

What think Ye of the Bible?

Part 15 "Spiritually Dead, Alive IN CHRIST."

Review from Previous Article.

In the previous article (Part 14) from last week, we considered Adam's FALL in the Garden of Eden, which was due to his willfull disobedience of God's command. God cursed the ground, and pronounced judgment upon Satan, the woman and Adam. Adam's nature became corrupted in intellect, emotion and will. The defiled nature was then passed on through all successive generations. Anyone (except Jesus Christ) born into this world is "spiritually dead."

Spiritually dead people do not have any spiritual connection to the Holy, Righteous, Just Creator of the Universe. The Apostle Paul calls this being in "the flesh," or being alienated from God. Ephesians 4:18 KJV

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:"

This blindness is a "spiritual blindness," people in this condition don't seek God and they don't understand the things of God.

Spiritual blindness was illustrated by Friedrich Schleiermacher, the Father of Liberal Theology, who said spiritual aspects in the Bible did not make sense to him. Spiritually dead people read the Bible and decide that truths like the New Birth, the Virgin Birth of our Savior, His sacrificial death on the cross, His resurrection are all "foolishness." God knew unregenerate man's response to the Gospel and, thus, the Apostle Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 1:18 KJV

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." Please note that this passage makes reference to two kinds of people. There are those that perish, and those that are saved. There is no middle ground, there is no neutral option.

Liberal Theology rejects much of what God has told man in His Word. They believe in a "God." But they vehemently reject all of the supernatural events in the Bible. They also deny that man has a fallen nature. Instead, they advocate the idea that man is basically good, and is able by moral, ethical and virtuous living to secure salvation for himself. They view the crucifixion of Christ not as an atonement act on behalf of sinners, but only as an example for men and women to try their best to live a life of self sacrifice for others. Ultimately, Liberal Theology teaches that there really is no HELL, and in the final analysis everybody will end up in heaven, as Rod Bell described in his book "Love Wins." Schleiermacher initiated the concept of man's inherent goodness, who is able to provide

for his own salvation.

False Teaching is generally widely accepted by fallen man. Unregenerate man loves this concept, and is more than willing to accept this religious dogma and play this faux role of Christianity. We might say, the Devil has won this tactical battle, insofar that there have been, and still are millions who subscribe to this fatally flawed theology, for it is diametrically opposed to what the Holy Spirit has written in His book the Bible. However, we, who believe the truth, know how it will end. Satan has already lost the war. It is burdensome and sad that Satan will drag millions with him into perdition due to this false teaching. That is why I am laboring in writing these articles of biblical truth. Jude 1:22-23 KJV

"And of some have compassion, making a difference: [23] And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."

There is a pervasive sense of self deception regarding self righteousness. Consider this verse from Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 17:9 KJV

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

God says this about ALL unregenerate people, those who have not been SPIRITUALLY BORN AGAIN. Yet, millions think they are intrinsically good. That is not to say unregenerate people cannot do good works for others. I am not saying that at all, and that is not what the Bible teaches. But, these good works are done IN THE FLESH, and not in the Spirit. Good works done in the FLESH will produce a sense of inner self satisfaction, and SELF RIGHTEOUSNESS. In these situations the GLORY GOES to the person doing the good deed. On the other hand, good works done IN THE SPIRIT are done under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, and thus immediately become a FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT, and not a fruit of the FLESH. When good works are done IN THE SPIRIT the deeds bring GLORY TO GOD, instead of to man.

Consider what Isaiah said.

Isaiah 64:6 KJV

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." The multitude of good works done by a person who is spiritually dead bears no merit in the eyes of God. None! Perhaps, this might be the most difficult aspect to comprehend by someone who does not have the Spirit of God in him. But, it becomes intuitively obvious by one who has been born again. The Holy Spirit indeed brings illumination to many biblical truths that were not comprehended prior to regeneration. This reminds me of the empirical aspect of salvation, namely FAITH. Romans 10:17 KJV

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Hebrews 11:6 KJV

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." I think it is important to introduce faith at this time. It will be dealt with in more detail in future articles.

Often people use false standard and false comparisons.

Often, the problem is that people compare themselves to other people. I had a secretary long time ago. She was educated in a New England Finishing School. She and I worked together for 8 years. My assessment was and still is that she was a most moral, ethical, and virtuous person. I know that there are multitudes of people like that. It is very likely for such a person to compare themselves with the spiraling out of control, moral decay in our society and come to the conclusion that says "I am not like my surrounding environment. I think I am a pretty good person." The deep rooted problem in this kind of self assessment is the false "standard" of comparison.

There must be a Biblical comparison instead of a neighborhood comparison.

A Biblical example of an accurate comparison would be from the book of Isaiah. Isaiah was one of the major Old Testament Prophets. By all human standards he was an obedient and faithful servant of Jehova. Isaiah wrote all 66 chapters in the book entitled by his name. However, closer examination of the text in Chapter 6 reveals that Isaiah did not know who he was, nor who God was until Isaiah was visible thrust into the very Presence of God. It was at that point in time that Isaiah came face to face with the radiant splendor and holiness of God. Now, Isaiah had a realistic standard of comparison, and consequently he cried out loudly.

Isaiah 6:5 KJV

"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

This presented a moment of spiritual crisis for the Prophet Isaiah, and he responded properly, acknowledging his destitute situation. God always shows himself to be merciful and gracious to those who reveal a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Psalm 51:17 KJV

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

It is good for people to obtain a realistic perspective of their spiritual bankruptcy. When that happens, they will cry out to the Lord, repent of their sin and place their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for redemption and salvation of their eternal soul. (There will be future articles about salvation, being saved, crediting (imputation) of Christ's righteousness,

adoption, and many other Biblical truths).

Sadly, those who have been under false teaching for decades carry with them the baggage of erroneous security in their own righteousness. Proverbs explains it well.

Proverbs 14:12 KJV

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Now, after having laid the groundwork in regards to an unregenerate (lost) person's destitute condition, we can take the next step and examine a very poignant passage from the Epistle of Ephesians. This will deal with the transition from spiritual deadness to being spiritually ALIVE IN CHRIST. This is the power of the glorious Gospel of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is the GOOD NEWS!!

This is the passage.

Ephesians 2:1-5 KJV

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; [2] Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: [3] Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. [4] But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, [5] Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

We will look at this passage next time.

Precious Heavenly Father, please find broken hearts to receive your truth with GLADNESS.

Thank you for Jesus, who shed His blood in order to provide salvation to those who have a contrite spirit.

The salvation door is open to all, who still have breath and beating hearts. One day the heart beat will stop. Then it will be too late. Today is the day of salvation.

With Warm Regards,

Horst Adler

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." (Ro. 1:16)