

NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.” (1 Cor 2:14-15 KJV)

The “natural” man is like an animal. His focus is on physical fulfillment. An animal has absolutely no interest in the Bible or anything spiritual. Neither does the “natural” man.

The “spiritual” man, by contrast, will often choose to read the Bible and pray rather than enjoy a meal of physical food. The Spirit of Christ directs the life of a “spiritual” man.

The Corinthians had received the Spirit of Christ. Consequently their bodies were now “Temples of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 6:19). Unfortunately, however, they were so spiritually weak and immature that Paul could not write unto them as unto spiritual people, but as worldly people who were but mere babes in Christ (1 Cor. 3:1).

Let’s take a closer look at what it means to be “spiritual”.

The “natural” man comes from a physical seed and the “spiritual” man comes from a “spiritual Seed”. Believers are “born again,” not of a corruptible seed, but of the incorruptible, even the Word of God that lives and abides forever (1 Pet. 1:23). These two natures are in a constant struggle. They are “contrary” to one another. The flesh desires one thing, and the Spirit desires another (Gal. 5:17). If you abide in Christ, however, you will ultimately be victorious over the flesh for He that is within us, is greater than he that is in the world (1 Jn. 4:4).

The transformation of the natural man is so revolutionary that he actually becomes a “new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17). Consequently, everything becomes new. No longer does this “spiritual man” view anything from a purely human point of view. This is especially true of Christ. While once we viewed Christ as the world does, we do not do so any longer (2 Cor. 5:14 - 21).

Jesus illustrated this transformation by reference to sheep. His sheep “know” His voice and follow Him, but they will not follow a stranger (Jn. 10:4, 5). Paul uses a variety of examples to illustrate the same truth. Like good soldiers we want to obey our commanding officer (2 Tim. 2:3, 4). Like children of God we want to please our Heavenly Father (Rom. 8:16, 17). Like members of His Body, we do what our Head commands us to (1 Cor. 12:12 - 27). Like citizens in His Heavenly Kingdom we strive to do everything our King commands us to (Eph. 2:19). Like disciples we strive to be like our Teacher (Lk. 6:40). Like the Bride of Christ we are in submission to our Husband (Eph. 5:22 - 33). Etc.

In each illustration, there are the unmistakable fingerprints of God. Becoming a Christian involves the supernatural. It is dramatically different from joining a service club, or any human organization. How else can you possibly define those who are “spiritual”?

Every member of the Family of God benefits from inside information. The Father reveals things to His wife and children that He does not reveal to strangers. **“No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.” (Matt 11:27).** The Scribes and Pharisees were brilliant scholars, but the truth of the Gospel was hidden from their eyes (Matt., 13:11 - 17). While there was a veil over the hearts of the scholars (2 Cor. 3:14 — 17), the truth of what Christ spoke was “given” to His disciples (Matt. 13:11). Spiritual truth is not foolishness to spiritual people.

The Old Testament prophets and even angels searched and inquired diligently to understand the Scriptures (1 Pet. 2:10 - 12). What they could not attain by diligent study and scholarship has been “revealed” to us by His Spirit (1 Cor. 2:10). When God reveals Himself to you, you are in a new and different category. Now you can judge all things and man’s judgement no longer matters.