

**“The Spiritual Man”**  
(1 Corinthians 2:15)

By Pastor Kelly Sensenig

Many years ago, I sat in a Sunday School class in Grand Rapids, Michigan where the young college students, who knew everything, were talking about the subject of spirituality. I remember the question the teacher asked that particular Sunday, “What does it mean to be spiritual?” I shall never forget some of the answers that the class gave that day. Some relegated spirituality to a feeling, while others thought spirituality was only a matter of their faithful church attendance. Others suggested that spirituality was helping needy people and doing other good deeds for hurting people. Everybody in the Sunday School class had their opinion regarding the subject matter of true spirituality.

Let me ask you the same question: “What is spirituality?” When studying the Bible we discover the meaning of true spirituality. By the way, when you ask too many questions during a Bible class, you will find yourself going in circles, trying to squeeze everybody’s answer into the discussion. I think we need less religious talk shows today and more “Thus saith the Lord” teaching and preaching! People want what they call “creative communication.” Whatever happened to the art of clear communication through expository Biblical teaching and preaching?

Paul told Timothy to “Preach the Word” (2 Timothy 4:2). God has ordained the preaching of His Word as the way to communicate truth. God has promised to bless the preaching of His unchanging Word. Many people are more interested in religious performances, which entertain them, instead of instructing them through solid Biblical exposition. “What is real spirituality?” The Bible gives us the answer.

1 Corinthians 2:15

“But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.”

The life of the spiritual man is introduced after speaking about the life of the “natural man” in 1 Corinthians 2:14. The “natural man” is the

“soulish man” who lacks the spiritual life of God within his own human spirit. Therefore, he is only governed and guided by his soul, which is the center of the sin nature and the old way of life in Adam. This man cannot be guided by God since he does not possess God’s life or nature within his spirit. Therefore, his soul or personality (feelings, desires, decisions, will) has no divine guidance and spiritual assistance. The natural man is devoid of God’s spiritual life within his spirit and has no spiritual dimension to guide his life in a godly manner or fashion.

Furthermore, the natural man does not have the Holy Spirit indwelling His life and cannot participate in the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit (“receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God”). This means the natural man cannot grasp the importance, application, and relevancy of Bible truth to his daily life. This man is a spiritual dud, unaided by the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, and guided by the power of the old nature, instead of the power of God’s life. The Bible says the natural man is “spiritually discerned” (vs. 14). Without the teaching aid of the Holy Spirit, the natural man is incapable of properly judging and understanding the spiritual truths, regarding God’s plan of salvation and the Christian life.

Vance Havner used to say:

“One might as well talk nuclear physics to a wooden Indian in front of a cigar store as to discuss spiritual things to a natural man.”

The natural man actually looks at the things of the Bible and pertaining to the spiritual life of the Christian as irrelevant to his life. They are really absurd and distasteful to him. He cannot make any sense out of them. Living the Christian life is utterly beyond his comprehension. However, when the unbeliever trusts in Christ as his Savior, the Holy Spirit comes into his life, and he is moved into the plane of the “spiritual” (“But he that is spiritual” – 1 Cor. 2:15).

One of the books that I was required to read in college was written by Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer. It was called, “He That is Spiritual.” This is what we are going to study about in this lesson booklet. We want to find out what it means to be spiritual.

What are the marks of the spiritual man?

There are three marks of a spiritual man.

### **I. He possesses God's life.**

This person is called spiritual because he possesses God's life in the realm of his human spirit. The Greek word for "spiritual" (pneumatikos) is a word that points to an invisible spirit, much like the wind or the breath of a person, which cannot be seen. In contrast to the word "natural" (psuchikos) or "soulish" (1 Cor. 2:14), the word pneumatikos specifically relates to the human spirit within man, which is where God's life and nature exists. Paul is saying that the spiritual man has a regenerated spirit that possesses the life of God. He is born of God (1 John 3:9; 4:7), which means He has received God's life communicated to his human spirit. The natural man does not possess God's life (1 Cor. 2:14); therefore, he lives by the dictates of the old sin nature or disposition. However, the spiritual man is different; he has been given new life within his human spirit, and can now live a changed way of life that is favorable and pleasing to God.

Jesus said in John 3:6:

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

A person's inner human spirit is given new life, or regeneration, as a result of the infusion of God's life. At the conception of spiritual he becomes a "new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17), which means he is originally formed as Adam was in the Garden, a regenerated man possessing the breath of God in his human spirit (Gen. 2:7). Since God's life now dwells within this man's spirit, he can have contact or fellowship with God and live a whole new way of life that is pleasing to Him. The new life dwelling within this person's spirit gives him new perspectives, desires, goals, loves, and outlooks on life, which he never had before.

In the widest or broadest sense of meaning, the spiritual man is the person who is regenerated because his lost spirit has been given new spiritual life. The spiritual man ("he that is spiritual") relates to that man who shares in God's life and nature. His spirit has been brought back in contact with God; his life is once again in touch or tune with

his Creator. Every believer is spiritual before God's presence in the sense that his spirit is regenerated and given new life. In a positional sense, the spiritual man is that person who is no longer separated or estranged from God (Ephesians 2:15-16). He has a relationship with God that the natural man does not possess. The only way a natural man can become a spiritual man is to be born again spiritually within the realm of his human spirit.

When we were born again, or "born of God" (1 John 5:4, 18), God entered our life and began to change us and give us new meaning in life. Now we can sing:

"I will serve Thee because I love thee,  
You have given life to me;  
I was nothing before you found me,  
You have given life to me.  
Heartaches, broken pieces, ruined  
lives are why you died on Calvary;  
Your touch was what I longed for,  
You have given life to me."

## **II. He is permanently indwelt by God's Spirit.**

This is viewed in two ways:

### **A. His position in the Spirit**

When we trusted Christ as our Savior, the Holy Spirit came into our life and we moved into the plane of the "spiritual." The very word "spiritual" indicates that the Holy Spirit indwells this man. This word "pneumatikos" is built upon the Greek word "pneuma" which refers to the unseen or invisible person of the Holy Spirit. The third person of the Godhead is called the "Holy Spirit" (pneuma - 1 John 5:7). The teaching behind the word "spiritual" (pneumatikos), in this context, also carries the meaning of a person who possesses the actual presence of the Holy Spirit within his life and who is now being taught and guided by the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. In the widest sense of meaning, the spiritual man is every individual who possesses the Holy Spirit. They are the people who have been introduced to the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Therefore,

every regenerate believer possesses the Spirit of God, who has brought them out of the realm of the natural and into the realm of the spiritual. The Holy Spirit has planted God's life within this person's human spirit (John 3:6), and He now introduces God's life to him, through His indwelling ministry and work upon his heart.

W. E. Vine explains the spiritual man this way:  
"...his spiritual nature, energized by the Holy Spirit, is the dominating element in his being once again."

"Born of the Spirit with life from above  
Into God's family divine,  
Justified freely thru Calvary's love,  
O what a standing is mine!  
And the transaction so quickly was made,  
When as a sinner I came,  
Took of the offer of grace He did proffer,  
He saved me, O praise His dear name!"

As a result of the Spirit's entrance into our lives, we have been born again and possess God's very life and nature, which is expressed to us through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:19 says: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"

Romans 5:5 also declares: "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

Romans 8:9 concludes: "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."

There you have it! Every Christian possesses the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. If you are saved, it's because you possess the Spirit; if you are not saved, it's because you do not possess God's Spirit. This is because the Holy Spirit communicates God's life to us (John 3:6 – "born of the Spirit"; Rom. 8:2; 10). The Holy Spirit enters our life the

moment we believe in Christ and He transfers God's life within the realm of our human spirit. This is why we can live a spiritual life and be a spiritual man. God's life and nature has been introduced into our dead human spirit, by the work of the Holy Spirit, and has made our spirit come alive unto God (Rom. 6:11-13). This means we now have a living, dynamic, powerful, and victorious relationship with God.

In the broadest and positional sense of understanding, every believer is spiritual, since he possesses the indwelling presence and life-giving work of the Holy Spirit within him. In this sense, every believer is spiritually equal. In the positional sense, there is no such thing as an unspiritual Christian, or a partially spiritual Christian. This positional truth about the spiritual man is understood and contrasted with the natural man, who does not possess the Spirit's presence, life, and teaching ministry (1 Cor. 2:14). The spiritual person is the man who has the presence and personal teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit available to him. Therefore, his soul, personality, or true life, his human feelings, desires, decisions, and will, can once again respond to God, since he has this new power and teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit residing within him. The man with God's Spirit has unlimited potential for spiritual understanding and growth.

An American with an English gentleman was viewing the Niagara whirlpool rapids, when he said to his friend: "Come, and I'll show you the greatest unused power in the world." And taking him to the foot of Niagara Falls, he said, "There, is the greatest unused power in the world!" "Ah, no my brother, not so!" was the reply. "The greatest unused power in the world is the Holy Spirit of the living God." This is very true since the vast majority of people do not possess the Spirit's presence in their lives. They are "natural" and only live according to the dictates of their soul and sin nature. However, this is not the case with the spiritual man.

The spiritual man is someone under the influence of the Holy Spirit. The expression "he that is spiritual" (1 Cor. 2:15) is definitely marking a contrast between the natural man, who does not possess the Spirit's presence and teaching influence ("receiveth not the things of the Spirit" - 1 Cor. 2:14), and the man who does possess the Spirit's presence, power, and teaching ministry. His position is totally different than the natural man. The natural man has a position in

Adam, as a slave to sin (Rom. 6:6), while the born again believer has a new victorious position in Christ (Rom. 6:1-4, 8, 11-12), which can only be experientially realized and applied to one's life through the influence of the Holy Spirit ("the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" - Rom. 8:2). The Holy Spirit reveals Christ's life to us so we can enjoy His life and experience Christlikeness.

Oswald Chambers said:

"If the Holy Ghost is indwelling a man or woman, no matter how sweet, how beautiful, how Christlike they are, the lasting thought you go away with is-what a wonderful being the Lord Jesus Christ is."

The natural and spiritual man is at opposite ends of the poles. One lives in a lost estate, without God's assistance and life, while the other lives in the Spirit's realm, with the fullness of God's resources.

"This the secret of the holy,  
Not our holiness, but HIM:  
Jesus! empty us and fill us  
With Thy fullness to the brim."

## **B. His practice by the Spirit**

We are picking up on the phrase "he that is spiritual." In a more narrow and practical sense, the spiritual man is the man who has the full potential of being filled, or controlled by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, and who lives a totally different way of life than the natural man, and carnal man, since He is yielding to the life of the Spirit within. In the next chapter, Paul is going to talk about the carnal man, who is a Christian, which is not living in the realm of consistent victory, as he should.

1 Corinthians 3:1

"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ."

This verse tells us that Paul was also thinking of the spiritual man as that person who lives out the kind of life that he possesses. He practices what he possesses. He is a man who walks by the Holy Spirit's power and victory, in contrast to the carnal Christian, who is

defeated by the old sin nature. Therefore, “he that is spiritual” (1 Cor. 2:15) is also viewed as that man who displays God’s life through his daily living and actions. He is the man who walks in the Spirit (Gal. 5:25), as a habit, or way of life, and is non-carnal in his approach to living. This means he is not overtaken and continually defeated by the sin nature residing within him. He is a man who walks in the power, presence, and provision of the Holy Spirit and maintains his communion and fellowship with God. The spiritual man is then called “spiritual” because his heart is open and sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s direction and because he is living in the power of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual man can live a Spirit-directed life because he is filled with the Holy Spirit and walking in the power and provision of the Holy Spirit within his life.

The practice of the spiritual man is demonstrated in two ways.

### **1. He is filled with the Spirit.**

Ephesians 5:18-19 declares:

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

The word “filled” simply means to “make full or supply liberally.” The meaning of this word when used with the illustration of drunkenness is interesting. It gives us the clue to the exact meaning or understanding of being filled with the Spirit. First, there is a comparison between a drunken man and a person filled with the Holy Spirit. When a person is filled with wine, they are controlled by wine; however, when a person is filled with the Spirit, they are controlled by the Spirit. Just as wine can control and master a person’s life, so the Holy Spirit should control and master a Christian’s life. When a drunken person is under the control of alcohol, he will think, speak, and act in ways, which he would not naturally do when sober. Likewise, when a man is under the control of the Holy Spirit, he will think, speak, and act in ways, which he would not naturally do when controlled by the flesh. Therefore, the filling of the Spirit means to be fully controlled by the Spirit which will be directly reflected in our manner of living.



Second, there is an obvious contrast to a drunken man and a Spirit-filled person. Some interpret this to mean that people will act like a drunken man, if they are filled with the Spirit. They talk about becoming drunk in the Holy Ghost and base their experience on a verse like this. Of course, this verse is not talking about a Spirit-filled person acting like a drunken man, rolling around on the church floor, climbing tent poles, shaking, and barking like a dog. The point of Paul's analogy also verifies that there is a difference between the actions of a drunken man and a Spirit-filled man. A person who is filled with the Spirit acts differently than a person who is filled with alcohol (Prov. 23:31-35). He lives a life that is holy and honoring to God.

The believer receives the Spirit at the time of his salvation (1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 8:9). Therefore, when you are filled with the Spirit, you don't get more of the Holy Spirit; instead, the Holy Spirit gets more of you! You cannot get more of the Holy Spirit; however, the Holy Spirit can get more of the believer. This means that we must practice being under the full control of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual man is the person who is controlled by the Holy Spirit in his life. He is dominated by the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within his life. The Spirit-filled life is the Spirit-controlled life.

Dr. Lehman Strauss once remarked:

"The greatest unused power in the world is the Holy Spirit."

The "filling" (Eph. 5:18) or control of the Holy Spirit is explained as a "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25), or a daily dependence upon the Spirit's power and provision. It's also explained to "live in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25) and be "led by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:18), which similarly means to live our Christian lives under the Spirit's influence, power, and victory. To walk and live in the Spirit means to rely upon the person, power, and provision of the Holy Spirit within our life. It means to yield ourselves to His power for daily victory and tap His endless supply of resources, so we can live for God, instead of our old nature. There must be an unbroken reliance upon the Holy Spirit within our lives. When a person walks they put one step in front of the other. This is how we are to live and walk in the Spirit. We are to "step by step" rely upon the Holy Spirit who lives within our body. Walking in the Spirit is a daily matter. We must yield to His powerful and victorious provision

for our lives or else we will be a dismal and defeated Christian.

Ray Stedman said:

“The filling of the Holy Spirit is the momentary taking from Him of the resources you need for the situation in which you are. It has nothing to do with an experience or a feeling or a crisis; it is a quiet drinking again and again of an inner supply of strength.”

One preacher used this illustration:

“I have a glove here in my hand. The glove cannot do anything by itself, but when my hand is in it, it can do many things. True, it is not the glove, but my hand in the glove that acts. We are gloves. It is the Holy Spirit in us, who is the hand, and who does the job. We have to make room for the hand so that every finger in the glove is filled.”

As a Christians, we must live our lives in the dimension of the Spirit, instead of the detriment of the flesh. Therefore, we are commanded to “be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18). This is our responsibility. We must keep the fire burning in our hearts as the Spirit works within us to change us and charge us to do God’s service.

Dwight Lyman Moody said:

“God commands us to be filled with the Spirit, and if we are not filled, it is because we are living beneath our privileges.”

Ruth Paxson called the spiritual life “Life on the Highest Plane.” This is the way it should be for the believer. Far too often, Christians live on the lower plane, and do not allow the victory and fruit of the Holy Spirit to impact their lives. We cannot be spiritual if we are not allowing the Holy Spirit to take control of our lives and grant us daily victory. We are not spiritual unless we allow the Spirit to produce His fruit in our lives on a daily basis and free us from sinful bondage.

Here are some interesting Biblical facts:

- We are never told to be baptized by the Spirit.
- We are never told to be indwelt by the Spirit.
- We are never told to be gifted by the Spirit.
- We are never told to be sealed with the Spirit.
- We are never told to ask for the Holy Spirit.

However, we are told to be filled with the Holy Spirit by yielding to the Spirit's presence and power within us.

### **a. The results of Spirit-filled living.**

It's very interesting that the command to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18) is followed by the results of the Spirit's filling (Eph. 5:19-33). There is a direct grammatical connection between the command and the results of the Spirit's filling. After talking about living under the control of the Holy Spirit, Paul now explains what this means. The following participles "speaking" (vs. 19), "making" (vs. 19) "giving" (vs. 20), and "submitting" (vs. 21) indicate that they are looking back to the Spirit-filled life. They are explaining what it means to be spiritual or filled with the Spirit.

There are five results of living the Spirit-filled life:

#### **1. Praise (Ephesians 5:19a)**

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

The first mark of spirituality, or living the Spirit-filled life, involves praise. When we find ourselves joyfully praising God and worshipping Him, we can know that the Spirit is at work in our hearts and lives. The Holy Spirit directs our hearts in worship to God. This is why we meditate on God, sing to God, and experience His daily presence in our lives. When we are praising God from our hearts, we can know that we are being filled with the Spirit. However, the Holy Spirit only fills and directs us in "spiritual songs" which reflect God's likeness and nature.

The fact that they are called "spiritual" songs connotes that our praise should originate from the Spirit's filling ministry in our lives (Eph. 5:18) and express that God is in control of our hearts and lives. Our singing should never originate from our carnal nature and base appetites (1 Cor. 3:1-3). The kind of music we listen to sends a very clear message regarding our own spirituality. What we listen to reflects who we are. If you listen to rock music, or Contemporary Christian Music, which reflects the culture and the devilish sound associated

with the promotion of rebellion, sex, and drugs, then you can be sure that the Holy Spirit is not in it! You can surface many arguments for using CCM but they won't stand in the face of Scripture. Spiritual music is inspired by the filling of the Holy Spirit. It's a type of music that reflects the new nature (2 Pet. 1:4), new song (Ps. 40:3), and new life (2 Cor. 5:17) that Christians have in Christ - not the old way of life and rebellion. If it sounds like the rebellious music of the devil, then it is! Let's stop living in a fool's paradise. We must beware of becoming carnal in our musical expressions of worship (1 Cor. 3:1-3).

One thing is certain; a Spirit-filled Christian is a praising Christian. First Peter 2:5 says we are "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Praise to God and doing good to others are spiritual sacrifices that please Him (Heb. 13:15).

## 2. **Joy** (Ephesians 5:19b)

Here is the second mark of spirituality. When the Bible says we are "making melody in our heart," it means that we have God's joy ruling in our hearts. Joy is a specific result of the Spirit's filling in our lives. When we are filled with depression, discouragement, and dismay, we can be sure that we are not being filled with the Spirit. This inward melody of Ephesians 5:19 refers to the bubbling joy that is on the inside of us, which means that no matter how bad things are on the outside, inside they are wonderful! A Spirit filled Christian is a joyful Christian.

Acts 13:52

"And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost."

"He gives me joy in the morning;  
He gives me a joy that I never knew,  
And my heart strings play a song of jubilation."

## 3. **Thanksgiving** (Ephesians 5:20)

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The third mark of spirituality, which is linked to the Spirit-filled life, involves thanksgiving. When the Spirit fills, reigns, and controls the life of the believer, he will express gratitude to God. He will possess a deep sense of appreciation to God for the many blessings bestowed upon his life. He will possess an overall attitude of gratitude. He will give the Lord thanks for "all things." Yes, this means we should give thanks for even the trials that come into our lives, which draw us close to the Lord.

"I thank You Lord, for the trials I feel inside,  
That You're there to help lead and guide me away from wrong.  
And I thank You Lord, for the patience those trials bring;  
In that process of growing, I can learn to care.

And I thank You Lord, for the trials that come my way,  
In that way I can grow each day as I let You lead.  
Cause You promised Lord, that with every testing  
That Your way of escaping is easier to bear.

And I thank You Lord, for the victory that growing brings,  
In surrender of everything, life is so worthwhile.  
And I thank You Lord, that when everything's put in place,  
Out in front I can see Your face and it's there You belong."

A Spirit-filled Christian is a thankful Christian!

#### 4. **Submission** (Ephesians 5:21-24)

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

The fourth mark of spirituality, which is linked to the Spirit-filled life, involves willing and loving submission. Paul now presents another important mark of spirituality. When a person is filled with the Spirit, he will believe in Biblical authority and practice it within their personal marriage. There will be *mutual* submission to one another's needs

(Eph. 5:21) and *marital* submission (Eph. 5:22-23), so the marriage can function according to God's design (male leadership and Biblical manhood). Our marriages will reveal how spiritual we really are in our Christian lives!

Someone wrote:

"Sadly, it can be said of many professing Christians that they are saints outside but devils at home!"

When our homes are out of order our spiritual lives are out of order. Don't fool yourself. Men, if you are not reaching out to meet the needs of your wife, then you are not spiritual. You are a Frankenstein instead of a godly man, or a Spirit-filled man. Ladies, if you are living in open rebellion against your husband's leadership, then you are not spiritual! You may put on a front in many ways, but God will still test your spirituality by your willingness to follow your husband's decisions and leadership.

#### 5. **Love** (Ephesians 5:25-33)

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."

The fifth mark of spirituality, or living the Spirit-filled life, involves loving. A man who is Spirit-filled will love his wife. This is clearly outlined in Ephesians 5:25-33. A spiritual husband will express sacrificial love toward his wife, even as Christ expressed toward the Church, when dying on the cross. Christ is head of the Church (Eph. 5:23), and yet, He died for the Church (Eph. 5:23). A loving leader is a servant leader. He will reach out to his wife and sacrifice his time, treasure, and express tenderness toward his wife. Loving sacrifice goes a long way. It can heal wounds and rekindle the needed spark in a marriage relationship.

Song of Solomon 8:7

"Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it."

We can attend church wearing our ties and dress shoes and play the spirituality game, but true spirituality is evidenced by praise, joy, thanksgiving, submission, and love. These are the true lasting marks

of spirituality. A spiritual person will find himself practicing these very things on a daily basis within his life and marriage. Do you find yourself praising God, living a joy-filled life, thanking the Lord for everything, submitting, and loving in the marriage relationship? How you answer these questions will determine the level of your spirituality.

In addition, when a person is filled with the Spirit (Gal. 5:16), he will not commit the works of the flesh that are outlined in Galatians 5:19-21. “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; **Adultery** (unfaithfulness in marriage), **fornication** (sex between unmarried people), **uncleanness** (moral impurity in word and deed), **lasciviousness** (unbridled and shameless lust – animal living), **Idolatry** (worshipping idols and putting others things before God), **witchcraft** (occult and use of drugs), **hatred** (feeling of enmity against other people), **variance** (quarrelsome and contentious spirit), **emulations** (the jealousy that causes one to be suspicious about others), **wrath** (uncontrollable anger, outbursts of rage), **strife** (selfish ambition, self-centeredness, working to get ahead of the of another), **seditions** (dissension and disunity caused by disagreements – Hatfield’s and the McCoy’s), **heresies** (divisive doctrines and actions of people), **Envyings** (the jealousy that causes one to covet or want what others have), **murders** (the unlawful taking of human life), **drunkenness** (those who are excessive drinkers), **revellings** (party life, drunken orgies, riotous living and worldly or sensual entertainment), and **such like** (similar sins that reflect the old nature): of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

The spiritual Christian, the person who is filled, or controlled by the Holy Spirit, will avoid the fleshly works that are seeking to dominate and control his life. We can never be controlled by the Spirit and the flesh at the same time (“these are contrary the one to the other” – Gal. 5:17). The two are diametrically opposed to one another, even as light and darkness, or righteousness and unrighteousness are opposites (2 Cor. 6:14). Only one can rule our lives at any given time. The spiritual man will allow the Holy Spirit to dominate his life. He will constantly be seeking to live his life in the realm of the Spirit, instead of the region of the flesh.

The spiritual Christian will have an overall desire to follow the Spirit's control and leading, instead of the flesh. The spiritual believer is constantly striving to live in a manner that is pleasing to God. His desire is to "keep on being filled" with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18) and to "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16), but when he does sin, he immediately confesses his sins (1 John 1:9). He keeps short accounts with God. The spiritual man does not persistently promote sin, carnality, broken fellowship with God, and live in defeat throughout his daily routine of life. This is why he is called "spiritual" and is contrasted to the carnal Christian in 1 Corinthians 3:1.

Common salt, known as sodium chloride, is extremely vital to the health of both man and animals. Without it, cows will stop giving milk and finally sicken and die. It is also indispensable in sustaining human life. Years ago, in the rooms of automobile factories, strong men frequently collapsed while working in the high temperatures. At first, the doctors thought they needed to drink more water. But this did not solve the problem, for no matter how much they increased their water intake, the workers still kept dropping to the floor, writhing in agony with "heat cramps." After a thorough investigation, a Harvard laboratory staff came to the conclusion that excessive perspiring had caused the men to collapse. The medical team recommended taking salt tablets to compensate for the loss of sodium chloride from their bodies, since a certain amount of that chemical compound must be maintained in the bloodstream. Any great deviation from the norm can result in sickness and eventual death.

The same is true regarding the filling or control of the Spirit. When we deviate from God's plan for victory and living spiritual, we can only sicken and eventually go down. We will lose our spiritual edge and effectiveness for the Lord. We need to keep the Holy Spirit filling or controlling us with His power, fruit, and influence, so we might live differently, victoriously, and spiritually.

#### **b. The fruit of Spirit-filled living.**

Instead of manifesting the fruit of the flesh in his life (Gal. 5:19-21), the spiritual man will manifest the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). "But the fruit of the Spirit is **Love** (new desire); **joy** (new gladness); **peace** (new rest); **longsuffering** (new patience – toward others [2 Tim.



2:24] and in trials [1 Pet. 1:7]); **gentleness** (new disposition – being kind, gracious, and polite before others instead of harsh and overbearing); **goodness** (new excellence in character – opposite of being bad – doing good, right, and holy things); **faith** (new trust in God and His promises); **meekness** (new humility before God and others); **temperance** (new constraint or self control that enables us to conquer sinful habits – victory over the world, flesh, and the devil).

Spirituality is evidenced in our lives when the Spirit is producing fruit, or these examples of Christian character and virtues, within our hearts, and as an outward expression in our daily living. In short, we are only spiritual, if we are fruitful. Spiritual living and fruitful living go hand in hand.

Someone wrote:

“Every time we say, ‘I believe in the Holy Spirit,’ we mean that we believe that there is a living God able and willing to enter human personality and change it.”

Please notice that no tongues, slaying in the Spirit, dreams, and visions are present in these New Testament texts when speaking about the subject of the Spirit’s filling ministry and the believer’s spirituality. Why? It’s because these experiences were never intended to be true and lasting marks, or signs, related to spirituality for New Testament saints. In fact, some of the Corinthians spoke in tongues (1 Cor. 12:28), and yet, they were carnal (1 Cor. 3:1-3).

There are many who claim that a person is only spiritual, when they have extra-scriptural experiences, which are never promised to Church saints after the foundation of the Church (Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 13:8-10). I once met a man who said he spoke in tongues, had received the full blessing of the Holy Spirit, was baptized in the Spirit, slain in the Spirit, drunk in the Spirit and was on top of the world spiritually. I asked him if he thought the fruit of the Spirit was an important part of his spirituality. Sadly, this man viewed the fruit of the Holy Spirit, as something that is secondary in the Christian life, and on a lower plane than his alleged experiences.

### **c. The loss of Spirit-filled living.**

The sad fact is that Christians can go day-to-day and week-to-week without really being filled or controlled by the Holy Spirit. This is why the verb “be filled” is in the present tense, which indicates a continuous action. It could be rendered “keep being filled.” Each believer is exhorted to keep the filling or control process going on in his or her life. The filling of the Holy Spirit is not a one-time event that happens in your life. The filling of the Spirit is something that Christians should pursue at all times within their lives. When we sin, we lose the filling of the Holy Spirit. This is referred to as extinguishing the Spirit’s power in our lives (“quench not the Spirit” - 1 Thess. 5:19). Therefore, we must confess our sins and restore our fellowship with God (1 John 1:9), so we can restore the filling or controlling ministry of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and lives once again. Has the fire gone out of your life? Have you lost the flame of the Spirit’s work and filling? If so, you are not living in accordance with God’s plan and purpose for your life.

Jim Elliot wrote:

“God makes his ministers a flame of fire.

Am I ignitable?

God, deliver me from the dread asbestos of other things.

Saturate me with the oil of thy Spirit that I may flame.

Make me thy fuel, Flame of God.”

When we quench the Spirit, we put out the fire of the Spirit’s ministry from within our life and stand cold, callused, defeated, and insensitive to the Spirit’s inner voice of leading, direction, and power. We also cut off the fruit of the Holy Spirit. When we do this, we become carnal in our conduct and manner of living. The greatest tragedy in the church today is that God’s people have extinguished the power and personal teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit in their lives. This is why we have such a high divorce rate among Christians. This is why Christians live lives of double standards, putting on a show at church, while living like the devil in the home. This is why Christians hold grudges, are unforgiving, and unkind. This is why there is gossip in the Church. This is why Christians are so worldly today. It’s because God’s people have silenced the Spirit’s teaching ministry and power within their lives. They have silenced the Spirit’s voice and work. We have snuffed out the flame.

Let me tell you why you are such a snappy, snarling and stubborn person as a believer. Let me tell you why you get in those carnal grooves where you skip your devotions and leave God out of your life for weeks at a time. Let me tell you why you fail to attend church on a regular basis and miss the teaching of God's Word. It's because you have put out the fire! You have quenched the power, leading, and teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit in your life.

As a result, we begin to drift and compromise standards, truth, modesty, and Christian virtues. We drift away from the Holy Spirit's power and His leading and guiding ministry. Dear friend, you can't be a spiritual man ("he that is spiritual" – 1 Cor. 2:15) unless you are open to the teaching, power and guiding ministry of the Holy Spirit for your life. You must allow the Spirit of God to take the fresh truths of the Word and apply them to the very situations that you are facing in life. You must allow the Spirit to lead your life by the truth of the Word of God and change your life by His power and fruit.

There is a story about a boy flying a kite. The kite was so high that it had disappeared into the clouds. A man came by and asked, "Why are you holding on to that string?" The boy said, "I've got a kite up there." The man looked up and said, "I don't see it." The boy replied, "Well, I know it's there because I can feel the tug."

Friend, that tug of the kite is like the teaching, filling, controlling, and leading of the Holy Spirit within our lives. We cannot see the Holy Spirit, but we can feel the tug of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, when we are open and sensitive to His leading. The Holy Spirit keeps the inner tug going on in our life. As believers, we must refuse to cut the line that keeps the tug going on within our hearts and lives. When we do, we quench the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our life and our fellowship with God is broken. We lose the filling of the Spirit.

### **B. He is filled with the Word of God.**

The practice of the spiritual man is also demonstrated by the way he assimilates or incorporates the Bible in his daily living. A parallel statement is made between the Spirit's filling (Eph. 5:18-19) and a person who is filled with the Word of God.

Colossians 3:16 says:

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

Notice the similar results between the Spirit’s filling (Eph. 5:19 - “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”) and when a person is filled with God’s Word or truth (Col. 3:16 - “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord”). These similar results suggests that the filling or control of the Holy Spirit can only occur in our lives, when we are yielded to the Holy Spirit’s teaching, or as we are being filled and controlled by the Word of God. The Spirit-filled Christian is the Word-filled Christian. These two realities, the filling of the Holy Spirit and the filling of the Word of God are really one and the same. The Holy Spirit can only fill, or control the life of a person, who is controlled by God’s truth. In one sense, it is the Holy Spirit’s inspired Scripture, elsewhere called the “sword of the Spirit” (Eph. 6:17), which takes control of our lives and leads us in a right direction in life.

The word “dwell” means we must allow God’s Word “to live in” or “to be at home” in our hearts and lives. The word “richly” may be fully rendered “abundantly or extravagantly rich.” Scripture should permeate every aspect of the believer’s life and control every thought, word, and deed (Ps. 119:11; Matt. 13:9; 2 Tim. 2:15). As a result of filling our hearts with God’s truth, we will also be filled with God’s Spirit.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones said:

“Nothing is more dangerous than to put a wedge between the Word and the Spirit, to emphasize either one at the expense of the other. It is the Spirit and the Word, the Spirit upon the Word, and the Spirit in us as we read the Word.”

1 Corinthians 14:37

“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.”

Spiritual people always recognize the authority of Scripture over their lives. This is very important to understand, in light of those today, who are claiming to be led by the Holy Spirit, while preaching things and living lives that are contrary to the truth of Scripture. When I'm disobedient to church authority, or parental authority in the home, I'm not obeying God's Word, and I am not being the spiritual person God wants me to be. When I refuse to surrender my life to God's Word in some specific area, I am acting in an unspiritual way, since I am not allowing my life to be led by the Spirit (Gal.5:18). There are no shortcuts to living spiritually. We need to remember our daily devotion or else experience the daily erosion! The Holy Spirit wants to direct, or lead us into victory, but we can refuse His leading and prodding.

One thing is certain; the Spirit of God never acts contrary to the Word of God! Any person who is truly Spirit-minded and Spirit-filled will accept the authority of the Word of God over his life. We sometimes think we can be spiritual while ignoring or refusing to hear the Word of God. I want to say that if you are not hearing the truth of Scripture, then you have a spiritual problem. Dear Christian friend, it is a wasted life, when you turn a deaf ear to the Bible and live without the filling or control of the Spirit.

Hebrews 5:11 says:

“Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.”

Do you know what happens when you become dull of hearing? You become carnal. You begin to walk in your own way instead of walking under the filling or control of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit cannot control your life without the lamp or guidebook, which is the Word of God (Psalm 119:105). The result of neglecting truth and failure to respond to truth is carnality.

1 Corinthians 3:1-2 demonstrates the connection between carnality and the lack of spiritual instruction: “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.” The carnal Christian is that person who has not been growing in his knowledge, appreciation, and application of the Word of God to his practical daily

living. This is why Paul could not feed the saints of Corinth the deeper truths of the Word of God, when he wrote to them. He had originally shared with them the basics about the cross and their salvation; however, the Corinthians did not grow in their Christian life by studying and applying the truth of the Word of God to their daily living. The result was that they became carnal in their overall approach to living. These believers primarily lived by the power of their old nature as evidenced by their jealousy and divisions. (1 Cor. 3:3).

Here is the obvious point. Whenever you fail to open your heart to the Word of God and grow in your Christian life, through obedience to God's truth, then you will become carnal in your Christian life. If you tune out the Book, you will sooner or later tune out the Spirit! This is because the Bible and the Holy Spirit work together. You cannot walk in the Spirit if you are not walking in the light of God's Word. You cannot be filled, or controlled by the Holy Spirit, unless you are filled with the Word of God. To shut our ears to truth is to lose the control of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Dr. Harry Ironside used to say: "Do not traffic in unfelt truth."

The emphasis on the filling of the Spirit is not some ecstatic or emotional experience, but a daily controlling of the life, through obedience to the truth of God's Word. Spirituality is not some kind of emotional experience or feeling that runs down your spine. True spirituality is when we can awake on Monday morning and go throughout the week depending upon the provision and power of the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. Granted, there are various degrees of spirituality and on different days our spiritual level may vary. We may have a bad spiritual day! When this occurs, we must prepare ourselves for the battle the next day and once again walk with the Holy Spirit's power and cultivate Christian fruit in our lives.

We must beware of the notion that we can live in constant defeat, bear little fruit in our life, and still claim to be spiritual. We should not fool ourselves, when carnality controls our life, instead of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual man is the victorious man! He is the man who is living in the daily power and victory of the Holy Spirit. Victory is a way of habit within his life. It is not something that is only now and then. Sin is not reigning in the spiritual man's life and bringing him into

bondage (Rom. 7:15-25). The Holy Spirit is directing his life (Gal. 4:18). The spiritual man lives life on the higher plane! His habit or way of life revolves around triumph and victory.

2 Corinthians 2:14

“Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.”

The life of the spiritual man will gain more victories than defeats. His life will bear more fruit than failures. He lives his overall life under the influence and power of the Holy Spirit.

I remember stopping at a certain department store. We wanted to go into the store to purchase some items. To our surprise, the store was closed, due to inventory. The sign on the outside of the door read, “Closed for inventory.” I think it is important that we all take a spiritual inventory of our lives at times. This is when we really sit back and honestly evaluate our lives. We should learn to look on the shelves of our lives and see how much fruit is there. If you don’t find much fruit left on the shelves, then you need to start restocking! While taking inventory, we need to ask ourselves these questions. Have I really been spiritual in my daily living? Am I spiritual in my relationships at home, in the church, and on the job? Am I spiritual in my walk with the Lord? Am I experiencing daily victories more than defeats? Am I bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit in my life? Am I really living fruitfully? How much fruit have I been neglecting? Have I been obedient to God’s Word?

In summary, the spiritual man (“he that is spiritual” – 1 Cor. 2:15) is the man whose human spirit has been regenerated (made alive) and brought into a new dynamic living relationship with God. He is the man who possesses the life and nature of God (2 Pet. 1:4), which produces new desires and new outlooks on life (Phil. 2:13). He is the man who is also indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:1-4) and can now live his life in a Spirit-directed manner. The quality of his life can now become spiritual in nature through the presence of the new nature and the Spirit’s life.

Galatians 5:18

“But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.”

The Holy Spirit leads us in the way of victory over sin which is something the Mosaic Law could never grant. It is said that a certain guide lived in the deserts of Arabia who never lost his way. He carried with him a dove with a very fine cord attached to one of its legs. When in doubt as to which path to take, he threw the bird into the air. The dove quickly strained at the cord to fly in the direction of home, and thus led the guide accurately to his goal. Because of this unique practice, he was known as "the dove man." So, too, the Holy Spirit, the heavenly Dove (Matt. 3:16), is willing and able to direct us in the way that leads to abundant life. He will direct and empower us in the way of daily victory and fruit production, so our life can be changed and different. The spiritual man is the Spirit directed man. He is the dove man.

### **III. He has proper discernment in his life.**

1 Corinthians 2:15 states:

“But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.”

Unlike the natural man, who is not spiritually discerned, this man is discerning. The word “judgeth” in 1 Corinthians 2:15 is the same Greek word translated “discerned” in verse 14. It’s a word used of a pretrial examination and has the connotation of examining and investigating the truth.

#### **a. He can discern spiritual truth.**

The natural man examines the truth found in the Bible, but does not see the relevancy of truth, or how the Bible can apply to his life (1 Cor. 2:14). He is left in the dark when it comes to appropriating and understanding how the Bible can actually work in his daily life. This is because he does not have the Holy Spirit to open his eyes to truth and to the spiritual realities of salvation or the Christian life. The natural man is not only lost and going to Hell, he is also lost when it comes to understanding and assimilating the Bible in his everyday life. However, the spiritual man, who has the life of God within him,



and the Spirit of God to lead him (Gal. 5:18), has a whole different perspective on life. The spiritual man has a spiritual outlook, or perspective on life, since he examines everything through the lens of Scripture.

This man is able to discern or examine the truth of the Bible and then apply it to his daily life. When the Bible says he “judgeth all things” (1 Cor. 2:14) it means the spiritual man is able to discern what the Bible is saying and apply it to his normal living. A person possessing the Holy Spirit and guided by the Spirit is able to evaluate and apply the spiritual truths of Scripture to his everyday living. The “all things” would relate to the cross and God’s redemptive plan of salvation as earlier outlined in the epistle (1 Cor. 1:18-25). All the things about God’s cross, grace, mercy, redemption, regeneration and sanctification suddenly come alive to the spiritual man who can now grasp and appreciate spiritual truth.

This means that the spiritual man is now able to live and possess a new spiritual outlook on life. The man with the Holy Spirit can now understand the spiritual things of the Bible through the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus promised His disciples in John 16:13:

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”

The spiritual man is the discerning and enlightened man. The believer no longer has to be a spiritual dunce regarding the things of the Christian life and the Bible, since the Holy Spirit is teaching this man many wonderful truths, which he could never see or understand before he was saved. He now has a spiritual eye for truth and his life is being changed as he responds to God’s Word.

1 Corinthians 2:9-12 explains the spiritual man’s new discernment of truth in this way: “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save

the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.”

When the Bible says “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man,” it is explaining the natural man’s perspective of spiritual truth. The natural man has now allowed God’s Word to penetrate his heart (“neither have entered into the heart of man”). This verse is often used at funerals; however, contextually, the verse before it is talking about the unsaved, natural man and his inability to know what he was doing when he nailed Christ to the cross.

1 Corinthians 2:8 says:

"Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

This informs us that 1 Corinthians 2:9 is not a funeral verse! It really is talking about how the unsaved have never allowed the wonderful truths regarding God's grace, love and mercy to touch their hearts ("neither have entered into the heart of man"). The unsaved man cannot spiritually comprehend the significance of the cross and how it relates to his life. This message has not touched his inner being or sounded that beautiful spiritual chord of harmony within his heart. This is because they are "spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). The truth does not register and resonate within his soul.

He cannot know the wonderful realities related to Christian living or “the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Cor. 2:9). This is not talking about things which God has prepared for Christians far off in the distant future (in Heaven); it’s talking about those things which God has prepared for us right now (on earth), who love God and know the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. God has prepared for us a wonderful life and journey that we can enjoy as we walk according to truth and the Spirit’s guidance. However, since the natural man does not love God and live for God he is at loss when it comes to understanding the spiritual matters that pertain to salvation, life, and godliness. The natural man does not possess spiritual eyes.

For instance, the natural man cannot see the importance of God's grace and mercy as demonstrated upon the cross. To the natural man, the cross and the spiritual truths of God's grace and mercy is folly or foolishness ("to them that perish foolishness" - 1 Cor. 1:18). The natural man does not know anything more about the importance of the cross and salvation than a goat grazing on a hillside! However, this is not true regarding the spiritual man, who has been enlightened to spiritual truth by the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. He has been given new set of eyes and ears and a new heart; therefore, he can now see and understand how Bible truth fits into his life.

1 Corinthians 2:10 says:

"But God hath revealed them unto us (the regenerated people of God) by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

How wonderful that we are no longer in the dark! God has brought "us" (believers) out of the darkness into His marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9) and revealed to "us" the glories of salvation and Scripture. Christians can know the importance of God's truth and apply it to our lives. The "deep things" relate to God's Gospel plan, the cross, and God's display of grace and mercy through Jesus Christ. It's wonderful to realize that the Holy Spirit knows all about the depths of God's love and glorious grace surrounding the cross, and He reveals these wonderful spiritual realities to the hearts of those of us, who are born again.

Of course, the application of this verse would include the spiritual man's ability to understand and apply all truths that are found in the Bible to his life. However, it's altogether different for the natural man. The natural man, who is not born again, cannot comprehend the "deep things" (1 Cor. 2:10) about God's saving or sanctifying plan for his life. In general, he can't apply truth to His life. The natural man is incapable of seeing the relevancy and importance of the "deep things" or the depths of God's wonderful saving plan in the cross and God's sanctifying plan for the Christian life ("but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" - 1 Cor. 1:18). In short, the spiritual man is a discerning man, who has been enlightened to the importance of the "deep things" regarding God's Word.

“O the deep, deep love of Jesus,  
Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free!  
Rolling as a mighty ocean  
In its fullness over me!  
Underneath me, all around me,  
Is the current of Thy love  
Leading onward, leading homeward  
To Thy glorious rest above!”

Many Christians today are saying: “Don’t preach doctrine. Just give us heartwarming sermons that will encourage us!” However, if sermons are not based on doctrine, or the clear teaching of Scripture, they will accomplish nothing! What a thrill to be able to study the Bible and let the Spirit teach us “the deep things of God” (1 Cor. 2:10).

Generally speaking, the spiritual man can discern the importance and relevancy of truth (“judgeth all things” – 1 Cor. 2:15) and apply it to his daily life. The natural or unsaved man does not have the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit available to him (1 Cor. 2:14); therefore, he goes to the blackboard of life and writes down the word salvation, but has no clue how it relates to his own life. Jesus taught the unsaved eye has not seen and the deafened ear has not heard.

Matthew 13:15

“For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed...”

The unsaved man never quite gets it! His spiritual elevator does not come up to the top floor. He is left in the dark concerning spiritual truth and how it fits into his way of life. However, it’s a different story for the spiritual man (“he that is spiritual” – 1 Cor. 2:15). This man has the Holy Spirit abiding in his life and is open and sensitive to the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:12

“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.”

What a difference the Holy Spirit makes in a person's life! The Holy Spirit enables us to "know the things that are freely given to us of God," which means he opens our eyes to the wonderful spiritual blessings of God's salvation, grace, mercy, and love. Our eyes are opened to spiritual things and Scriptural things. We see these truths like we have never seen them before. In general, the Bible comes alive to the regenerated man who now has the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit within his life.

Martin Luther used to say:  
"The Bible is alive, it speaks to me.  
It has feet, it runs after me."  
It has hands, it lays hold of me."

The regenerated man, who is taught by the Holy Spirit, can now see truth that he has never seen before. This is because he has sailed across the ocean of unbelief and skepticism and has found a whole New World! For the very first time, he can see spiritual truth! The truth is this; at the moment of salvation, we begin to see and perceive spiritual truth in a different light. Suddenly, everything came alive to us. God turns on the lights!

Oswald Chambers commented on what takes place, when the natural man changes into a spiritual man, and receives God's new life and the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. He said: "What takes place is an explosion on the inside that opens all the doors that have been closed and life becomes larger; there is the incoming of a totally new point of view."

Isaiah 55:12 speaks about Israel's future conversion in the same way: "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands."

Of course, everything seems to come alive to a man or woman, who has just been delivered from their old state of blindness and bondage to sin, and to one who has just been ushered into God's new life of light and blessing. The trees, personified as clapping with hands (branches moving in the wind), suggests the overflowing joy that Israel will experience as a result of their new life in Christ. Everything

will seem to come alive to them! This is what happens when the change from the natural man to the spiritual man occurs. This is what happens when a man becomes indwelt by the Spirit of God and is being taught the wonderful blessings of salvation and the Bible.

Here's how D. L. Moody described his first walk outside, after being converted in the shoe store, where he worked: "I thought the old sun shone a good deal brighter than it ever had before. I thought that it was smiling upon me. And as I walked out upon the Boston Common and heard the birds singing in the trees, I thought they were all singing a song to me. It seemed that I was in love with all creation."

Wade Robinson, the hymnwriter, expressed the same sentiment, when he wrote:

"Heaven above is softer blue,  
Earth around is sweeter green;  
Something lives in every hue  
Christless eyes have never seen!

Birds with gladder songs o'erflow,  
Flowers with deeper beauties shine,  
Since I know, as now I know,  
I am His and He is mine."

The Holy Spirit has opened this man's eyes to the spiritual truth of Scripture, to such an extent, that he can now be touched, stirred, and motivated to sing about God's amazing love and grace.

"Amazing love! How can it be,  
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?"

In the simplest explanation, the spiritual man is an individual who has been freed from the blindness of Satan (2 Cor. 4:4). He is the man who has been enlightened by God and is now open to spiritual realities and truth. He has come to the light (John 12:36 ) and is now walking in the light (1 John 1:7).

Ephesians 1:18 declares:

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may

know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.”

We have a period in our world history, which is viewed as a time of enlightenment. It was the European philosophical movement of the 17th and 18th centuries, which was characterized by belief in the power of reason over spiritual truth. Men, like Immanuel Kant, wrote on ethics and morals from the standpoint of human reason. He wrote, “Nothing is divine but what is agreeable to reason.” The problem is that man’s wisdom or enlightenment is folly in God’s sight!

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?”

When it comes to understanding spiritual truth, we need God’s wisdom. This is why we need God’s enlightenment today which comes through the unbending truth of Scripture. The spiritual man has received God’s enlightenment and can understand and learn the truth concerning God’s magnificent plan for his life. Since this is true, the spiritual man is really a growing man. This is the man, who is growing in his Christian life, through the revelation of the Scriptures to his heart.

1 Peter 2:2

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”

Listen my friend; something wonderful happens when a man or woman gets saved! God brings the soul back to the Creator, so he can enjoy God’s presence again and all the blessings of salvation that He has given to him. The spiritual man can begin to grow by applying truth to his daily life and be changed or transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit (“changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” – 2 Cor. 3:18). Now we can sing:

“Things are different now,  
Something happened to me  
When I gave my heart to Jesus;

Things are different now  
I was changed, it must be,  
When I gave my heart to Him.  
Things I loved before have passed away,  
Things I love far more have come to stay;  
Things are different now  
something happened that day,  
When I gave my heart to Him.”

In summary, the spiritual man is an individual who is able to discern and know what the Scriptures mean to his everyday life. He has an appreciation and perception of spiritual truth that he has never had before and can now apply Scripture to his life. The spiritual man is open and receptive to learning the truth of God’s Word; he possesses an unlimited capacity for learning spiritual truth. As a result, he can grow in his Christian life. This is because the Holy Spirit has given him supernatural discernment to know the Scriptures.

In 1 Corinthians 2:13, Paul goes on to explain the new teaching and growth process: “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

Jesus promised that the Spirit would teach us (John 14:26) and guide us in truth (John 16:13). The way He does this is best explained as “comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” This means that Paul gave out Spirit-taught words (inspiration) that could, in return, be compared with other Spirit-given truth (revelation), which had already been recorded as Scripture. The Holy Spirit teaches us God’s Word as we compare spiritual truths with other spiritual truths (one Bible passage with another). It’s a great joy to sit before the pages of the Bible and let the Spirit reveal God’s truth to our minds and hearts. The trouble is that many Christians are too busy for this kind of quiet meditation, study, and learning. As a result, they are missing out on life’s greatest treasure – a deepening knowledge of God’s Word.

We must once again realize that the context contrasts the spiritual man (1 Cor. 2:15) with both the natural (1 Cor. 2:14) and carnal man (1 Cor. 3:1). This indicates that this man is spiritual because of his own openness to truth and his acceptance of God’s Word. He is the



man who has yielded his life to God, which in return, opens the way for the Holy Spirit to work in his heart and life, through the revelation of Scripture. Unlike the life of the natural or carnal man, the spiritual man has a life that is one of spiritual blessing and enrichment.

**b. He can discern right from wrong.**

The word “judgeth” or “discerns” means to examine, investigate or scrutinize. As we have already seen, the believer can examine all the content of Scripture, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, he can understand the meaning and impact that it has on his life. However, since the spiritual man can discern truth, he also has the ability to make good moral and ethical judgments, regarding what is right and wrong. Since this man is a discerning man, he is also capable of sorting out the difference between what is right and wrong. This is certainly part of the spiritual man’s description.

Harry Ironside said this about the spiritual man:

"He is able to see the difference between what is of God and what is of man, what is of the flesh and what is of the Spirit, what is of the new and what is of the old nature."

This man can judge everything in the ethical dimension of life. When the whole world seems to be saying that abortion is right, the spiritual man will say that it is wrong. He will conclude that homosexuality is wrong. The spiritual man will also be able to spot false doctrine and the system of greed, as it operates within the modern-day church. He will also be able to detect worldly sins that are seeking to dominate or control his own personal life. The spiritual man is the person who is capable of casting righteous judgment upon his own life and the conditions surrounding him within the world.

Jesus said in John 7:24:

“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”

Contrary to what many Christians say and teach today, proper judgment is a sign of living a spiritual life! If we do not judge the false conclusions and sinful actions of our own personal lives and others, we can very easily be overtaken by wrong conclusions, ideas, sinful

acts, and led astray by “every wind of doctrine” (Ephesians 4:14). We need to have our “senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Hebrews 5:14).

There is an unrighteous judgment. Jesus explains unrighteous judgment as judging some outward action, such as healing on the Sabbath (John 7:23), without having all the Biblical facts or truths. It is an ignorant type of judgment. However, our Lord did emphasize the importance of proper discernment of judgment. Christ demanded the exercise of moral and theological discernment, or judgment. Of course, the spiritual man does not judge like the hypocritical Pharisees judged, who possessed great spiritual flaws in their lives and who judged unfairly (Mathew 7:1, 5). They were also trying to judge the motives within the hearts of people which only God could examine and judge (Psalms 44:21; Proverbs 21:2; 16:2; 1 Cor. 4:5). Someday God will reveal the final chapter on the heart and the hypocrite.

Here is the point; we are not to judge like a bunch of unsaved nitpicking, hairsplitting hypocrites; however, we are to judge as a spiritual man. The spiritual man is to possess discernment in life (Heb. 5:14). Discernment is linked to a seasoned, developed, and Biblically informed mind (Psalms 119:66, 104, 130). Discernment can only flourish in an environment of faithful Bible study and teaching (2 Tim. 2:15). The spiritual man (“he that is spiritual judgeth all things”) knows the Book and why he does not engage in certain practices. He is a discerning man. The rule of thumb for the spiritual man is to test or examine everything!

1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 commands us to:

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.”

How do we maintain discernment?

**a. We examine all things (be discerning).**

This is how the spiritual man demonstrates discernment today. He carefully puts everything under the microscope of God’s Word and examines it. The word “prove” (dokimazo) is similar in meaning to the

word “discerneth” in 1 Corinthians 2:15. It means to test, analyze, examine or approve something as genuine. The word actually speaks of the process of analyzing something to reveal its genuineness. This word was used of the process of testing precious metals for their purity. The spiritual man is to be a discerning person who is ready to evaluate what is holy, right and true. He is able and ready to cast disapproval upon that which is unholy, unrighteous, and false. Beloved, we are to examine everything! Everything that we hear, read, wear, and see is to go through an examination, so we can determine whether it is holy and righteous, or unholy and worthless.

First John 4:6 talks about the “spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.” The spiritual or discerning man will be able to distinguish between the error and truth. He will place everything under the light and scrutiny of truth to determine its spiritual deficiency or acceptability. Spirit-taught discernment becomes practical in our everyday Christian life, as we learn to examine everything (1 Thess. 5:21) that we hear, read and see. Is it Biblical? Does it match up to what the Bible says? Does it go against Biblical principles? Examine everything! Christian discernment involves making a clear distinction between good and evil, or right and wrong.

Discernment is often assessed as being contentious or possessing a critical spirit that is unchristian. However, according to what the Bible says, a spiritual person is a discerning person (1 Cor. 2:15). He will mark a difference between holy and unholy music, carnal and spiritual works, selfish and spiritual actions, and between the fruit of the Spirit and the fruit of the flesh. Many Christians no longer possess the will or desire to discern. This is the great tragedy among the modern evangelical movement of today, which lives more carnally, than it does spiritually.

Jay Adams has correctly observed:

“Indeed, if the words of prophets in apostolic times needed to be examined and evaluated, then surely we ought to subject the words of self-proclaimed prophets and preachers today to even more intense scrutiny in the bright light of the completed New Testament.”

**b. We cling to good things (be determined).**

The Bible goes on to say, in 1 Thessalonians 5:21, that we are to hold on to the truth (“hold fast that which is good”). Hold the fort a little longer! We are to take a firm grip on truth and never loosen our grip. The spiritual or discerning man will never back down from truth and from doing what is right. Do right! The spiritual man will tenaciously and stubbornly hold on to the truth of Scripture. The truth is worth fighting for! Jude 1:3 says, we “should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” The spiritual man needs to have a militant, defensive, and protective stand against anything that undermines the truth. We must defend the truth in a zealous manner. The truth of sanctification and holiness (“the doctrine which according to godliness” - 1 Tim. 6:3) is also a major Bible doctrine that needs to be upheld in a day when Christians dress like the unsaved, think like the unsaved, act like the unsaved, view the same things as the unsaved, and listen to the same things as the unsaved. The spiritual man is constantly assessing everything and holding on to those things which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report (Phil. 4:8).

**c. We abstain from bad things (be decisive).**

Finally, 1 Thessalonians 5:22 says we are to “abstain” (refrain or keep away) from “all appearance of evil” or every form of evil. This calls for a radical separation from everything that is evil. This would include all evil teaching (false doctrine) and every action of evil behavior. To “abstain” from something calls for a decisive action. We must determine to avoid and not participate with those things which are morally despicable in God’s eyes and even questionable in conduct or practice.

All counterfeit teaching and carnal living should be rejected and avoided. Not only should pseudo-prophecies of Paul’s day be discarded, but also, as Paul broadens his warning, every “appearance” of evil should be avoided. The word “appearance” means to take on the fashion, form, or shape of evil. This means whatever form evil takes, we must abstain from it.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary adds:

“What may only appear to be bad also falls under this warning.”

Whether something is blatantly (openly) evil or deceptively (veiled) evil must be taken into consideration. All evil in every form must be avoided.

I think there are many Christians today that have totally lost sight of what it means to be spiritual. One key element of spirituality is the ability to discern (“he that is spiritual discerneth all things” – 1 Cor. 2:15). Spiritual people are discerning people. They are people who do not allow their feelings or emotions to determine what they believe. They are people that do not blindly swallow everything that comes down the pike, or everything that they hear someone say. The spiritual man measures everything by the yardstick of Scripture (Acts 17:11).

I once had a man call me on the church phone, who was heavily involved with the modern Charismatic movement. He talked my ear off and finally concluded that I was not a spiritual Christian, since I did not follow the teachings about tongues and the alleged Holy Spirit baptism. I proceeded to explain from Scripture why the sign gifts of the Spirit are no longer in operation within the church today and that the baptism of the Holy Spirit has nothing to do with emotions or ecstasy. This man would not take the time to listen to truth, since he was caught up in the mysticism of the last days. He chose his mystical experiences over the measuring stick of the Word of God. Today, many people are disregarding truth for experience. Truth is becoming more flexible to many Christians in order to promote their own world of make-believe spirituality.

When Harvard University was founded, its motto was “Truth for Christ and the Church.” But in recent decades the motto has been modified to simply “truth.” Biblical truth can easily be ignored. We must remember that truth is what we find Scripture. We discover truth when “rightly dividing the word of truth” (1 Tim. 2:15) and discovering God’s mind. Anything that does not pass the test of the Word of God should be shunned. The spiritual man is simply the discerning man. He is able to judge the moral climate surrounding his life and discern what is right and wrong.

1 Corinthians 2:15 goes on to say: “But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.”

Although the spiritual man can judge between right and wrong, the natural or unsaved person, cannot judge the genuine Christian life, since he does not understand the life of the spiritual man. The Christian and non-Christian live in two different worlds or spheres of life. The Christian understands the unsaved person because he has been in his position before. However, the unsaved man cannot understand the life of the spiritual man, since he has never entered inside the gates of salvation and its blessings. When the Bible says, “he himself is judged of no man,” it does not suggest that unsaved people can never point out flaws in the believer’s life, since they often do have flaws! What the Bible is teaching is that the unsaved man cannot penetrate into the full understanding of what the Christian’s life is all about.

This means that the unsaved world cannot properly evaluate the life of the spiritual man. They look at his life and wonder why he can love God and the Bible the way that he does. The unsaved of this world do not have a clue about what makes this man really tick in life. The spiritual man is an enigma or puzzling character to the unsaved world of mankind. This is because the unsaved, or natural man, lacks the discerning faculty that the spiritual man has. He is unable to see the wonderful blessings of the Christian life because he is unaided by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the natural man cannot properly evaluate the life of the spiritual man when it comes to his interest in spiritual things and the difference in his life (“he himself is judged of no man”).

What does the unsaved man really know about the Christian life? How can he possibly understand how the spiritual man can have such peace, joy, and patience through the difficult times of life? How can the unsaved begin to understand why the Christian bows his head and prays before he eats lunch? How can he ever understand why the spiritual man loves the Bible and goes to church? How can he properly evaluate this person’s changed life from his own manner of living? How can he explain the peace and rest that a spiritual man experiences at a funeral service, knowing that he will see his beloved wife again?

The answer to all of these questions is that the unsaved, or natural man, cannot understand what it means to be a Christian. He lives in

another world unaffected by spiritual realities. A man who is “spiritually discerned” (1 Cor. 2:14) is incapable of judging a discerning man, whose life has been transformed or changed by the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit. The spiritual man is simply a mysterious character, who makes no sense to the man of the world. The spiritual man is walking down a different road, moving in a different direction, and singing a different song than the natural man. The two lives of these people are as different as night and day. At least they should be! For this reason, the natural man cannot properly evaluate what is going on in this man’s life and judge him fairly concerning spiritual matters. He can only shake his head and wonder what kind of motor could possibly be running the spiritual man’s life.

Acts 26:24-25

“And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.”

In short, Festus told Paul that he was out of his mind! He believed that Paul was some type of mentally unbalanced, religious fanatic, since he believed in the resurrection of Christ. This is how the natural man views the spiritual man as he lives and talks about Christ. The natural man is unable to properly evaluate the life of the spiritual man, since he is not in contact with God and spiritual realities. The unsaved man lives in the twilight zone of spiritual blindness. He has no understanding of spiritual truth and what it means to live for God.

1 Corinthians 2:16 concludes with this statement about the spiritual man’s life: “For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”

Verse sixteen picks up with the last thought concerning the inability of the natural or unsaved man to judge the life of the spiritual Christian (1 Cor. 2:15). The connective word “for” introduces the reason why the spiritual man cannot be examined, or understood by the natural man. The reason is because no unsaved person can know, or perceive how God thinks (“For who hath known the mind of the Lord”). Paul is quoting from Isaiah 40:30 and is referring to the unbeliever when he asks, “who hath known the mind of the Lord?”

The unbeliever has no clue concerning the way God really thinks, since he has rejected the Bible as revelation. Therefore, the unsaved individual cannot “instruct” or give counsel to God on any matter.

In Isaiah 9:6, God is called the “Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” This means God does not receive counsel from any person. He is the Counselor! No person can ever tell God what to do. The epistle of Romans also echoes this same truth.

Romans 11:33-34 says: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?”

God alone gives counsel to others. No man can tell God what to do! God is the great omniscient Counselor, who alone can give instruction to other people. God has His own mind settled on everything. And the wonder of the ages is this; God has given His own mind to the spiritual man! He has instructed the spiritual person on how to think, live, and walk in this present world.

Paul says that “we have the mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:16). This means the spiritual man thinks like God and comes to the same conclusions as God does in relationship to morality and matters that pertain to life. Furthermore, since the spiritual man possesses “the mind of Christ” already he can only be judged by God (1 Cor. 4:3-5) - not by unregenerate people (2:14), or by worldly Christians (3:1-3).

To have the mind of Christ is to be obedient to God’s revelation (Phil. 2:5-8). Within the scope of the immediate context, the mind of Christ seems to suggest that we have been given the supernatural ability to understand, or discern the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit has enlightened our minds to truth and it’s through the truth of Scripture that we can now have the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:10 again reads:

“But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”



Only as the Word of Christ dwells in us richly (Col. 3:16), can we really think like Christ, and act like Christ. Christ's words, as revealed in the Scripture, give us a new mindset on how to live and function in life. To possess the mind of Christ means that we can now understand Bible truth and make it applicable to our lives. Only as we reflect upon the glorious truths that the Holy Spirit reveals to us from the Bible, can we expect to have the mind of Christ. Biblical instruction gives us Christ's perspective on living, so we can be prepared to live like Jesus Christ in this world (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The Biblical perspective on life is Christ's perspective on life. This is why we must be open to the Spirit's teaching ministry in our lives today. When we close the door of our hearts to learning and understanding Biblical truth, then we cannot have the Christ-centered outlook on life. Instead, we develop the self-centered outlook on life. To state it succinctly, the Spirit of God reveals the Word of God to us, so we can have the mind of God!

James 3:15 says:

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

The world's demonic wisdom tries to deceive us and lead us astray in life. But do not fear my friend, the spiritual man has the mind of Christ. As we possess the mind of Christ, or the understanding and wisdom of Christ for daily living, we can be rescued from the demonically inspired wisdom of this age. The desires and thoughts of the Lord (Ps. 37:4), gained through the Word of God, can redirect us and bring victory into our everyday lives.

To have the mind of Christ means we can make decisions as Christ would make decisions. We can see things as Christ would see them. We can view life as Christ would view life, if He were here on earth today. We can think, act, and live as Jesus would live today in our present century, since we have been given the very mind of Christ, through the instruction of the Word of God.

In addition, possessing the mind of Christ also means that we will go throughout life with humility and serve other people. The epistle of Philippians reveals this to us.

Philippians 2:5-8 says:

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

Let this mind be in you - the mind of Jesus Christ! What kind of mind did Christ possess? It was a mind of humility for He humbly served others and sacrificed his life for them. In fact, he died upon the cross for all of lost humanity. The thinking of Christ was centered on other people instead of Himself.

“And may the prayer of my heart always be,  
Make me a servant today.”

Do you really want to know how you can impact the world today? Do you want to know what will improve your marital relationship? Do you really want to know what keeps churches unified and sin from running rampant? The answer to all of these questions is the mind of Christ. The spiritual man possesses the mind of Christ. When we put this into practice, we will be Christlike in our character and conduct in life. We will always ask, “What would Jesus do?” The spiritual man is the Christlike man because he possesses the mind of Christ. We must let loose within our lives the mind of Christ!

Ray Stedman has summed it up well:

“This is the privilege of the spiritual man, who is able to operate in the midst of the confusion of life today in such a way as to call men back to reality, away from the confusion and the illusion and the delusions by which the world lives, to the realities of life as it is in Christ. What a privilege.”

God has given me the mind of Christ. What an exciting and transforming truth this is for our personal lives today. God has given me a new outlook and a new direction for life. He has given me a new attitude about life in general. He has given to me a new disposition or character in life that I never had before. He has given me new power for daily living. He has given me something worth living for!

“Something more than my yesterdays,  
More than you’ll ever know.  
Something more than wealth or fame,  
He gave me something, worth living for.”

Shame on us, when we as Christians, lose our Christlike perspective on living. Shame on us, when we become carnal and do not allow the mind of Christ to control us. Shame on us, when our values become distorted and twisted by the world system (1 John 2:15-17). Shame on us, when we live beneath our privileges!

May I ask you a rather personal question? Are you a spiritual man? Are you a spiritual woman? How would your wife, husband, or children honestly answer this question? Dear Christian, do some soul searching today. God wants us to be spiritual in our every day manner of living (“he that is spiritual” – 1 Cor. 2:15). Our spirituality must be seen on the job. It must be witnessed out in the highways and byways of life. It must get down to our shoe leather and home life.

### **A Spiritual Checklist**

- Has the Holy Spirit been controlling your life?
- Are there areas that you need to surrender to the Lord?
- What areas of your life need improvement?
- What kind of consistent and daily fruit has been seen in your life?
- How much victory have you been experiencing in your daily walk?
- Have you really been open to the truth of Scriptures?
- Are you receptive to the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit?
- Have you been applying Biblical truth to all of your decisions and actions in life?
- Have you been discerning in your approach to living?
- Do you examine everything in the light of Scripture?
- Are you thinking like Jesus?
- Are you being obedient to what the Bible is asking you to do?

- Are you submitting to your wife's needs and to your husband's spiritual leadership?
- How do you react to the situations that used to make you angry?
- Are you a loving, kind, gentle, and patient person?
- How do you relate to your wife or husband?
- Do your children see Christ in your life?
- Does your family and other people enjoy being with you?
- Are you serving others as Christ did?
- Are you worshiping God in your daily routine of life?

## **False Spirituality**

We have discovered what true spirituality really is throughout this study. However, there are several kinds of false spirituality, which have crept into the church over the years. False spirituality and hypocrisy is something we all need to avoid. Let's conclude this study by dealing with some areas of false spirituality.

Here are some examples of false spirituality.

### **1. Personality spirituality**

This results in "hero worship" by Christians who follow certain teachers. These people say, in effect, "I am of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas" (1 Cor. 3:4). People today stake their claim to spirituality when they follow certain personalities or preachers. They grade their spiritual life on the fact that they attend a person's seminar or follow the teaching of a certain eloquent speaker. There are many Christians today that get caught in the web of Christian celebrity worship. They follow a man and become identified with this man or person to such an extent that they feel that they are spiritual. This was the case in the lives of the Corinthians (1 Cor. 3:3-4). However, this is the mark of false spirituality.

### **2. Emotional spirituality**

This type of spirituality is allegedly demonstrated by handclapping, shouting, waving of the hands, or weeping, as proof of spirituality. It is

also often marked by speaking in tongues or receiving what is termed the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is believed that certain emotional responses or reactions within people's lives are the mark of their spirituality. Spirituality is seemingly regulated to attending certain types of church services that are upbeat and which leave a person in some type of hypnotic state. Many are addicted to these types of services today, which promote extra-Scriptural emotional experiences, and so-called Christian Rock Music. There are also services that promote the felt-needs of people, entertain people, and result in stroking one's self esteem, or creating a shallow emotional response from people. We must remember that feelings are not the gauge of true spirituality (John 17:17 - "thy word is truth"). The Corinthians claimed to have certain ecstatic experiences (1 Cor. 12:3) and yet they were carnal (1 Cor. 3:1).

### **3. Selective spirituality**

This idea says, "What's the use of being spiritual, if there's no one around to watch?" This person tries to demonstrate spirituality in front of a certain class of people, which they think, can elevate their spiritual barometer in life. In other words, this person attempts to put on a godly show in front of a selective group of people (Eph. 6:6). They may seem to be a profound Sunday School teacher in church, or some other kind of spiritual giant, while serving in the local church, but in actuality they may be a mean husband in the home, or a disobedient wife. This individual can be an altogether different person depending on the people and circumstances that surround his life. They are somewhat like the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde split personality. This is what we might term as selective spirituality.

### **4. Crisis spirituality**

This person appears to be spiritual when he needs some type of financial assistance or help from God's people. This person puts on a type of spiritual Broadway show in the time of a crisis - a need for money, health issue, etc. When tough times come into this person's life, he resorts to a false show of spirituality, in order to gain something that he needs or wants. However, it's this same type of individual that will eventually show their true condition (Matt. 13:22).

## **5. Conversational spirituality**

This type of spirituality involves the ability to talk about spirituality, without really walking and manifesting spirituality within one's life. Some people can talk about spiritual living and know the "spiritual jargon" but still be far from a genuine walk of spirituality (Matt. 15:8).

Remember the old saying:

"Some people talk the walk and some people walk the talk."

## **6. Activity spirituality**

This is the idea that constant activity is a sign of spirituality. It's the idea that you must always be doing something for the Lord, serving the Lord, or else you get a failing grade on your report card for spiritual living. I will never forget the time when I was in one church with a singing group. Our group was told to sing and end at a specific time because of all the work that had to be done after the service. Immediately following the service, the people began to scramble around like a bunch of red ants on a picnic lunch. They went in every direction. No one had time to shake our hands because everyone was actively engaged in some practice or some program. I never saw anything like it. I wanted to holler out, "Slow down!" I didn't, but I should have.

I sometimes think we actually feel that constant activity, whether its involvement in programs, or soul winning efforts, is a sign of true spirituality. I want to say today that nothing could be further from the truth (Luke 10:38-42). Your spirituality is not gauged by your constant efforts to stay active. Some people think that if they just keep moving along on the treadmill of serving the Lord and add another notch on their belt to their list of souls, which they supposedly won to Christ, then this will make them spiritual. This is a false concept of spirituality. I have discovered when I try to push myself, without adequate time for worship and stillness, it's then I become less spiritual!

The spiritual man is the man who walks in the Spirit daily, manifests the fruit of the Spirit daily in his life, and takes time to worship God.

He is the man who realizes that the wheels of this mortal life spin much easier when he takes time to worship God!

Psalm 5:3

“My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up.”