

The Worldly Mind of Sinful Man

(An Unfaithful Carnal Nature)

S421R 0625 25W

The carnal (or worldly) mind of man (which is controlled by the devil), will depend on something or person besides God. To realize that is very valuable for a Christian to know, in order that, that root of sin within us can be gotten rid of. Having that root destroyed and removed will bring us deliverance from every other sin as well.

That root of sin is born within us, and until (by God's grace) we are delivered from it, we will always be influenced and tempted by Satan to commit sins of many kinds. That hidden and evil nature gives the devil a dominating power over us, whether we are aware of it or not. That is of utmost importance for us to know (and understand), so we can be sincere in wanting God to remove it from our heart.

If we had poison weed growing in our yard, and we did not remove the root, it would come up again. If we got down to the root, however, and destroyed it, that would be the end of growth. Jeremiah said that we do not know that the root of sin is within our heart. He said that, that natural disposition of man is hidden in our heart, (a sin nature inherited from Adam), which is the root of trusting in man instead of trusting God. (Jer.17:9) *"The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"* (No one of themselves would know it!!, God has to reveal that to us!)

If you would tell a worldly person (or the average denominational church member) that they have an evil root in them (and, that they stand in need of repentance), they would be highly insulted, and yet you would be telling them the truth. But when God gets hold of us (as result of our real repentance, and a real surrender of the self-life), then God can search the heart. He will expose that condition of our heart to us. (Jer.17:10) *"I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways; According to the fruit of his doings."*

"I try the reins," means that God brings out in the open the hidden things of that evil root in the heart (and for everyone who will allow Him to do so). He will then deliver one from the things that

come from that 'root of sin', by revealing His plan or His way of escape'.

We need to understand that 'root of sin' in its true light, and to realize how much worse it is even than murder, adultery, stealing, and lying. It is most terrible and is the root of all these other sins mentioned because it can continue to dwell in a person's heart without them having any idea that that viper is in their heart. However, if we allow God to work in our life, He will expose it, and He will enable us to get rid of it. We cannot get rid of it of ourselves. It is in the carnal (or worldly) mind the Bible says. "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"

The carnal worldly mind trusts in something else besides God,... something that man has made or devised (which is called idolatry). That is what trusting in the self-life is called in the Scriptures, and it is the worst sin that could possibly be. "He who trusts in Him does not come up for judgment," Jesus said. {And, of those who are not obeying God, and are not trusting only on His Son, Jesus said (John 3: 18) *"He who does not trust has already received sentence, because he has not his trust resting on the Name of God's only Son."* That is the seriousness of not getting rid of an idolatrous carnal nature which will deceive us to place trust some other place instead of on God.

God requires believers (and everyone else) to "trust on (His Son) the One whom He has sent," and Jesus said, *"only those who are obedient to my Father in Heaven," "will enter the Kingdom of Heaven"* (Matt.7:21). To the others, (who are not found to be obeying Him by not trusting on His Son), He said, *"I will tell them plainly, I never knew you; begone from me, you doers of wickedness."* (NKJV) calls it practicing lawlessness because God's will(or His law) had not been obeyed.)

(1 Cor.10:) describes some of the idolatry that the Israelites took part in (as well as troubles they went through as a result of those sins of disobedience). Apostle Paul warned, *"Do not be idolaters, as some of them were."* He was referring to that time (after the Israelites had left Egypt) when Moses was called by God to come up the mountain and he stayed there for forty days. That was at least 39 3/4 days longer than he had to stay (to hear and know what God wanted him to hear). But he was kept up there by God, to 'test the hearts' of the Israelites. And, after he had been there for quite a while, the people began to wonder, and to say to each other, "something has happened to Moses, and he is

never going to come back.” (Exodus 32:1) *“When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, ‘Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses, who brought us up out of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.’”*

Those people actually asked Aaron to make idols for them to worship (and who they thought would lead them to their Promised Land). They had not believed God’s Word (nor on the many miracles that He had performed in their sight), because that carnal nature of self was still in their hearts. The Israelites gave Aaron all the jewelry they had borrowed from the Egyptians. Aaron made two golden calves in imitation of the gods of Egypt, and they held a feast to those golden calves. Then they stood up to dance and to make merry before the metal gods they had created. (NIV translation calls it pagan revelry). In any case it was one of the worst forms of idolatry; a false place of trust on some-thing made by man, and a direct disobedience of the first two commandments God had given Moses for the people to obey. The people said to each other, (4) *“These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.”*

That was another evidence, that the natural heart (controlled by the self-life), wants to see where the deliverance comes from. They had more confidence in those metal calves than in a God, Who had made Heaven, the earth (and everything in the universe). The spiritual mind with the carnal nature removed, however, has no trouble putting faith in the unseen God, and it wants to place its trust on “the One whom God had sent.” That is God’s great command, the one condition or requirement that He places on all true believers.

God said to Moses (7-10), *“Go down, because your people, (whom you brought up out of Egypt), have become corrupt. They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol, cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.’”* “I have seen these people,” the LORD said to Moses, *“and they are a stiff-necked people. Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I*

will make you into a great nation.”

“Then Moses pleaded with the Lord his God.” He asked, what will become of your great Name? He meant, you told Israel (and you told me), that it paid to serve and trust you. Now if you destroy this people, the heathen nations of the earth will hear about it and say, you just brought them out to kill them.

Then Moses asked God if He would pardon them, and God did pardon them as Moses prayed. (Vs.14) says, *“So the Lord relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.”*

We want to take notice that in Israel’s experiences (when they were defeated by their enemies), it was the result of idolatry in the carnal mind (that had never been revealed nor forsaken). That is, they were trusting in man instead of on God, or, in things that could be seen (instead of trusting in the unseen God).

(1 Cor.10:6-10), Paul said, *“Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were as it is written: ‘The people sat down to eat and drink, and (then) got up to indulge in pagan revelry.’”* (Trusting in their metal gods was idolatry, and it soon led them into many other forms of idolatry (as the apostle continued to describe). “We should not commit immorality as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. We should not test the Lord as some of them did and were killed by snakes. And do not grumble (and be discontented) as some of them did, and (they) were killed by the destroying angel.”

Because the Israelites did not fear the Word of the Lord, they did not obey Him. The prophet Samuel was inspired by God to say (1 Sam. 15:22-23) *“Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.”* For rebellion (in the human heart) is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, “He has rejected you as king.”

Since the Israelites were not sincerely committed (and they had not made a final surrender of their life to God, their rebellion was still in their hearts (so God could not help them, and He could not remove that carnal worldly

nature from them, against their will). We have to want to be delivered and be willing to allow God to submit us to His will (and to His plan for our life). The carnal unfaithful nature of self (that we were all born with), must be removed and replaced with the Christlike obedient faithful nature. It is an Eternal Life issue!

As a result of their stubbornness and rebellion, the idolatrous actions of the Israelites continued to multiply (all originating from that carnal worldly nature of the self-life still in their heart). They had not learned to trust in a God whom they could not see, but is the One Who had made Heaven, the earth (and everything else in the universe), and had worked many miracles before their eyes to deliver them from the Egyptians, even parting the waters of the sea to enable them to escape the Pharaoh. "I have seen these people," the LORD said to Moses, "and they are a stiff-necked people." (They refused to be pliable under God's teaching, as clay in the hands of a potter. They wanted to depend on their own knowledge, and to trust in the things which could be seen. They had not given the Holy Spirit an opportunity to remove the carnal worldly nature (of self-trust) from their heart.

Paul explained to the Corinthians that we are to depend on Spirit taught Truth, that which the Spirit teaches, "so that your trust might rest not on the wisdom of man but on the power of God" (1 Cor.2:5).

It is through the sanctifying work of the Spirit that the carnal nature of self is removed from our heart. It is "the office work of the Holy Spirit." And, we want to be among God's own people, (1 Pet.1:2) "chosen in accordance with the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, with a view to their obedience and to their being sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ."

The writer to the Hebrews explained that it is the surrender of 'man's will' that God wants to see in us (and that surrender needs to take place in everyone's life). Without having the carnal nature of the self-life removed, no one will go to Heaven.(Heb.10:7) refers to Jesus Spirit-inspired message (as given Psalm 40:7-8) "Then I said, Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart."

Jesus was speaking of His Father in

Heaven, and of delighting to have His 'Father's will within His own heart.(Vs.10 speaks to us) "It is through that divine will that we have been set free from sin, through the offering of Jesus Christ as our sacrifice once for all." That tells us that through believing on the sacrifice of Christ and accepting into our heart what that has accomplished for us, we should then realize from God's Word that His sacrifice has taken away the desire to sin from a truly surrendered heart. (By Scripture saying Athrough the offering of Jesus Christ as our sacrifice once for all. God's Word means that the power of the blood of Jesus Christ is just as effective today (as the day He went to the Cross in our place, to take away the carnal, sinful nature of self) (if we would accept and believe it).

A believer has the responsibility to see themselves as God's word says they are and not listen to the devil telling us that we have not been cleansed, pardoned, and forgiven by the work of Christ on the cross. (Gal.2:20) reminds us, however, "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ that lives in me; and the life which I now live in the body I live through faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up to death on my behalf." (That is how we are told to see ourselves through the cleansing Blood of Jesus Christ!!)

At the same time, we are to always leave ourselves open to further conviction through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, as we live a life of faith on the Son of God. (Acts 26:18) "that they may turn from darkness to light and from the obedience to Satan to God, in order to receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among those who are sanctified through faith in Me." (That was Jesus speaking to Paul.)

As a person is sincere in wanting to live a life of faith, the Holy Spirit will expose the carnal nature within their heart so that it can be forsaken (removed by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit and replaced with a Christlike nature). It is a lifelong process within a person's heart (as we are never finished learning about God's will and His plan for the believer). Having the carnal worldly nature removed from our heart, is essential for one's preparation for Eternal Life with Christ, because the heart is where the wrong places of trust (idolatry) are embedded.

Idolatry is what God had to expose to the

Israelites through "Gideon." It was the hindrance that had to be removed in order for God's power to work to deliver them from the persecution of the Midianites (and open the way for spiritual progress to be made). At the time when the judges ruled over Israel, the Midianites would come and take the grain from them when it was ready for harvesting. What little they could keep for themselves, they had to hide and thresh it secretly. Gideon was threshing wheat behind the winepress to hide it from the Midianites, as the Israelites had no power whatever against them. An angel from the Lord appeared to Gideon, and said, (Judges 6:12-15) *"The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!"*

Gideon said to Him, *"O my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?'... But now the Lord has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. Then the Lord turned to him and said, 'Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?'" (God used sarcasm to expose the Israelites lack of trust on Him, and of how weak we are ourselves.) So, Gideon said to Him, *"O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."**

The place of Israel's self-trust had been exposed by God, and Gideon greatly feared, because the Midianites had come with a vast army of well-trained soldiers. Then the angel gave some real spiritual light to Gideon (if he would accept and follow it). (vs.16) *"And the Lord said to him, 'Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.'"*

That same night the Lord gave Gideon the first step, "tear down the altar of Baal that your father has, cut down the wooden image that is beside it; build an altar to the Lord your God and sacrifice the second bull (of your father's herd) on the altar as a burnt sacrifice." The idolatry of those carnally minded people (that 'spiritual cause') had to be removed first.

Gideon must have believed the Lord's words "I will be with you," since he made the right choice. He chopped down the idol and built an altar to the Lord (even though he greatly feared the people). [Gideon 'had the faith to act' only

because he believed the word of the Lord.]

[A very important point, for if we do not believe the Word we will not be able to obey or act on it. It is the same with God's Word for us.] The second step was for Gideon to choose a few thousand men to go against Midian, a very insignificant number to go against that vast number of Midianite warriors. The Lord then reduced Gideon's men to three hundred (and there was a reason for that). It gave opportunity for faith in God to be exercised, for there was nothing left to do but to have faith in God, to defeat the vast army coming against them.

That is how battles were won in the Bible, with the carnal nature of dependance on self having been removed (and it is the same today).

To make a long story short, Gideon went to the battlefield with only three hundred men, in full dependence upon God's power to deliver them. The enemy was defeated by God in a remarkable way, and that fulfilled what God had said, that if His people (which can include each one of us), if His people would obey and follow Him, "one would chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight."

What we need to learn from this is the value of finding out 'the cause' of our troubles. The cause of the Israelite's trouble was depending on something that man had devised (depending on something besides God). It was idolatry in the carnal worldly nature of sinful man, that God exposed to Gideon. Their victory came the moment they exercised faith on God alone (with nothing else left to trust on).

If we will put aside our self-efforts and our trust on plans devised by man, and give God the opportunity, He will also bring us to victory over the carnal nature of the self-life. With the self-life removed from our heart, we can make progress in the full Truth of God and enjoy being prepared by God for Eternal Life. The ultimate reward!

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