

FINDING WHERE WE ARE IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

(An Appraisal of our Spiritual Condition)

The first question God asked man was, "Where art thou?" It's still a good question. If a map is to help you reach a certain destination, you must first know your present position. And the first step in spiritual growth is an honest evaluation of your present spiritual position.

Scripture lesson: I Corinthians 2:11 through 3:4

In this passage are presented the Three Spiritual Positions:

I. THE NATURAL MAN 2:14

1. He is Bound to the Material. "Natural" is used of animal existence, that kind of life which has only physical and material needs.

2. He is Blind to the Spiritual "Receiveth not." Spiritual things are unwelcome in his life; he doesn't have the capacity to comprehend or understand spiritual matters.

II. THE CARNAL MAN 3:1-4

This is a Christian whose life is still dominated by the flesh, or the old fallen nature. The Holy Spirit dwells in him but does not dominate him.

1. Retarded Growth -- "babes" There is nothing wrong with being a baby, but it is abnormal to remain a baby.

Three stages to growth (1) Fed by others
(2) Feed self
(3) Feed others

2. Conduct similar to that of the lost. "walk as men."

If a lost person and a carnal Christian lived in the same home, you couldn't tell them apart.

3. Bad Disposition. 3:3

4. Unable to get along with others. 3:3

III. THE SPIRITUAL MAN 2:12, 13, 15, 16.

The difference between carnal Christian and the spiritual Christian is not in their possessions; they both possess the same. The difference is in their awareness and recognition of what they possess. In the spiritual Christian, the Holy Spirit not only dwells, but dominates.

1. Enlightened in the things of God. 2:12, 13 "that we may know."

2. Expresses the things of God. 2:13 "which things also we speak."

What the Christian receives, he is to pass on to others. The carnal Christian doesn't do this, lacks the ability.

3. Evaluates all things. 2:15, 16

He has the ability (given him by the Holy Spirit) to make right judgments; knows the difference between right and wrong.

The spiritual principle is the basis of his judgment on the secular as well as the sacred.

STEPS TO BECOMING A SPIRITUAL CHRISTIAN: Recognize, admit:

1. Inadequacy of self -- a realistic view of self.
2. Individual responsibility. 3:10
3. Indwelling of Holy Spirit. 3:16