

Spirituality: The Greatest Need of the Church

I Corinthians 3:1-4

Introduction:

- A. Greatest need of church is not buildings, parking, attendance, money, leadership, etc.
- B. Greatest need of church is a spiritually minded membership.
 - 1. Lack of spirituality was at root Corinth's problems.
 - 2. Spirituality is not displaying a "holy look" and talking in a "holy tone"
 - 3. Spirituality is a mind attuned to spiritual and eternal welfare rather than fleshly and temporal.
- C. Each member can diagnose himself for carnality or spirituality by a few simple tests:

Discussion:

I. The Pleasure Test (2 Thess 2:12; Ps. 1:2; 2 Cor 12:10).

- A. Carnal mind finds most pleasure in temporal things. (Rev. 3:17,18)
- B. Carnal mind finds little pleasure in spiritual exercise. (cf. Eph. 5:18,19)
 - 1. Worship must appeal to flesh.
 - 2. Religious activities must appeal to senses.
- C. Carnal mind is more comfortable in worldly rather than spiritual environment
 - 1. Enjoy people of world more than children of God.
 - 2. Enjoy trivial discussions more than religious discussions.
- D. Carnal mind enjoys questionable recreation more than wholesome.
 - 1. A joke is funnier if has dirty overtone.
 - 2. A party is more fun if a little dancing, drinking or carousing is injected.
 - 3. A contest is more interesting if a wager is placed. (cf. Rom. 13:9,10)
- E. Carnal mind seeks approval and attention of carnal minds. (1 Pet. 3:4)
 - 1. In way they dress.
 - 2. In way they talk and act.

II. The Justification Test (our text 1 Cor. 3:1-4; 4:6).

- A. Spiritual minds feel justified in faith and practice only if they know God approves it. (Mt. 28:18)
 - 1. Not family and friends
 - 2. Not preacher and parents.
- B. Spiritual minds look to the message more than messenger for justification (context of our text 1 Cor. 3:3-7; Acts 17:11)
- C. Spiritual minds can discern good and evil from Scriptural principle for justification. (Heb. 5:12-14).
 - 1. Every thing does not have to be spelled out in detail. (Cf. "and such like" - Gal. 5)
 - 2. No verse mentions modern dance, pot, gambling, mini-skirt, inst. music in worship etc.
 - 3. No verse mentions song books, meeting house, other facilities, etc.

III. The Priorities Test (Col. 3:1-2; 2 Cor. 4:18-5:1).

- A. Spiritual minds place going to heaven above physical and mental comfort. (cf. Heb. 11)
- B. Spiritual minds place the Kingdom of God above necessities of life. (Matt. 6:33)
- C. Spiritual minds place actively doing good above merely avoiding wrong. (Rom. 12:2,21; Jas. 4:17)
 - 1. "How far can I go without sinning?" or "How clear of sin can I stay?"
 - 2. "Unless a failure to do it sin, I will not do it"? or "If doing it is right and beneficial I will do it?"
- D. Spiritual minds place spiritual things above physical, social, economic or educational in choices.
 - 1. The selection of a mate.
 - 2. The selection of job, school, club, civic or recreation activity.

Conclusion:

- A. Carnal mind thinks it is really living, when dead. (Rom. 8:6)
- B. Carnal mind thinks spiritual is foolish. (1 Cor. 2:14).
- C. Carnal mind is bored by repetitious spiritual exercises.