

# *A Carnal Mind*

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1 Corinthians 3:1-3 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. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

Romans 8:5-7 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

- I. One thing I have heard from older preachers all my life is how they are troubled about how the people they preach to do not apply what is preached to them.
  - A. Either they do not listen, or they do not believe it.
  - B. The truths they get at church from the preaching are like the clutter in their car or in their house.
    1. They handle it very loosely and carelessly and when they need it they cannot find it.
    2. They do not treat it is something valuable, let alone as something vital to their future and their spiritual life, or that of their children.
    3. Most people have a short list of vices and worldly things that do NOT do and therefore draw assurance for themselves that they are ready to face God.
  - C. Most people have so much assurance of their salvation that nothing concerns them about how they think and live and treat other people.
    1. A carnal mind is something that other people have, but certainly not themselves.
    2. The fear of God has been neutralized in their heart and mind by the certainty that they are saved and on their way to heaven.
  - D. It is very seldom that we are brought to task for our blindness, carelessness, and ignorance in spiritual matters.
- II. A carnal mind is not identified by sins and vices, but by how we interact with other people.

1 Corinthians 3:3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

- A. Envy, strife, and divisions are the evidence presented to convict these people of being carnally-minded.
- B. The way we deal with those around us is the indicator of whether we are spiritually-minded or carnally-minded.
- C. A spiritually-minded person looks at others as souls that are crossing this wide river of life amid perils and dangers of all kinds and truly desires to help and protect them until they reach the safety of the grace and knowledge of God.
- D. A carnally-minded person looks at others as trouble.
  1. They are annoying, a nuisance, frustrating, a bother.

2. They are imposters, liars, and hypocrites.
  3. They are dumb, stupid, and ignorant, and deserving of any hardship that happens to them.
- E. A spiritually-minded person will be stable and consistent in their attitude and treatment of other people.
- F. A carnally-minded person will sometimes feel ashamed of themselves and try to put on a face of compassion, pity, and concern, but they cannot be consistent with it.
- G. In any case, the outstanding characteristic of a carnal mind is that it will always be opposed to, and focused on, others and their ways,
1. They are always looking out and never in the mirror of God's Word at themselves; at least not long enough to affect any lasting change in themselves.
- H. The carnally-minded person will always be caught up in what we call "drama" of other people.
1. There will always be some emotional volcano around them over what someone else is doing, or what they think they are doing or saying.
  2. A gossip, or what the Bible calls a "tale-bearer" is a carnally-minded person, never a spiritually-minded person.
  3. A carnally-minded person will always be occupied and usually angry about what others are, or what they are doing.
- I. The spiritual mind truly desires mercy for others, while the carnal mind is always set on judgement and justice; meaning they should get what is coming to them.
1. A spiritually-minded person will avoid criticism, condemnation, and gossip about someone else, even it is someone who is their enemy.
- J. All this is manifested in envy, strife, and divisions.
1. These three words are a progression; we have one thought here, not three different ones.
  2. First, there is envy.

ENVY, n. Pain, uneasiness, mortification or discontent excited by the sight of another's superiority or success, accompanied with some degree of hatred or malignity, and often or usually with a desire or an effort to depreciate the person, and with pleasure in seeing him depressed. Envy springs from pride, ambition or love, mortified that another has obtained what one has a strong desire to possess.

3. A carnal mind feels uneasiness while a carnal mind feels envy.
- K. Almost everyone would deny that they envy in this way, but that is only because they redefine the word in their heart to justify themselves.
- L. However, where it leads to from there betrays them because it always leads to strife.

STRIFE, n. See [Strive](#).

1. Exertion or contention for superiority; contest of emulation, either by intellectual or physical efforts.

1. The meaning of this word includes the idea of zeal.
2. Many times strife is caused by a zeal for righteousness, but not according to knowledge, as Paul said concerning Israel:

Romans 10:2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

3. This is what the Pharisees and Scribes were known for.

- M. When we think of being carnal, we think of rioting and drunkenness, and sexual immorality, but conveniently exclude strife and envying.

Romans 13:13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

- N. Then envy and strife lead to division.
1. Carnally-minded people are always tribally-minded people.
  2. They are always marking off people and always trying to identify themselves with people.
  3. It is always “us and them” with carnally-minded people.
  4. The carnal mind cannot function without division as its end.
  5. Someone must be marked as bad; but few are marked as good for long.
- O. Walking after the Spirit instead of after the flesh will produce love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.
- P. Walking after the flesh will produce ...hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: 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. – Galatians 5:19-21
- Q. To be carnally-minded is to be an enemy of God; it is death to the soul.
- R. There is no such thing as a truly carnal Christian.

Peter Miller was personally acquainted with General Washington. Whether he was in communication with General Washington in reference to this matter is not known. However, after the death sentence was passed, Peter Miller arose early in the morning, took his cane and set out on foot, through the snow, to visit General Washington at Valley Forge, to intercede for the life of Witman. He was told that his prayer for his friend could not be granted. "My friend!" exclaimed Miller. "I have not a worse enemy living than that man." "What!" rejoined Washington. "You have walked sixty miles to save the life of your enemy? That, In my judgment, puts the matter in a different light. I will grant you his pardon." "The pardon was written, signed by General Washington and handed to Miller, who at once set out for West Chester, fifteen miles distant, where the execution was to take place on the afternoon of the same day." He arrived just as Witman was being carried to the scaffold, who, seeing Miller in the crowd, remarked: "There is old Peter Miller. He has walked all the way from Ephrata to have his revenge gratified to-day seeing me hung." These words were scarcely spoken, when Miller waved the pardon and commanded them to halt. We will not picture the scene that followed. It is said they embraced each other. They walked home to Ephrata together and remained firm Friends.