

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter
Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

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Flesh and Spirit – Part 2

A child of God is a spiritual creation whereas a natural man is a soulish creation. The Apostle Paul confirms this, saying, *“The first man Adam was **made a living soul**; the last Adam (Jesus Christ) was **made a quickening spirit**. ...As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and **as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.**”*

I Corinthians 15:45-48. The soulish creation lives in the fleshly realm, or *“in Adam.”* The spiritual creation lives in the spiritual realm, or *“in Christ.”* Paul spoke of these two different realms when he wrote, *“For as **in Adam** all die, even so **in Christ** shall all be made alive.”* I Corinthians 15:22.

The term *“in the flesh”* refers to the fleshly realm of Adam. On the other hand, the term *“in the Spirit”* refers to the spiritual realm of *“Christ.”* Those who are born of God live *“in the Spirit.”* Those who are not born of God live *“in the flesh.”* No one lives in both realms. Paul tells the redeemed *“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.”*

Romans 8:9.

Only those who are *“in the Spirit”* can *“walk in the Spirit”* Galatians 5:16. In fact, it is impossible for those who are still *“in the flesh”* to *“walk in the Spirit.”* They may be sincere and do many religious works,

but they cannot *“walk in the Spirit”* if they are not born of the Spirit of God. This why Paul says, *“So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”*

Romans 8:8.

As the life of a fish is found in the ocean, so a child of God thrives as they walk in Christ. They are heavenly creations, and in that heavenly realm they find everything they need for a joyous and victorious walk. As they walk in Christ, they have no struggle with sin because *“the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from the law of sin and death.”* Romans 8:2. There is, however, one thing that can bring them crashing down into the struggles of religious darkness. Paul warned of this when he said, *“If you live after the flesh you shall die.”* Romans 8:13.

To *“live after the flesh”* is to walk as those who live in the fleshly realm walk. Paul rebuked the Corinthian church for this, saying, *“For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, **are ye not carnal, and walk as men?**”* I Corinthians 3:3. Carnal men cannot walk with God, but it is possible for a child of God to walk like carnal men walk. Such a walk always leads to destruction. A walk *“after the flesh”* can be worldly, but it also can be religious.

Paul repeatedly warned the church about becoming subject to the rudiments, or elements, of the world. This speaks of the way things are done in the realm of flesh. Paul described these elements of the world as being *“weak and beggarly.”* Galatians 4:9. He was referring to religious observances, rituals, commandments, and

traditions which can never cleanse your heart from sin or give you the life of Christ. This is why such things are *“weak and beggarly elements,”*

Paul identifies some of *these “weak and beggarly elements”* as the religious observance of *“days, and months, and times, and years.”* Galatians 4:10. It is astounding how many Christians are trusting in the keeping of a feast day or *“...holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days”* Colossians 2:16, thinking it adds spiritual value to their walk with God. There is nothing wrong with observing a feast day or sabbath, neither is it wrong not to observe it. Trusting in such things, however, is what carnal men do.

The Apostle Paul also identifies religious ordinances as being a rudiment of this world. He asked the Colossians, *“Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?”* Colossians 2:20-22. If you are born of God’s Spirit, why do you come under the dominion of religious ordinances, rituals, and commandments? All these things are flesh, and as Jesus told us, *“the flesh profits nothing.”* John 6:63. None of these things can add to the work Christ has already done in you.

In his epistle to the Philippians, Paul identifies the religious *“flesh”* he once trusted in under Moses’ Law. His religious induction ceremony was *“flesh.”* His natural lineage was *“flesh.”* His

religious affiliation was “flesh.” His religious zeal was “flesh.” And his commandment keeping was “flesh.” Philippians 3:4-6. When he realized how impotent these things really were, he gave it all up to “*win Christ, and be found in him!*” He reminds us that the true people of God are those “...which worship God ***in the spirit***, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, ***and have no confidence in the flesh.***” Philippians 3:3.