

Module : The Spiritual Man**Session 4** : Effects of Carnality on the Soul**A Brief Recapitulation of Salient Points from Session 3**

The present study is focussed on the accurate hearing of the Word of God, which are words of spirit and life that must be heard from within the platform of the renewed spirit. The **spiritual man** can easily receive and understand spiritual words. The **natural man** cannot at all accept them, for they are deemed as foolishness. Also, he cannot understand them, for they must be spiritually appraised – something he is incapable of doing. The predominance of the fleshly nature in the **carnal man** prevents him from accessing anything spiritual, especially understanding the Word of God. [Read 1 Cor.2:9-15 and 3:1-4].

THE SPIRITUAL MAN: We have discussed how we ought to hear the Word of God as '**SPIRITUAL**' men, engaging the Word from the platform of our renewed spirits. The spirit of man gives life to his body – for the body without the spirit is dead. God's Spirit engages our spirits in all spiritual transactions and exchanges – it is always from 'Holy Spirit' to man's 'spirit' and from man's 'spirit' to the Holy 'Spirit'. Man is thus totally dependent upon God. The spiritual man will follow the leading of the Spirit of God as He leads man from within the realm of his spirit. He does not follow his own reasoning within the domain of his unrenewed soul, which functions independently of a Word-illuminated spirit. His soul is not relegated to a place of inertia – it is still engaged – for through the soul he lives intelligibly in the world – but his soul simply submits to the leading of his spirit, blindly and without question or doubt.

THE NATURAL MAN: If we choose to co-operate as '**NATURAL**' men, governed by natural instincts, principles or standards of a worldly or humanistic system, to the total exclusion of God, we will not accept the things of the Spirit, for they will be regarded as foolishness. Neither will we have the ability to understand them, since they must be spiritually discerned. The natural man is largely ruled by the unrenewed realms within his soul, to the total disregard for the promptings /leading of the Holy Spirit within the spirit of man. Thus he lives independently of God, with complete reliance upon his own reason, thinking, etc. This natural man is thoroughly susceptible to being influenced by his environment, context and cultural norms – that may be in opposition to the Divine will. The eight spies, who came back with a negative report, after spying the Promised Land, allowed the prevailing intimidating outward conditions to erode faith in the Word of God given to them to possess the land. These spies functioned as natural men. Two spies, Joshua and Caleb, fueled by faith in the Divine promise, depict spiritual men, who pursue the execution of God's will without consultation with the prevailing external environment.

THE CARNAL MAN: If we allow ourselves to function as '**CARNAL**' men, we erect a barrier to accessing anything spiritual from God. The carnal man is ruled by his base sinful instincts associated with his fallen nature. This includes fleshly lusts and various other works of the flesh, e.g. strife, jealousy, etc., but also includes division, sectarianism, and especially the intentional decision to abide in a state of spiritual infancy as a preferred condition, without any inclination to proceed to maturity.

The spiritual condition of infancy is regarded as carnal and disqualifies one from hearing and receiving anything of greater weight, maturity or profundity from the Word of God.

THE SETTING OF THE MIND: The essential factor in determining what facilitates the development of a spiritual, natural or carnal man, is WHERE HE SETS HIS MIND.

The mind of the soul is pulled in two directions. The spirit competes with the flesh for being the dominant influence over the mind of the soul.

Col. 2:18 Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self- abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his **fleshly mind.**

Rom. 8:7 because the **mind set on the flesh** is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so

The mind of the spirit fights the mind of the flesh for dominance in affecting, influencing and leading the mind of the soul. Hence the mind of the soul, set on the Spirit, is life and peace, but the mind set on the flesh leads to death. The dualism within the soul is this tension between the Spirit operative within the spirit of man versus the carnality operative in the flesh (or fleshly mind).

He who vacillates between these two states is what James called a 'double-minded' man who is unstable in all his ways. Thus David prayed for a 'united heart' so that he might walk in the ways of God.

CF. 1 Kings 18:21(ESV) And Elijah came near to all the people and said, How long will you **go limping between two different opinions?** If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people did not answer him a word

The mind set on the Spirit is life and peace - the mind set on things above (spiritual man); the mind set on the flesh is death and corruption (carnal mind); the mind set on secular humanism or cultural norms aborts divine purposes, especially in the way in which God's purposes will be executed (natural man).

Rom.8:5-8

- 5 For **those who are according to the flesh** set their **minds on the things of the flesh**, but those who are **according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.**
- 6 For the **mind set on the flesh is death**, but the **mind set on the Spirit is life and peace**,
- 7 because the **mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God**; for it **does not subject itself** to the law of God, for it is not **even able to do so**,
- 8 and those who are in the **flesh cannot please God**

Col.3:1-3

- 1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, **keep seeking the things above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God

2 **Set your mind on the things above**, not on the things **that are on earth.**

3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God

The soul is caught in the middle of a great warfare between the Holy Spirit working in and through the spirit on the one hand, and the flesh or carnal nature on the other.

Gal.5:16-18

16 But I say, **walk by the Spirit**, and you will **not carry out the desire of the flesh.**

17 For **the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh**; for these are

in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

18 But if you are **led by the Spirit**, you are not under the Law

As the soul is the vehicle through which we engage our world or environment, whichever of the spirit or fleshly nature succeeds in suppressing it into submission will configure or determine it's thinking, decisions and even emotions. The resultant outward behavioural action would either be obedience or disobedience to the Divine will.

The saying is true: '**Your thinking determines who you are.**'

Prov. 23:7a For as he thinks within himself, so he is.

Literally read in the original Hebrew, this reads as follows: "**As he reckons in his soul, so is he**". Ultimately the mind of the soul must be transformed to think like that of the mind of the renewed spirit, and not like the 'mind of the flesh'. The true battle is for domination of the mind of the soul by the Holy Spirit in the spirit of man versus the spirit of this world via 'things/lusts of the world'. Whichever realm you feed will win. Whichever realm you starve will lose.

You can think spiritually, naturally or carnally. How ever you think – so are you.

JOINED AS ONE SPIRIT TO THE LORD

1 Cor. 6:17 But the one who **joins himself** to the Lord is **one spirit** with Him

Joins = kollao = to glue together, to make to cohere

The spiritual man is joined to the Lord and has actually become ONE SPIRIT with the Lord. He is inseparable from the Spirit of God. His spirit and the Holy Spirit are indistinct. He, the Spirit, through a spiritual father, speaks Words from the Heavenly Father to your spirit, and these words are spirit and life. To overcome the flesh, you simply have to walk in the Spirit, which essentially is walking in obedience to the Word of God (more on this in the next session). Obedience to the Word gives expression to your oneness with Him, the Spirit.

The context in which the verse above is located is one in which Paul speaks against sexual immorality, which is a work of the flesh (carnality). In other words, sexual immorality prevents the state of oneness with the Spirit, because, amongst other things, carnality actually leads to a defilement of one's spirit and thus fosters a disesteem and scorn for God's Word and therefore negates effective, accurate hearing thereof (more on this in our next session).

Cf. 2 Kings 18:6 For he clung to the Lord; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the Lord had commanded Moses. [a ref. to Hezekiah]

In our present study, we focus on the works of the flesh as a barrier to hearing the Word of God. There are many examples in Scripture of the works of the flesh associated with the carnal man. Below we list a few.

WORKS OF THE FLESH ASSOCIATED WITH CARNALITY: The issue of Carnality and its expressions is extremely broad.

1 John 2:15-17

- 15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
- 16 For all that is in the world, the **lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life**, is not from the Father, but is from the world.
- 17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever

Gal. 5:19-22 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things **will not inherit the kingdom of God**.

Eph. 5:1-5

- 1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;
- 2 and **walk in love**, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.
- 3 But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints;
- 4 and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.
- 5 For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Col. 3:1-10

- 1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, **keep seeking the things above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
- 2 **Set your mind on the things above**, not on the things that are on earth.
- 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
- 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.
- 5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as **dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.**
- 6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the **sons of disobedience**,
- 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.
- 8 But now you also, **put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.**
- 9 **Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices**

1 Cor. 6:9-12

- 9 Or do you not **know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,**
- 10 **nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.**
- 11 Such were some of you; **but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.**
- 12 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.

1 Thess. 4:1-8

- 1 Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us *instruction* as to how **you ought to walk and please God** (just as you actually do walk), that you **excel still more.**
- 2 For you know what commandments we gave you by *the authority of* the Lord Jesus.
- 3 For this is the will of God, **your sanctification**; *that is*, that you **abstain from sexual immorality;**
- 4 that each of you **know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,**
- 5 not **in lustful passion**, like the Gentiles who do not know God;
- 6 *and* that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is *the* avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before **and solemnly warned you.**
- 7 For God has not called us for the **purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.**
- 8 So, he who rejects *this* is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.

1 Cor. 6:15-20

- 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be!
- 16 Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a **prostitute** is one body with her? For He says, The two shall become one flesh.
- 17 **But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.**
- 18 **Flee immorality.** Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.

- 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have
from God, and that you are not your own?
- 20 For you have been bought with a price: **therefore glorify God in your body**

Eph. 4:17-32

- 17 So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also
walk, in the futility of their mind,
18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance
that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;
19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of
every kind of impurity with greediness.
20 But you did not learn Christ in this way,
21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,
22 that, in **reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self**, which is being
corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,
23 and that you be **renewed in the spirit of your mind**,
24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and
holiness of the truth.
25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, **speak truth each one of you** with his neighbor, for we are
members of one another.
26 BE angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,
27 and do not give the devil an opportunity.
28 He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands
what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.
29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for
edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.
30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along
with all malice.
32 Be kind to one another, tender- hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has
forgiven you

1 Peter 2:1 So put away all **malice** and all **deceit** and **hypocrisy** and **envy** and all **slander**

EFFECTS OF CARNALITY UPON THE SOUL

CARNALITY REDUCES THE SOUL'S ABILITY TO RECEIVE SPIRITUAL THINGS THROUGH THE HEARING OF SPIRITUAL WORDS SPOKEN FROM THE WORD OF GOD

DOUBLE-MINDEDNESS = IMPURITY OF HEART

James 1:8 being a **double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**

James 4:8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. **Cleanse your hands**, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

The state of **double-mindedness**, i.e. the subtle rivalry between the mind of the spirit versus the mind of the soul for dominance, is essentially an **impure heart condition**. Hence the command to '**purify your hearts you double-minded**'.

The impure heart is reflective of an impure lifestyle – hence carnality. Carnality negatively affects the soul, warring against it, and eventually causing 'leanness' of the soul, which is a reduced capacity to submit to and follow the dictates of the spirit (more in this in the next session). If we can get the heart pure, we can prevent the weakening of the soul and therefore empower it to accede to the leading of the spirit.

Only the '**pure in heart shall see God**' – **Matt. 5:8**. The state of one's heart has a significant influence upon one's capacity to see and understand spiritual things. Defilement within the heart can dull one's spiritual senses and blur or total inhibit one's spiritual perception. [See also **Psalms 24:4; Heb. 12:14; 1 John 3:2,3**]

UNCIRCUMCISED EARS

The carnal man may also be described as one who is **uncircumcised in heart and ears**.

Acts 7:51 You men who are stiff-necked and **uncircumcised in heart and ears** are always **resisting the Holy Spirit**; you are doing just as your fathers did

Jeremiah 6:10 To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, **their ears are uncircumcised, they cannot listen**; behold, the **word of the Lord** is to them an **object of scorn; they take no pleasure in it**.

The principle of circumcision relates to a cutting away of the flesh – i.e. the removal of carnality. Carnality can inhibit our effective hearing of God's Word. Note in Jer. 6:10 quoted above, the carnal man 'CANNOT' listen to the Word of God because he scorns it and has no pleasure in it. Recall that we discussed how delight in the Word facilitates obedience (see Session 10: 'First Love').

Psalms 119:35 Make me **walk in the path of Your commandments**, For **I delight in it**.

Job 23:12 "I have **not departed from the command of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food**.

Note the reason that Job obeys God by 'not departing from the command' of God's lips, is because he has made a decision to 'treasure the Words of His mouth' - even as more essential than physical food. Your high estimation of His Words facilitates your obedience thereof.

God's commandments are not burdensome to the one who loves Him and His Word.

1 John 5: 3 For this is the **love of God**, that we **keep His commandments**; and **His commandments are not burdensome.**

Deut. 30:8,11,14-16,20

- 8 "And you shall again **obey the LORD**, and **observe all His commandments** which I command you today.
- 11 "For **this commandment** which I command you today **is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach.**
- 14 "**But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.**
- 15 "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;
- 16 in that I command you today to **love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments**, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it.
- 20 by **loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."**

One indication that a person is carnal and that the fleshly nature is beginning to become significantly dominant in their lives, is that they develop **a dislike for the hearing of God's Word**. They actually scorn and disdain it.

CARNALITY CORRUPTS/DEFILES THE SOUL

If through the soul, via the five senses of the body, we are to engage the physical environment of the earth effectively, the soul is to be restored to wholeness and also to its position of submission to the dictates of a renewed spirit. The pursuit of carnality prevents this for it weakens the soul's ability to obey the spirit. Here is a brief case study of how this played itself out in the life of Lot.

BRIEF CASE STUDY: LOT

Lot separated from Abram, who represented a fathering principle that was positioned to cover him and speak to him the Word of God. Thus his spirit was not fed with the proceeding Word, and fell into domination by his unregenerate soul.

- He displayed no willingness to resolve the conflict between his herdsmen and that of Abram, and therefore accommodated strife, tension and relationship friction – all expressions of carnality.
- He then displayed dishonour to Abraham in not affording him the first opportunity to choose his portion of land.

- His own choice was selfish, based on an estimation of the most beneficial natural elements of the land.
- His choice positioned him toward Sodom, a city of excessive wickedness and lawlessness, and ultimately he lived in the city, being assimilated into its life, custom and culture.

Peter describes the effect of Sodom on Lot's soul.

2 Peter 2:6-8 and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; ⁷and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked ⁸(for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)

His righteous SOUL was tormented (vexed) by the lawless and carnal deeds of the men of Sodom. What he HEARD and SAW tormented his soul – through the ‘eye’ and ‘ear’ gate. The wickedness of Sodom, which he, by positioning himself in close proximity to it, negatively affected his soul, defiling it.

Through the five sense of the body, the soul is operative. The eye and ear gate must particularly be guarded – otherwise the soul could become defiled.

Consider:

Psalm 101:3 I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not fasten its grip on me

BBE I will not put any evil thing before my eyes; I am against all turning to one side; I will not have it near me.

KJV I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; *it* shall not cleave to me.

NIV I will set before my eyes no vile thing. The deeds of faithless men I hate; they will not cling to me.

TNIV I will not look with approval on anything that is vile. I hate what faithless people do; I will have no part in it.

CEV I refuse to be corrupt or to take part in anything crooked,

Deriving entertainment value (e.g. via television, radio or reading material) from something which God abhors (e.g. pornography), equates to you condoning or approving that thing.

Job 31:1 "I have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?

AMP I DICTATED a covenant (an agreement) to my eyes; how then could I look [*lustfully*] upon a girl?

Read Isaiah 33: 14-24.

14 The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling has seized the godless: "Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?"

15 He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, who despises the gain of oppressions, who shakes his hands, lest they hold a bribe, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed and **shuts his eyes from looking on evil,**

16 he will dwell on the heights; his place of defense will be the fortresses of rocks; his bread will be given him; his water will be sure. **Your eyes will behold the king in his beauty; they will see a land that stretches afar**

Oppressed = kataponeo = “to tire down with toil, exhaust with labor” hence signifies “to afflict, oppress”; “to be oppressed, much distressed”; “sore distressed” (KJV, “vexed”)

Tormented = basanizo = “to rub on the touchstone (a dark stone used for testing metal), to put to the test,” then, “to examine by torture” denotes “to torture, torment, distress”; implies a degree of pain

The name LOT means the following:

Covering; veil; covered; concealed; myrrh; A wrapping
(roots = [1] a covering; a veil;
[2] to cast over; to wrap in)..

One of the meanings of Lot is also MYRRH – a symbol for bitterness. The bitterness in Lot’s soul made him susceptible to the allurements of the wickedness of Sodom. Depression, bitterness, anxiety and other negative emotional states make us more prone to easily succumbing to temptations and sins of the flesh.

How many people you know simply, without even a fleeting effort to fight back, resign themselves to some depraved act of sin which they would not normally have committed, simply because they are overwhelmingly overcome by some negative emotional state (e.g. disappointment, depression, bitterness, etc.).

Lot is 'veiled' or 'covered' – i.e. his eyes or perception is covered or wrapped. The eyes of his spirit are completely blind. He has no or little accurate spiritual perspective. The eye of his unrenewed soul is open and is the dominant means determining his perspective and function in life. He failed to SEE or recognise Abram ('high or exalted father') as a spiritual father. He failed to see the lethal danger of strife and tension. He chose the best land by natural criteria – but it was the wrong spiritual location – he did not have the grace content to deal with the wickedness that Sodom represented.

Note: The fleshly lust 'warred against the soul' of Lot.

Fleshly lust made the soul of Lot 'lean' (discussed in next session).

THE FLESH WARS AGAINST THE SOUL

1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, **I urge you** as aliens and strangers to **abstain from fleshly lusts** which wage war **against the soul**

War = **strateuomai** = to lead an army, wage war.

Fleshly lust wages war against one's soul. Fleshly desires and lust war against right principles and moral precepts. The imperative is to ABSTAIN from fleshly lust – or else you empower the flesh in its aim to attempt to master the soul – something which the spirit of man should do.

THE FLESH OPPOSES THE RECEPTION OF THE WORD DESIGNED TO SAVE THE SOUL

James 1:14-25

- 14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and **enticed by his own lust**.
- 15 Then when **lust** has conceived, it gives birth to **sin**; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth **death**.
- 16 **Do not be deceived**, my beloved brethren.
- 17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.
- 18 In the exercise of His will He **brought us forth** by the **word of truth**, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.
- 19 *This* you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be **quick to hear**, slow to speak *and* **slow to anger**;
- 20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.
- 21 Therefore, **putting aside all filthiness** and **all that remains of wickedness**, in **humility** receive the **word implanted**, which is able to **save your souls**.
- 22 But prove yourselves **doers of the word**, and not **merely hearers** who **delude** themselves.

- 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror;
- 24 for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.
- 25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and **abides by it**, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

James implores us to depart from all forms of lust, which if entertained leads to sin, which results in spiritual death (v.15). In the same context he warns of the deceptive nature of lust and sin (v.16). He then proceeds to remind us that we have been 'brought forth' by the WORD OF TRUTH (v.18) – the seed of divine nature is within us. Having established this, James beckons us to be slow to speak, quick to hear and slow to anger, and then instructs us to put aside all filthiness (i.e. immoral behaviour) and what 'remains' – i.e. any remnant or residue of wickedness (i.e. malignity, malice, ill-will, desire to injure). He then cites the reasons for his statements, i.e. so that we might receive the Word with humility, which is able to save our souls.

James 1:21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

The Word of God, which is received in one's spirit, can be prevented from having its intended result, through immorality and malice. The imperative is to deliberately **PUT ASIDE** these things, so that the Word of God could have its ultimate effect of bringing salvation to the soul. Recall that the soul is purified every time the Word of God is obeyed (1 Pet 2:11). We are to deliberately **ABSTAIN** from fleshly lusts, and **CLEANSE** ourselves from defilement.

2 Cor. 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us **cleanse ourselves** from all **defilement of flesh and spirit**, perfecting holiness in the fear of God

ENCOURAGEMENT:

In pursuing our aim of having our spirit, soul and body whole/complete and preserved blameless at the coming of our LORD, Paul sets forth two actions, viz. one pertaining to us and the other to the Lord.

1 Thess. 5:21-24 (KJV)

- 21 **Prove all things**; hold fast that which is good.
- 22 **Abstain** from all appearance of evil.
- 23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 24 **Faithful is he** that calleth you, who also will do *it*.

1 Thess. 5:21-24 (NASB)

- 21 But **examine everything carefully**; hold fast to that which is good;
- 22 **abstain** from every form of evil.

- 23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 24 **Faithful is He** who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.

On our part, as we 'examine or prove all things carefully we must HOLD ON to that which is good and ABSTAIN from every appearance of evil. Then Paul prays the prayer for completeness and blamelessness in spirit, soul and body. He then states that God is FAITHFUL to do it.

Phil. 2:12

- 12 So then, my beloved, just as you have **always obeyed**, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation with fear and trembling;**
- 13 for it is **God who is at work in you**, both to will and to work for His good pleasure

Note in verse 12 above, we 'work out our salvation' through conscious acts or expressions of obedience. But every endeavour or expression of obedience activates the working of God in us. Again, when we work, then so does He. When we draw near to God, He draws near to us. 1 Pet 1:22 teaches that acts of obedience purify the soul. Every act of obedience increases the sense of authority and power in your spirit for it to lead the soul. Consistent obedience entrenches the preeminent position of the spirit, such that the soul is brought into greater and even more willing compliance with the will of God fed through the Word via one's spirit. Every expression of obedience recruits further enablement and empowerment from God

When we do our part God will come alongside us to empower us BY HIS SPIRIT AND THROUGH GRACE, to overcome. We will demonstrate this further from the Word of God in our next session.

Also we will discuss other negative effects of carnality upon the soul, specifically how carnality cause LEANESS OF THE SOUL. We also provide additional keys to overcoming carnality so that every time we HEAR the Word of God, nothing will hinder its total effect in our lives.

Great grace be with your spirit.

(See Questions and Issues for Review and Discussion on next page)

QUESTIONS AND ISSUES FOR PERSONAL REVIEW AND GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Distinguish between the spiritual, natural and carnal man.
2. The mind of the soul is torn between submission to the spirit on the one hand, and the flesh on the other. Provide Scriptural texts for this view.
3. From various passages of Scripture, construct your own comprehensive list of works of the flesh or carnality that the carnally minded man may be susceptible to.
4. Describe the negative effect of carnality in reference to it posing a serious barrier preventing the accessing of one's kingdom inheritance through the hearing of the Word of God.
5. What is the possible meaning and implication of the phrase 'uncircumcised ear', and explain why the 'uncircumcised ear' cannot listen to the Word of God? (Consult Jer. 6:10).
6. Discuss how the soul of righteous Lot was tormented by the carnality of Sodom. What lessons can we learn from this in preventing the defilement of our own souls.
7. With reference to James 1:14-25 and 1 Peter 1:22, explain how the Word of God saves the soul.
8. Spend some time in meditation upon the promise that GOD HIMSELF made that He would ensure that your entire spirit, soul and body be complete and blameless at His coming. This promise is an indication of HIS FAITHFULNESS. (1 Thess. 5:23).
9. What is our personal responsibility in dealing with carnality.

N.B.: I strongly recommend that the reader listen to audio recordings of the five sessions of Thamo Naidoo's teaching on the 'Spiritual Man' delivered at his 20th Apostolic School of Ministry – Nov. 2011. This teaching provides accurate perspective to the Divine design for the position and function of man's spirit and soul in his body. Go to www.thamonaiddoo.com; 'Downloads'; 'ASOMs'; '7-12 November 2011'; then each day there is one session on the subject. Also consult Dr SY Govender's teaching on 'ZOE LIFE' from www.apostolicleader.co.za. In our present study at hand, we simply discuss some of the issues relevant to this topic in as far as it has reference to HEARING God's Word correctly, with a view to obeying it fully from the vantage point of an enlightened spirit.

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