

OUTGROWN 4: Carnality

THE JOURNEY (1 Cor 3:1-3, Rom 8:5-7)

We start off CARNAL (sarkikos): FLESH-RULED, SELFISH, IMPULSIVE, EMOTIONAL, OVER-REACTIVE, DEFENSIVE, FEARFUL.

But God wants us to become SPIRITUAL (pneumatikos): Spiritually AWARE, SENSITIVE, ORIENTED, LED

Sarkikos needs to be TAKEN OFF; pneumatikos must be PUT ON.

Flesh must be STARVED & SUFFOCATED; spirit should be FED & EXERCISED (Col 3:5-8, Eph 4:22-24, Gal 5:24-25).

→ *What are the differences between spiritual babies & spiritual grown-ups? How do you 'grow up?'*

→ *What do you understand by the word 'carnal?'* What does it mean to be 'spiritual?'

Can you give an example of a carnal reaction as opposed to a spiritual one?

→ *How do you take carnality off? How do you 'put it to death?'* How do you put spirituality on? How do you feed & exercise it?

CARNALITY v SPIRITUALITY

1. Carnality reacts to what the natural senses tell you; spirituality listens instead to spiritual senses (conscience, intuition, inward witness, still small voice).
2. Carnality defaults to the old way / 'old man' / old habits; spirituality has been retrained into a new way / 'new man' / new habits.
3. Carnality leaps; spirituality waits.
4. Carnality assumes; spirituality listens.
5. Carnality complains; spirituality serves.
6. Carnality is prone to explode; spirituality is quick to pray.
7. Carnality tends to give undue influence to negative, unhealthy emotions; spirituality gives primary influence to the leading & constraining of the Holy Spirit.
8. Carnality has worldly knowledge; spirituality has Biblical wisdom.
9. Carnality needs me to win; spirituality wants everyone to win.
10. Carnality sees through selfish eyes; spirituality through God's eyes.
11. Carnality judges by outward appearance; spirituality discerns the heart.
12. Carnality gets caught up in the moment; spirituality sees the bigger picture & long-term wins.
13. Carnality values material comfort over godly fruitfulness; spirituality values obedience over self-interest.

14. Carnality is fear-ruled; spirituality is faith-ruled.

15. Spirituality instinctively submits to God (and therefore honours all God-given authority); carnality instinctively resists God (and therefore dishonours & rebels against God-given authority).

16. Spirituality knows God's voice and responds to it; carnality doesn't know the Enemy's voice and responds to it.

17. The carnal unwittingly let the Enemy 'play them like a fiddle;' the spiritual recognise the Enemy's agenda and slam that door shut.

→ *Work your way, either one-by-one or perhaps pick one each, and explain the contrast between carnal & spiritual in each case. Why does carnality behave that way? Why is spiritual way so much better?*

→ *Recommend spending some time on 3-6, 9, 12 & 16.*

→ *Why does carnality risk the Enemy 'playing you like a fiddle?'* Have you seen people falling into that trap and even claiming something like, 'God has said?' Why was it clear God had not said (perhaps refer to some of the other points on your list as evidence).

3 LEADING QUESTIONS

1. Who's 'PULLING your STRINGS?'

* AWARENESS is key: Once you can SEE it, you can start to DEAL with it.

THE CLUES:

* Is it pulling you towards GOD or away?

* Is it into BIBLICAL WISDOM or away?

* Is it towards HOLINESS or away?

* Is it towards GRACE & RELATIONSHIP or DISCORD & DISUNITY?

2. How good are you at RECOGNISING which VOICE is shouting at you?

* It's not that the spiritually mature have NO carnality; just that they've learnt to IGNORE it.

3. From which WELL are you DRAWING? (Isa 58:11, John 4:13-14)

* The good news is that God has given us ALL WE NEED. We just have to learn to DRAW from the RIGHT WELL.

→ *Are these questions helpful? Do you ever find yourself asking them? What might change if you did?*

→ *"It's not that the spiritually mature have no carnality; just that they've learnt not to give it a voice. They've chosen to ignore it." Discuss!*

→ *Would you say that you were, as a rule, carnally or spiritually inclined? How could you go about growing less carnal & becoming more spiritual?*

→ *What's been your one major take-away from this teaching?*