

The Examiners

Examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so...Acts 17:11

CARNALITY OR SPIRITUALITY

Carnality is the absolute status of the believer's soul being controlled by the sin nature resulting in loss of fellowship with God because of unconfessed sin in the life.

The KJV used the term backsliding, which is the temporary lapse into unbelief and sin following a spiritual conversion. The four relevant Hebrew and Aramaic in the OT are variously translated "backsliding" (Jeremiah 8:5), "apostasy" (Jeremiah 5:6), "turning away" (Hosea 11:7), and "faithlessness" (Hosea 14:4).

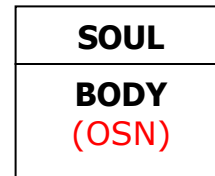
Backsliding in the OT primarily concerns Israel's forsaking of its covenant relationship with God (Jeremiah 2:19; 8:5; 14:7). The nation's turning from the Lord in disobedience is analogous to the breaking of a sacred marriage vow (Jeremiah 3: 6-22). Although the word "backsliding" is not found in the NT, there are numerous examples of believers who draw away from fellowship with the Lord, like the disciples (Matthew 26:56), Peter (Matthew 26:69-75), Demas (2 Timothy 4:10), Corinthian Christians (2 Corinthians 12:20-21), and churches in Asia (Revelation 2:4, 14-15, 20).

God created perfect human beings in the person of Adam and Eve, without the old sin nature (OSN), eternal, sinless, possessing the capacity to stand face to face with God, and no need for a Savior. When Adam chose to deliberately and intentionally sinned against God he was expelled out of the Garden. He became contaminated with sinful nature, mortal, and imperfect and without capacity for relationship with God. Only Adam and Eve was created in the image of God.

Adam and the woman were created with body, soul and spirit, without the old sinful nature. In theology, it is called trichotomous being:



After Adam deliberately and willfully sinned against God, he and the woman became sinners (Romans 3:23), and so with every person born into this world. Theology called it dichotomous being:



Dichotomous is the fallen state of man, Adam and Eve became spiritually dead, with no capacity for relationship with God. The wages of sin (Adam's original sin imputed to every person born) is death (spiritual death) [Romans 6:23]. Every person born into this world is spiritually dead, they are body and soul contaminated with old sinful nature.

After salvation (believing and accepting the free gift of eternal in Christ Jesus), Adam and Eve became regenerated (born again by the Spirit of God –John 1:11-12), and their human spirits was restored. In the same way, every person who believe and accept the free gift of salvation received at the moment of faith their human spirits, to become the residence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit cannot reside in the body or soul of men because it is contaminated with the old sinful nature (1 Corinthians 6:19).

SPIRIT
SOUL
BODY (OSN)

The regenerated individual is trichotomous being: body, soul and Spirit but with the old sinful nature that will harass the soul the rest of his life (1 Thessalonians 5:23). The real spiritual battle is not driving away Satan and his demons, but not to allow the old sinful nature (OSN) take control the soul.

The Spirit we received at the moment of salvation is permanently given to us (1 Corinthians 2:12), it guarantees the eternal life of the believer. We did not earn our salvation, and there is nothing we can do to earn it. Salvation and eternal life is the free gift of God:

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 3:22).

“This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him (the spiritual death of Christ), we shall also live with Him (the imputed eternal life). If we endure (the 3 categories of suffering for blessing), we shall also reign with Him (receive the eternal blessings). If we deny Him (ignore the mandate to grow and reach spiritual maturity), He also will deny us (withhold our eternal rewards). If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself. (2 Timothy 2:11-13).

There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8:32-39). God is the One who justifies the believer, He is the One who declares the verdict of justification for the believers.

Salvation is a free gift, eternal life is imputed not earned. There is nothing we can do to nullify, cancel, alter or destroy our salvation. Whenever the believer sinned, his fellowship with God is temporarily broken but his soul is eternally saved.

Within every believer there is a resident evil: “For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do” (Romans 7:14-15).

“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? (1 Corinthians 3:1-3)

The believer has two types of fellowship with God:

- **Eternal Fellowship** refers to the believer’s eternal and permanent relationship with God, which is not affected by anything or anyone –this is the eternal security of the believer (Romans 8:36-39).

- **Temporal Fellowship** refers to fellowship of the believer with God inside the divine dynasphere while in the world, where the believer is under the control of the Holy Spirit and not by the OSN (Ephesians 5:18).

The OSN is an integral part of every human being that resides in every cell of the human body. The old sin nature was acquired originally by Adam at his fall and subsequently passed down genetically to all humanity through procreation, which results to spiritual death and total depravity of all humanity (except Jesus Christ). Adam was created perfect, without sin and possessing eternal life. In his fall, he became imperfect, sinner and spiritually dead. We are born imperfect, spiritually dead and sinner.

In carnality, we do not become spiritually dead but operationally and temporarily dead (see the categories of death), the believer is outside the will, plan and purpose of God. It is being controlled by the old sin nature following the lust patterns.

THE ANTIDOTE

Carnality is a serious spiritual problem and should not be taken lightly by any Church Age believer who aspires to reach spiritual maturity. Carnality attacks slowly, gradually and swiftly without any hints because the believer is either ignorant or unaware of its subtle maneuver.

The human souls are plunges with three categories of sin (mental, verbal and overt) during the entire duration of existence on the planet earth. Jesus Christ solved the problem of sin once and for all. People will go to hell not because of sin (forgiven or not) but because of their rejection of Christ as the only Savior of mankind.

At the state of spiritual death, the grace of God accepts the non-meritorious "faith in Christ" of the unbelievers, and takes over to replace it with the merits of Jesus Christ (John 3:36). Therefore, Christians are saved by grace through faith, not by human works (Ephesians 2:8-9).

After salvation, at the state of carnality, God accepts the non-meritorious act of rebound or "acknowledgement of sins" and replaces it with the merits of Christ (1 John 1:9). Therefore, God forgives us, through the works of Christ not by ours.

The denial of personal sins is worse than commission of sin. "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us" (1 John 1:8, 10). The denial of the presence of sins is hypocrisy, blasphemy and rejection of Christ complete works on the Cross for the entire humanity.

God has already provided the only solution for carnality, and that is the act of rebound:

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). To confess (Greek verb: *homologeō*) our sins is to name, cite, admit or acknowledge.

Homologeō does not mean to feel sorry for sins, or to publicly renounce sins, or to suffer a guilty conscience, because there is no emotional connotation involved. There is no need to beg for forgiveness because God has already accounted every sin on Christ.

Believers are mandated to confess to God alone. There is no biblical requirement for ritual, ceremonial, or repetitive liturgical phrases for confession.

Forgiveness depends solely on God's perfect character ("He is faithful and righteous) and not on man's works. The term "faithful" clearly emphasizes God's consistency in forgiving every believer who admits his sins to Him.

The term "righteous" describes the only source of forgiveness. God's holiness or what we called integrity is composed of justice and righteousness. God's perfect righteousness is the only standard His justice can accept. He cannot accept our penance, guilt feelings, emotional reactions, and all human good works.

The verbs "to forgive" and "to cleanse" means to cancel. The instance we admit or acknowledge our known sins to God, He cancels the sins and initial repercussion of loss fellowship. The verb: "He cleanses us from all unrighteousness" means to "remove for the purpose of purifying all unknown and known sins.

THE FOUR STEPS OF REBOUND:

- Name your sins to God.
- Isolate your sins.
- Forget your sins.
- Keep moving.

To "isolate your sins" is to "bar" past sins so as not to generate further sins, and to break down the chain reaction (Philippians 3:13). To "forget your sins" is to prevent the mind from cultivating mental sins from already confessed sins, which hinders the believer from advancing toward spiritual maturity. The next step is to keep moving toward the goal of spiritual maturity.

THE ESCAPE ROUTE

A carnal believer is outside the realm of spirituality and truth. He is under the power of the OSN, controlled and manipulated by his own lusts:

But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death (James 1:14-15).

The world system and the OSN are Satan's allies, they are serving the same purpose. The ignorant and immature believers have no way to run, except God's way. Everything in the world is doing the will of Satan, if not the human will. Remember there are three categories of will:

- The Divine will – the perfect plans, purpose and will of God for men reveal in the Word of God.
- The satanic will – the devious plan of the devil for total destruction of men especially the spiritual stagnation and defeat of the believers.
- The human will – the arrogant, selfish and carnal plans and purpose of men for himself designed by the devil to thwart the will and purpose of God in the world. The human will is in complete agreement with satanic will. Both the satanic and human will are 'good' in the eyes of the men.

The most difficult thing for the believers is to discern which is the will of God. It is a task of lifetime because we have to study the Word of God as long as we are still in the world. Discerning the will of God is a skill that every child of God must master. Spiritual discernment requires maximum epignosis or Bible doctrines in the soul of every believer. Only the truth of Bible doctrines stored in the soul and remaining inside the divine sphere (spirituality) could protect the believer from choosing the human or satanic will for himself. However, believers have always the tendency to choose satanic and human will.

There are 3 types of the will of God:

- Directive will of God
- Permissive will of God
- Overruling will of God

There are 3 categories of God's will:

- The Viewpoint will of God
- The Operational will of God
- The Geographical will of God

There are 7 categories of revealed will of God for men (only one for unbelievers, six for believers):

- Salvation (John 6:40)
- Sanctification (1 Thessalonians 4:3)
- Spirit-Filled Life (Ephesians 5:18)
- Sincere Gratitude (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- Sufferings for Christ (1 Peter 3:17, 4:19)
- Secure Faith – Rest (Proverbs 3:5-6)
- Spiritual Maturity (1 Peter 2:15)

It is difficult to avoid falling into carnality but it is easy to go back to spirituality by rebound. The immature and ignorant child of God will continue to struggle with OSN and most of the time fails, but the grace of God will never fail to forgive and cleanse the believer with all of his confessed sins. The issue is not to prevent falling into carnality but to remain spiritual most of the time.

Some believers arrogantly reject God's way of "escape" from state of carnality. The term temptations of 1 Corinthians 10:13 refers to undeserved sufferings of advancing believer not personal sins of reversionist or carnal believers. Therefore, the "way of escape" mentioned in that context is not applicable for temptation into personal sins.

The believers must focus his heart on God's plan, purpose and will for our lives and not on the world and things of the world. We must never allow the OSN to "resurrect" and overpower the soul but gives the Holy Spirit total control and dominion. The human volition must concentrate on the things of God and not on the things of the world. Our positive freewill volition is our access to spiritual blessing and prosperity. Positive volition must be nurture with Bible doctrines to enhance its growth. ●●●

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