

3 Descriptive MEN

Natural Man

Any person who does not possess the Holy Spirit, namely all unbelievers.

Spiritual Man

Indwelt by the Holy Spirit; but being spiritual implies a **condition in which a man is under the control of the Spirit.**

Carnal Man

¹ *And I, **brethren**, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to **men of flesh**, as to infants in Christ.*

"fleshly" or "worldly" or carnal Christian man.

- Indwelt by the Holy Spirit
- He has limited capacity to take in God's wisdom as contained in the word of God.
- He can only take milk, not solid food.
- In such a low spiritual condition that Paul was unable to minister to them the deep things of God.
- **The fleshly believer then is an immature Christian.**
- **To be carnal**, or spiritually undeveloped, like a baby that has ceased to grow, and therefore unable to assimilate the rich, spiritual food that God has provided for His people.

² *I gave you milk to drink, not **solid food**; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, **What is the difference between milk and meat?***

(1 Peter 2:2 (NASB) ² like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,).

The fleshly believer does not expend time and effort to ingest God's word.

- It was not that the apostle could not have communicated **the depths of God**; but could they then profit by such teaching?
- Would it be of God to give meat beyond them or injurious to them?

"Ye were not yet able, nor indeed are ye yet able."

Hebrews 5:11-14

"There are two things that have to be taken into account in communicating truth.

1. Not merely should there be certainty that it is the truth from God,
2. But it must also be suited truth to those whom you address.

They might need it all, but they may not be in condition to receive it; and the more precious the truth, the greater the injury, in a certain sense, if it is presented to those who are not in a state to profit by it." — **None But The Hungry Heart 6/19 Miles J. Stanford**

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- **"babes in Christ"** does not refer to a recent conversion, but to their **lack of growth**.
 - Their fundamental need was not a change of diet but a change of perspective.

³ *for you are still **fleshly**. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?*

- The reason Paul did not feel he should give them more advanced instruction was that their **flesh (Gr. *sarkikos*) still dominated them.**
- As believers they were making provision for the flesh to fulfill its desires rather than following the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- Imitation and strife were works of the flesh, not fruits of the Spirit.
- In their practical ways they walked as natural men.
- Instead of serving one another in love, as befits saints,
- They were envious of one another and seeking to be equal, or excel one another in **knowledge and the exercise of gifts, even as men of the world.**

⁴ For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men?

It is completely contrary to the mind of Christ who Himself stooped to raise others.

- These Corinthian saints pandered to this spirit of imitation by attaching themselves to certain gifted teachers.
- It is noticeably clear that it is possible for genuine Christians to behave as and to appear to be unbelievers.
- The Corinthians' conduct indicated carnality, not lack of eternal life.
- Prolonged immaturity as a result of carnality is a condition all too prevalent in modern Christianity.

The Holy Spirit is everywhere the agent and power, as Christ is the object presented, and His work the effective ground and means, which His own sovereign counsels are the spring of all spiritual life.

Specifically it is the Holy Spirit who,

- As He reveals, and communicates in suited words,
- So enables the believer to receive, the things of God.
- And this leads to a contrast between him that is spiritual, who discerns all things, and
- the natural man who does not receive and cannot know the things of the Spirit.