chayah" (singular). By contrast, when God created man (Gen. 2:7), He breathed into man, "nephesh chayim" (lives). The expression "breath of life" (Gen. 2:7) is literally "breath of lives" (plural in Hebrew) and denotes the fact that the inbreathing of God produced a twofold life – physical and spiritual. Man was more than just a hunk of meat with a nervous system. He was created as a spiritual being that possessed an inner life that could reflect God's likeness and fellowship with God. Therefore, Adam awoke to consciousness of life, and this awareness of life contained both a physical and a spiritual capacity. Man is unlike the animals. *Man was created in God's image (Gen. 1:27); therefore, he received God's breath of eternal life and existence, at the time of creation, and also God's moral and intellectual likeness, which was vastly differently than the animal kingdom.*

Adam was created with an intricate, inward, spiritual center that possessed God's life, nature, and personality. The breath of God is the narrator's way of describing the infusion of man's spirit, which would transfer all of God's moral, intellectual, relational, and spiritual capacities to Adam. When God breathed life into Adam's lifeless body, He was also communicating spiritual life to Adam (Gen. 2:7; Rom. 5:18-19), which resulted in Adam becoming a unique human person (soul) that was different than the animals.

Atheistic evolutionary myths relegate man to the status of the animal kingdom. How much hope do we have to think that our existence is no different than a lizard or lady bug?

Someone said:

“Atheism is a journey without a destiny, a body without a soul, a religion without a reason, life without meaning, a faith without hope, and a universe without God. The truth of atheism is the death of truth. The absence of God logically means the absence of all that God implies.”

The Bible does not say God breathed His own breath into the animal world or any other parts of His creation. Although the animal kingdom possessed physical breath, they did not possess God’s special breath of life. Unlike the animal world, God was directly communicating to man His very own spiritual life and nature (“breath”). The breath of God refers to the eternal, Godlike, invisible human spirit that was created within man (Zech. 12:1), so Adam’s life could be directed toward God. Unlike the animal world, man was created with a human spirit and soul that was eternal, which could reflect the image and likeness of God’s personality – His intellect, morals, emotions, and will (Gen. 1:26-27). The animal creation was incapable of reflecting God’s likeness. The Scriptures are very clear about this. Animals were not created in God’s image. The breath of God infused within man would create Adam in God’s own image and likeness, which means he would possess a moral capacity like God, be spiritually capable to worship God, be holy like God, and think like God, through his own human soul.

2. God’s creation of man.

In Genesis 2:7, we read that God breathed His own spiritual life into man’s body and produced a “living soul.” This is the same term that was used of animal life in Genesis 1:24 (“creature” - nephesh), but the breath of God’s life makes humans distinct from all other creatures! The term “soul” means more than just physical or biological life; it also speaks of the invisible part of man’s inner existence and life (spiritual part of man’s existence), which is capable of reflecting God’s likeness and personality (intellect, will, emotions, morality).

The term “soul” (living being) also speaks of the inward spiritual creation of God (a person’s invisible personality), which reflects God’s likeness. Adam was not only a living and breathing soul (physical

being) on the outside; he was also a living soul (spiritual being) on the inside. What occurred on the outside was but a faint reflection of who Adam was on the inside. Adam was created as a complete person who possessed a human personality such as intellect, emotions, will, morals, and companionship with God. He could reflect God's life, nature, and personality.

The word "soul" speaks of the total person that Adam was after his creation, which was vastly different than the animal kingdom. It must be understood that the soul to Hebrew Christians referred to the entire personality of the individual working through the body. It did not just mean a physical being with physical life or breath. Adam was created as a living soul (physical and spiritual being) that possessed an immaterial side to his human existence. Adam was given a spirit (Zech. 12:1) that reflected God's life, nature, and personality, but he also "became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7) through which God's life, nature, and fellowship could be experienced in his daily life (1 Thess. 5:23). The spirit within man would govern the soul of man, or his real human life and existence, into worship and fellowship with a holy Creator.

Unlike the spirit of the animal world (Ecc. 3:21), Adam's soul and spirit would be eternal, and was designed to live on forever in the fellowship of God's presence (Rev. 6:9; Hebrews 12:23; 2 Cor. 5:10). This was a remarkable achievement by God. This creative act was accomplished by the infusion of a human spirit possessing divine life (John 3:6), which would result in Adam becoming a complete person ("living soul") that could reflect God's life, and one who could experience fellowship with God, without any interruptions of sin. Adam was created as a perfect soul (outwardly and inwardly) which could maintain constant inner communion and companionship with God.

The original created human spirit within man actually ruled over man's soul, keeping his desires, affections, and will pulling in a Godward direction. When man sinned his spirit became separated from God (Eph. 2:1-2) and he was no longer capable of having holy fellowship with the true and living God (Genesis 3:9). In short, his spirit was separated from God and his soul became enslaved to sin. Think of this way. God Himself, who is spirit (John 4:24), breathed His

life-giving spirit into the body of Adam. This joining together of the spirit (breath of God) and body (physical dust) produced another phenomenon called the soul, a physical and spiritual man, which included his inner personality (Gen. 2:7). It was actually the presence of the regenerated life within Adam's spirit that created Adam, as a living soul, and allowed Adam to function as a human being with a mind, emotions, and will that was directed toward God.

Today God regenerates or gives new life to the spirit of a person who is unsaved (Rom. 8:2; 2 Cor. 3:6). It's through this regenerating new life that God begins to bring the personality or soul of man back to Himself (2 Cor. 3:18). As a spirit, God indwells our human spirit, when we receive Christ as Savior and starts to bring the affections, desires and will of the soul (human personality) back into a proper relationship with God.

The cults like to believe that the soul of man only speaks of his physical existence as a human being. The cultic claim is that when man dies, the physical breath of God goes out of him, and man dies like a dog, without any immaterial life that continues on. This is called annihilation. The serious error of the cults is that they fail to separate man from the animal kingdom. Man is a soul in a way which no animal could ever be. Man was created as a living soul (a person that could reflect God's life by God's direct energizing and activating process). This obviously means that man's existence was not to be animal-like in nature, but Godlike in nature. It demonstrates that man's existence, as a soul (nephesh), was much more complex than the animals. Man is not to be compared to the animals in any way. Man is not an animal. He was created as "a living soul" (Gen. 2:7), or spiritual entity, which could inwardly fellowship with God and reflect His nature. Man was created to possess an immaterial and eternal nature like God's, which would last forever, a nature through which man's soul (inward personality) could be governed by God.

In the original creation, Adam and Eve were created without any sin nature to govern their soul. This is sometimes called the Dispensation of Innocence. They lived in perfect harmony with God through their inward spirit, as God's life directed their human soul (inward personality) in a righteous direction. Man's spirit was originally alive with God's own life and personality. Therefore, there was no sin

nature to corrupt man's soul or his reasoning process, will, or feelings. Through your soul you exhibit the normal routines of life. You make decisions, have emotional responses, and express desire, choice, and feelings.

3. God's purpose at work.

In God's providential purpose (Eph. 1:11), He allowed Adam to sin. He had given Adam free choice. Adam possessed a free-will love relationship with God. It was not a mechanically devised relationship where Adam was forced to live a certain way. God never works on this basis. God's purpose and plan for the human race was coming to pass in the Genesis account, which would ultimately bring glory to Him, through the expression of His love, mercy, and grace to mankind. So what happened? In line with God's providential purpose, Adam made a conscious choice to disobey God, and when he disobeyed, his spirit immediately died (Eph. 2:1), and his soul became corrupted with a sin nature (Rom. 5:12). The human soul that was once governed without any sin, now became an operational center through which a corrupt nature, or disposition could work. Thus, the moment Adam sinned he became a "natural man" (1 Cor. 2:14) operating within the realm of his soul, unaided by the life of God. Adam was spiritually dead, without God's life and aid to guide his soul across the sea of life's existence.

Let me illustrate it this way. Before Adam sinned, he lived his life on the top floor of man's human nature. This was when Adam was guided by the infusion of God's very own life and nature, within the realm of his spirit. His inward human soul thrived and lived in accordance with the direction of his human spirit, which God had given to Adam for fellowship with Himself. However, when Adam sinned, there was a moral earthquake and Adam dropped down to the basement floor of his human existence and became governed by the old nature, through his soul.

At this point, Adam became a natural (soulish) man, whose soul was governed and guided by the sin nature, instead of God's own life and nature. Instead of fellowshiping with God on the first floor (through the spirit), he now dropped down to the basement floor (his soul untouched by God's life). As a result, his soul became governed by

the old nature and all of his feelings, emotions and decisions were now in some way opposed to God. Adam's sin-cursed soul was now in the preeminent place to guide his life, instead of his God-enlightened spirit. Adam had lost God's original design of spiritual life that had been implanted within his human spirit. Adam had lost the original breath of God's life! No longer would this God-given life, within his spirit, be available to govern or guide his soul (will, decisions, feelings, desires) into a proper relationship with God. He was now a man governed by a sin-cursed soul instead of being guided in the way of godliness by a life-giving spirit.

Since the Genesis Fall, every man is born in the basement, and has been living in the basement ever since! Jesus said, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh" (John 3:6). To state it succinctly, man is physically born with a sin nature that dominates his soul, instead of a regenerated spirit to dominate his soul. People of Adam's race fall into the category of "the natural man," or man who is guided by a soul that is untouched by God's life and nature (1 Cor. 2:14). They are governed by the power of the sin nature which they have received from Adam (Rom. 5:12).

This can only mean one thing: "Ye must be born again." John 3:3 says: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." We need the breath of God once again! We need God's touch upon our lives to bring His life back into ours.

"Shackled by a heavy burden,
'Neath a load of guilt and shame.
Then the hand of Jesus touched me,
And now I am no longer the same.

He touched me, Oh He touched me,
And oh the joy that floods my soul!
Something happened and now I know,
He touched me and made me whole."

Dear friend, we need to once again experience the "inbreathing" or regenerating touch and life of God that Adam lost. Man needs to be spiritually restored back to God and fellowship with Him once again

by the infusion of God's life.

This is why Jesus said in John 5:24:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

The moment we believe in Christ to be our Savior we pass from the realm of spiritual death to spiritual life. We are taken out of the realm of our natural lost estate and are brought into a right relationship with God. One thing is certain; only God can breathe spiritual life back into the human spirit of a person and begin to change the soul of a person, so the soul can once again be guided by divine life. This is done through the life giving breath or wind of the Holy Spirit.

John 3:8

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

The change from the natural to the spiritual man can be described in the words of the hymn writer:

“Down in the human heart,
Crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore;
Touched by a loving hand,
Wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.”

C. The results of the change.

As a result of the Genesis Fall, Adam became the forefather and seed through which a lost race of humanity would spring forth. The Bible teaches that people born into this world possess Adam's sin nature, which is passed down to them through their forefather, Adam.

Romans 5:12 says, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

The argument of Scripture is clear. Adam sinned as our forefather and federal head. Adam's act of sin was considered by God to be the act of all people that stem from him. When Adam sinned, we sinned. When Adam ate the fruit, we ate the fruit. This is because his sin is passed down to us through imputation and God views us as participating in his same sin. The Bible says the sentence of death (physical and spiritual – Rom. 6:23) is passed on to every human being because of Adam's death. Since Adam died, we also die, both physically and spiritually. His death becomes our death. In a similar way, it's equally true that we "all have sinned" (past tense) in Adam's sin and must suffer the consequences of this sin. Since Adam sinned, we sinned. His sin becomes our sin. The sentence or penalty of Adam's sin is passed on to us (1 Cor. 15:22) and we are viewed as participating in his very act of sin. The entire human race is viewed as having sinned in the one act of Adam's sin.

The corporate sinning of all people "in" Adam accounts for the universality of death. Both Adam's death and sin, along with his sin nature, is passed on to us, since Adam was our federal head that represented us in the Garden. The entire human race, except Jesus Christ, was linked to Adam. We all have Adam's blood flowing through our veins and must be judged for Adam's sin. We are made guilty by Adam's sin.

You might reason: "This isn't fair." Why am I judged as a sinner for something Adam did? Well, get over it! The Bible teaches that we were in the loins of Adam when he sinned, and for this reason, we must bear the consequences of his sin, even as people must bear the consequences of a leader's decisions and legislation, which becomes binding upon everyone. The fact of the matter is this; you sin because you are already a sinner. You sinned when Adam sinned, and as a result, you have received Adam's sin nature or corrupt disposition (Rom. 7:9-25). We are born in sin (Ps. 51:5), since we are the spiritual offspring of Adam; therefore, we are incapable of being governed in a Godward direction. This is because we do not possess God's life within our human spirit. We are born a natural man, whose soul is cursed and condemned by Adam's sin, and whose nature is passed down to us. This is why the man in 1 Corinthians 2:14 is called the "natural" man. It's because Adam gave his nature to all who followed him and mankind has been expressing this evil Adamic

nature ever since. We are born with the natural tendencies to sin and our soul is governed or guided by this inherited sin nature throughout life.

As a result of possessing Adam's sin, guilt, nature, and lost estate, the natural man of this world no longer has his human spirit or soul connected to God. He has been disconnected from God. A spiritual short circuit has taken place in the link between God and man. The breath of God's life is not within his human spirit and his soul cannot be directed in the way of godliness. Therefore, the natural man only follows the old nature as it rules his soul. We have sinned when Adam sinned and we were condemned to hell when Adam sinned. Yes, we have "all have sinned" (Rom. 3:23) in Adam. We are born part of Adam's hopeless and helpless race.

Is there a way out? Is there any hope? Yes, Jesus Christ came to die on the cross to pay the penalty of sin that Adam's race inherited. He died to set Adam's race free from sin's condemnation or an everlasting hell (John 3:15-16).

1 Corinthians 15:45 explains it like this:

"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit."

As we have seen in the Genesis account, Adam was created by God to be both a physical and spiritual being ("a living soul"), which could possess fellowship with God and love and serve Him. However, Adam lost the original life and fellowship (soul relationship) which he once had with God. Therefore, the last Adam (not second Adam), who is Christ, came to restore spiritual life to the Adamic race, which now possesses a lost human spirit. The regenerating life of Christ can once again restore the spiritual life within the human spirit and bring the human soul back in contact with God.

This means God's life within our human spirit will once again begin to recapture the mind, emotions, and will of our soul. As a result, we can once again have a spiritual relationship with God (Gen. 5:24; 1 John 1:5-7), as Adam did before the Fall (Gen. 3:8-9), and a spiritual life, which Adam possessed in the Garden. Our soul can once again be connected to God and we can have fellowship with Him. We can be

removed from our natural state of enmity before God (Rom. 5:10), and be given a new standing of acceptance before Him (Rom. 5:1,11), and a new life with God (2 Cor. 5:17). Of course, all these spiritual blessings come to us through Jesus Christ. I thank God that He saved me from what I was and made me into something new. The hymn writer put it like this:

“He left his Father’s throne above,
So free, so infinite his grace!
Emptied himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam’s helpless race:
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For, O my God, it found out me!
Amazing love, how can it be?
That Thou my God should’st die for me!”

III. He is the unaided man.

1 Corinthians 2:14 once again declares:

“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.”

The natural man of this world does not possess the Holy Spirit’s presence and teaching ministry. For this reason he is a spiritual dunce when it comes to seeing the importance, application, and relevancy of the Bible. He does not see how it fits into his life.

The fact that he is unaided is seen in three ways.

a. He can’t grasp truth.

Paul mentions the subject of the “natural man” in the context of talking about the illumination and teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:9-13). The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 2:14 that the natural man “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” The word “receiveth” literally speaks of taking hold of something and figuratively means to mentally grasp truth. This means the unsaved man cannot really grasp or understand the significance of how the Bible relates to his life. He lives without the Spirit’s aid and cannot understand how

the spiritual truths regarding salvation and sanctification can apply to his life. The context reveals that the “things” have reference to God’s plan of wisdom, which centers on the message of the cross and salvation (1 Cor. 1:18-25; 2:7-8). The Holy Spirit makes the Bible and spiritual truth concerning the cross, Gospel, salvation, and God’s grace very real and relevant to the life of the child of God (1 Cor. 2:10). Believers are commanded to “receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (James 1:21). However, the spiritual things that the Holy Spirit reveals to the saved are actually “foolishness” to the unsaved (1 Cor. 2:14). They are foolish because the unsaved, or natural man, cannot comprehend the relevancy and importance of spiritual matters in his life, such as the need for the cross and man’s salvation.

1 Corinthians 1:18 says:

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”

One man said to me, “I don’t believe in that junk!” Another man said to me, “How can a man’s death 2,000 years ago do anything for me today!” The natural man does not see how the Bible fits into his scheme of life or how the Bible can make sense in his everyday living.

Someone said:

“Like a deaf critic of Bach so is the unregenerate critic of God’s Word.”

The natural man is like a blind man in an art gallery, or a deaf man at a symphony. The unregenerate person cannot receive the message of wisdom, regarding the cross and God’s plan of salvation, regardless of his intellectual abilities or accomplishments. He may be smart intellectually in the world’s wisdom and thinking, but a spiritual dunce, when it comes to seeing the relevancy and importance of how spiritual truth, such as the Gospel, can impact and change his life.

1 Corinthians 1:20

“Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?”

There is no wise man that lives outside the realm of spiritual thinking and living. If one rejects the wisdom of the cross, the way of salvation, and God's truth, then he is a spiritual dunce in God's eyes. In fact, those who reject the truth about God's existence and creation (Rom. 1:22) are labeled as "foolish" (moraino), which literally means moron. Do you know what an atheist is? The Bible calls him a moron! The natural man is a spiritual moron when it comes to understanding how God's Word or truth applies to his life. He lacks spiritual sense. He may have good intellectual abilities and receive high academic honors among men, but with God, He is a spiritual fool!

Man is an utter fool when he lashes out against God's Word. Richard Dawkins is a leading evolutionary atheist who is writing books attacking God and creation. One of his books is called "The God Delusion." Well, let me tell you who is deluded. It's not God, the Bible, or Christians; it's someone who believes everything began without a Designer. It's someone who believes something can come from nothing! It's someone who believes that everything came about by chance. This is neither science, common sense, nor spiritual sense. You see, the natural man cannot receive the truth of God's Word.

Someone suggested:

"The best man can do on his own is to gnaw the bark of Scripture without getting to the wood."

b. He can't know truth.

1 Corinthians 2:14 once again 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."

We have already discovered that the natural man cannot receive or grasp the relevancy of spiritual truth and apply it to his life. Now, Paul takes it a step further when saying, "neither can he know them." This man does not receive truth because he cannot know the truth. Why can't he know the wonderful truths of the Bible? It's because the Holy Spirit is not illuminating and enlightening this person. The natural man cannot possibly understand spiritual truths since truth can only be

understood by the illumination of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:10; Eph. 1:18; Heb. 6:4). When a man rejects the illumination, or revelation of God's Spirit, he is left in the dark ("and their foolish heart was darkened" – Rom. 1:21 and "the understanding darkened" – Eph. 4:18). It's a terrible thing to live in darkness, but it's also a chosen path. The light is shining but men choose the darkness over the light.

Jesus said in John 12:36:

"While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light."

In short, the unregenerate man is not indwelt or taught by the Holy Spirit and cannot understand the significance of how the spiritual truths, concerning the cross and the Bible, relate to his life. This is because the Holy Spirit does not indwell this man's life. As a consequence, this man lacks the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit. The natural man cannot know the same wonderful spiritual truths that the Holy Spirit has made known to born again children of God.

Jude 19 says this:

"These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."

The Greek word for "sensual" is the same Greek word translated "natural" in 1 Corinthians 2:14. This tells us that the "sensual" or "soulis" man, who follows the dictates of his old nature, is the man who does not possess the life and teaching ministry of the Spirit. The Spirit of God cannot teach this man the glorious truths of Scripture. This man is not in the receiving line when it comes to spiritual truth. The natural man simply walks his own path fueled by worldly wisdom, which has been passed down to him by his own human sinful nature, and also demonic influences.

James 3:15 tells us:

"This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish."

A description of man's wisdom is that it is limited to earth. It is also characterized by man's lower "sensual" or "soulis" nature, which is

influenced and dominated by the sin nature and Satan's evil emissaries. Satan's wisdom is far different than God's wisdom about the cross and blood of Christ as the only way of salvation. Lost mankind simply lives by his own set of rules and wisdom, which he receives from Satan and his workers. This is why the Bible calls it "devilish" (James 3:15). This is why the unsaved man does not have any clue about God's wisdom, as revealed in the Bible, and why he lives in a different world devoid of spiritual understanding. The reason is because the sin nature, which he has received from Adam (Rom. 5:12), along with demonic influences, has deceived him and continues to influence his thinking within his daily life. The wisdom of the world has hidden the spiritual dimension of life from the eyes of this man.

1 Corinthians 1:21 says:

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

You will note that the cross is not actually called foolish preaching from God's perspective, but the "foolishness of preaching," since the natural man cannot perceive how the death of Christ 2,000 years ago can have any bearing or effect upon their life today. From the natural man's perspective, we are nothing but a bunch of foolish preachers! But I thank God for foolish preachers and the Gospel message for it's this message that has saved my soul from hell!

Man cannot come to know God by the human wisdom of philosophy, science, and technology. Man cannot find God and His salvation in what he thinks is true wisdom. The unsaved man's perception of life and how to live cannot bring him into a relationship with God. Only the preaching about the cross of Christ can open a man's blind eyes and bring a lost, natural man to God. God designed to save helpless sinners through the preaching of a message that was so simple, the "worldly wise" deemed it as nonsense!

So, the natural man lives by his own set of rules and understanding, which is called the "wisdom of the world" (1 Cor. 2:6). He goes on his own pathway in life concluding what is in his best interest. He simply follows his own wisdom on how to live and make decisions. This man

is not interested or concerned about what God says. As we have seen, the unsaved or natural man does not receive truth, nor can he receive truth, since he is spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2:14). In short, he is a spiritual dunce!

The natural man is governed by the old nature, through his soul, and unaided by the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit; therefore, he does not know how to appropriate or apply the truth of Scripture to his life (1 Cor. 2:14). In the preceding context, the natural man cannot specifically know, or understand the great truths surrounding God's redemptive plan of salvation. He cannot see how the cross and the blessings, which accompany salvation, fit into his everyday life. This man does not welcome God's plan of wisdom, as revealed in the message of the Bible, into his own personal life.

Of course, the natural man may mentally comprehend Biblical facts in the Bible. He may intellectually understand all the Bible stories told to him throughout his childhood days in Sunday School class. He may understand or know about certain truths found in the Bible. He may mentally grasp and even believe that Christ died upon the cross. However, none of these facts really matter to him, or drastically change the life of the natural man. This is because he is living in an altogether different world than the world that is governed and guided by spiritual truths and values. This is because the Holy Spirit has not illuminated the natural man to the world of spiritual realities.

The Holy Spirit has not revealed to the unsaved man how these wonderful truths can actually fit into his own personal life. Therefore, the natural man is not connected with spiritual truth and how it works in his life. He lives in a world, which is separated from spiritual truth and reality. The plug of spiritual understanding has been disconnected from his life. The natural man does not know that the spiritual dimension to life really exists. He does not know about the happy side of life! As we have already seen, he is living in the basement from a spiritual standpoint, which means that he lives by the dictates of his sin-cursed soul. This is because his spirit is no longer connected to God. His human spirit cannot function as the agent of God's regenerating life and nature, which is designed to keep his soul, or the real person, from straying from God's holy plan and will for living.

The natural man has a type of spiritual short-circuit when it comes to understanding the importance of spiritual truth and how it fits into his own life. He is drifting on a foggy sea of life and has no ability to see the relevancy of spiritual truth to his life. This type of person cannot take these spiritual truths, which are revealed in the Bible, and make any sense out of them for his own personal living. This is because the natural man is guided by the standard established by the old nature. How sad when a person misses out on the true meaning and purpose of life and how wonderful it is to be a Christian (John 10:10).

The colorful Vance Havner advises:

“The wise Christian wastes no time trying to explain God’s program to unregenerate men; it would be casting pearls before swine. He might as well try to describe a sunset to a blind man or discuss nuclear physics with a monument in the city park. The natural man cannot receive such things. One might as well try to catch sunbeams with a fishhook as to lay hold of God’s revelation unassisted by the Holy Spirit. Unless one is born of the Spirit and taught by Him, all this is utterly foreign to him. Being a Ph. D. does not help, for in this realm it could mean Phenomenal Dud!”

c. He can’t judge truth.

Paul now gives the reason for the spiritual ignorance of the natural man. The natural man cannot see past his nose, when it comes to spiritual truth. He cannot understand the importance of God’s glorious display of wisdom, as seen in the cross of Christ. The natural man cannot grasp how the cross can save him, nor can he comprehend the spiritual realities of the Christian life. Why? It’s because this man is “spiritually discerned” (1 Cor. 2:14). This means the natural man is incapable of properly judging and understanding the spiritual truths that the Holy Spirit reveals to believers concerning God’s plan of salvation and the Christian life. The opposite is true regarding the spiritual man (“But he that is spiritual judgeth all things” – 1 Cor. 2:15). He is able to discern how God’s truth, as found in Scripture, relates to his life and changes his life. However, the natural man has a spiritual mental block when it comes to understanding the importance and relevancy of the Bible.

The verb “discerned” was used of a pretrial examination. The natural man examines, scrutinizes, or questions how spiritual truth can make sense, or really matter in his life. In essence, he cannot even pass a preliminary examination about spiritual truth, in relationship to its relevancy and application to his everyday normal living. This is because he has a spiritual deficiency regarding spiritual truth.

Why do people examine or question the wonders of spiritual truth? Why do they arrive at the conclusion that the Bible and salvation is a bunch of “humbug” teaching that is irrelevant to their lives? Why do people live, as they please, and neglect salvation, the cross, the Gospel, and God’s free saving grace? It’s because the devil is ruling over their soul (1 John 3:8), through the power of the old nature, and blinding their minds to the relevancy of these spiritual truths for their lives.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 declares:

“But if our gospel be hid (veiled), it is hid (veiled) to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

It’s not that people can’t believe; they won’t believe. The work of the Spirit, while using the Gospel message, goes out into all the world of mankind to bring conviction upon the lost and unbelieving (John 16:8); however, the mass multitudes reject the light (Acts 7:51; Matt. 7:13-14).

In summary, those who are not saved simply cannot discern spiritual truth. They cannot make a proper assessment of the Bible in relationship to how it applies to their lives. People who try to understand the Bible, apart from the help of the Holy Spirit, could be characterized by similar words used to describe idols “Eyes they have, but they do not see” (Psalm 115:5). The unsaved may appreciate the Bible for its literary beauty and its moral teachings, but they cannot grasp its spiritual meaning. Instead, they are puzzled by it. They don’t understand why Christians love it, as they do, or how they derive so much from its pages. The Bible is a mystery book to the unsaved because the message of the Bible does not make sense to them, or have any real value for their normal everyday living.

Someone has explained it this way:

“The natural man can hear the Word of God but it yet hovers about him as a sound, rather than penetrating him as a message.”

C. H. Spurgeon told a story about a lady who once said to an artist, "Why do you put such extravagant colors into your pictures? I never see anything like them in nature." The painter wisely responded, "Don't you wish you did, Madam?" Spurgeon then commented that in much the same way believers see many divine wonders that unbelievers cannot perceive. My friend, the unbeliever cannot see the color of God's grace and mercy. The unbeliever cannot see the beauty of color displayed in the teachings of the Bible. All they see are black words on white paper!

This type of person is shut away from the things of God! To be shut away from the things of God is the greatest emptiness of soul that man could ever find or experience!

Someone defined real failure as:

"Living without knowing what life is all about, feeding on things that do not satisfy, thinking you have everything, only to find out in the end, you have nothing that matters."

I am so very glad that God, by His grace (Eph. 2:8-9), has rescued me from my old sinful and natural state in Adam, and has given me a new nature that has taken my life in a different direction. God has not left me alone! My heart is full of thanksgiving as I finish this study. I am grateful that I am no longer a natural man left to aimlessly wonder across the sea of life without God. I thank God for delivering me from the spiritual darkness of unbelief, sin's power, and blindness. 1 Peter 2:9 joyfully exclaims that God "hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Ephesians 5:8 adds, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."

“From shades of night,
To plains of light,
O praise His name
He lifted me!”

This is the story of our lives! God has taken us out of the realm of the “natural” (soulish) and transferred us into the realm of the spiritual, by giving us His new life and nature. In addition, God has also put a new song within our hearts.

Psalm 40:2 puts it this way:

“He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings.”

This is the song of the soul set free! We no longer must allow our soul to be dominated by the sin nature and old way of life. We can be free from sin and Satan’s power. In short, we can now live a truly satisfying and spiritual life that is transformed by the Holy Spirit, a life that finds rich fulfillment in Christ (Col. 2:10) and truth (Col. 3:16).

The change from the natural man to the regenerate, or spiritual man, who is born again and possesses the transforming life and presence of God, has been beautifully summed up in the words of the hymn writer, Clara Teare.

“Feeding on the husks around me
Till my strength was almost gone,
Longed my soul for something better,
Only still to hunger on.

Poor I was, and sought for riches,
Something that would satisfy;
But the dust I gathered round me
Only mocked my soul’s sad cry.

Hallelujah! I have found Him
Whom my soul so long has craved!
Jesus satisfies my longings;
Thro’ His blood I now am saved.”