

Lesson 51

1. Last week in conjunction with our teaching of Genesis chapters eighteen and nineteen I taught in part the Doctrine of The Three Classes of Men.
2. I want to review some of that learned and then pick up with new material at point 17 in our categorical study of the three classes of men.

The Doctrine of the Three Classes of Men

1. There is an obvious difference in the character and quality of the daily life of Christians. This difference is acknowledged and defined in the New Testament. There is also a possible improvement in the character and quality of the daily life of Christians.
2. This improvement is experienced by all such Christians who fulfill certain conditions. These conditions form an important theme in the Word of God.
3. The Apostle Paul, by the Spirit, has divided the whole human family into three groups:
 - 3.1 The "natural man," who is unregenerate and thus, unchanged spiritually;
 - 3.2 The "carnal man," who is a "babe in Christ," and walks "as a man"; and
 - 3.3 The "spiritual" man.
4. These groups are classified by the Apostle according to their ability to understand Bible doctrine. Doctrine if taught by God the Holy Spirit to positive believers.
5. Christ predicted this in Joh 14:26 and 16:13.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Joh 16:13 Therefore when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

Joh 16:14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

6. In 1Co 2:9 to 3:4 the threefold classification of mankind is described.

1Co 2:9 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"--

1Co 2:10 but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.

1Co 2:11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

1Co 2:12 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.

1Co 2:13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

1Co 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

1Co 2:15 The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:

1Co 2:16 "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

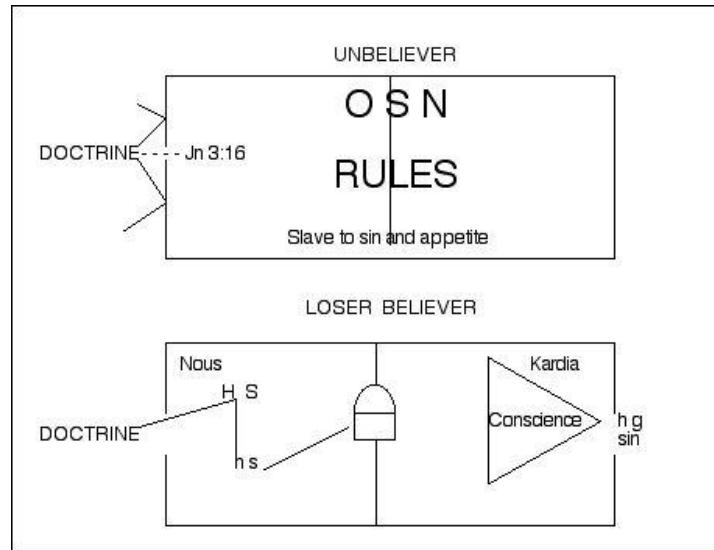
1Co 3:1 Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly--mere infants in Christ.

1Co 3:2 I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready.

1Co 3:3 You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?

1Co 3:4 For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere men?

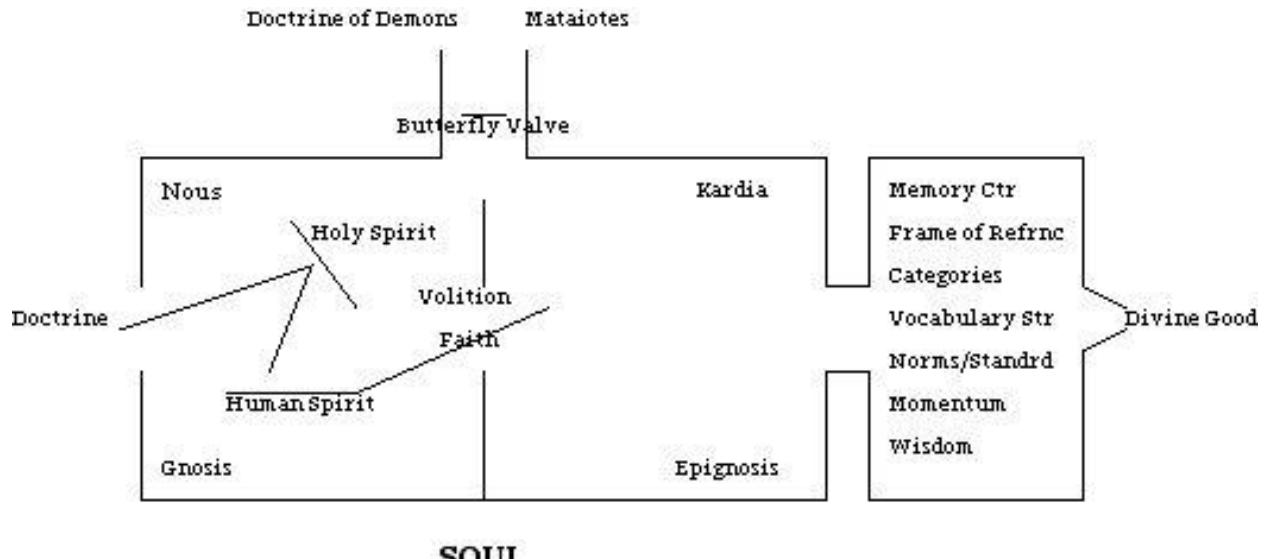
6.1 A chart will help introduce the concept of what we are about to study. Recall, the natural man is the unbeliever. He cannot understand Bible doctrine. Then there is the carnal believer or loser believer who also cannot understand Bible doctrine.



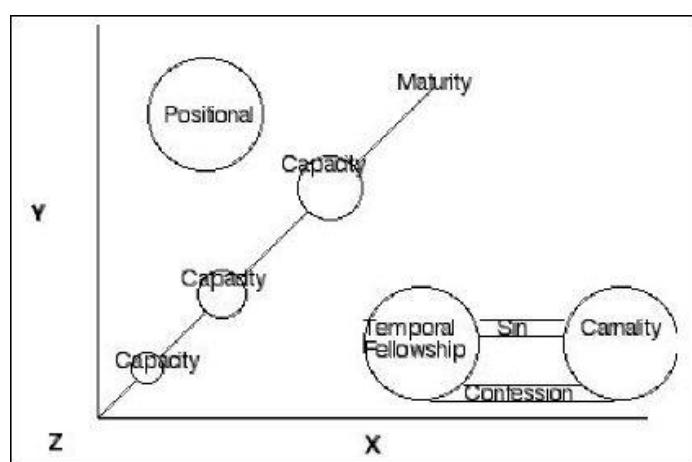
7. The passage opens as follows: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,

neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."

8. A distinction is here drawn between human knowledge received through the eye-gate, the ear-gate, or the "heart" (the power to reason), and Bible doctrine taught by God the Holy Spirit. Another chart will facilitate our understanding of how doctrine is taught by God the Holy Spirit to the positive believer or as Paul says: the spiritual man.



9. There is no reference here to any revelation other than that which has already been given to us in His Word and such revelation is boundless. "For the Spirit (Who reveals) searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." We can never exhaust or master all that God would have for us to know. His truths are inscrutable—incapable of being totally mastered. We are always moving in the direction of spiritual maturity.



10. Men are classified according to their ability to understand and receive the "deep

things of God." Into these "deep things of God" no unaided man can go. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (knows them).

11. An unaided man may enter freely into the things of his fellow man because of "the spirit of man which is in him." He cannot extend his sphere. He cannot know experimentally the things of God. Our intellectual prowess can only take us so far.

12. Even though man, of himself, cannot know the things of God, the Spirit knows them, and a man may be so related to the Spirit that he too may know them. By this I mean: we are born—again, after which we name our sins to God and take-in the Word of God and are thus, related to the Spirit, i.e., we can now taught by the Spirit.

12.1 The passage continues: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things [the "deep things of God," which eye hath not seen, etc.] that are freely given us of God."

12.2 "We [that is, all saved, excluding none] have received the Spirit Which is of God." Here is a great potentiality. Being so vitally related to the Spirit of God as to have Him abiding within, it is possible to come to know "the things that are freely given to us of God." We could never know them of ourselves: the Spirit knows, He indwells, and He reveals.

13. This divine revelation is transmitted to us in "words" which the Holy Spirit teacheth, as the Apostle goes on to state: "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

14. God's Book is a Book of words and the very words which convey "man's wisdom" are used to convey things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man."

15. A failure to receive His counsel can have dire results.

Pro 1:23 If you had responded to my rebuke, I would have poured out my heart to you and made my thoughts known to you.

Pro 1:24 But since you rejected me when I called and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand,

Pro 1:25 since you ignored all my advice and would not accept my rebuke,

Pro 1:26 I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you--

Pro 1:27 when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you.

Pro 1:28 "Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me.

Pro 1:29 Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD,
Pro 1:30 since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke,
Pro 1:31 they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.
Pro 1:32 For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools
will destroy them;

15.1 Christ is always knocking, first with discipline and then with intensive discipline,
remember He wants to feel at home in our hearts.

Rev 3:16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee
out of my mouth.

Rev 3:17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of
nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind,
and naked:

Rev 3:18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and
white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not
appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Rev 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the
door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Rev 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also
overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Rev 3:22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

15.2 He wants to feed us but only when we hunger and thirst.

Mat 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be
filled.

16. Nevertheless unaided man cannot understand these "deep things of God," though
couched in words most familiar to man, except as they are "revealed" by the Spirit. Let's
look in more detail at the three classes.

17. The Natural Man

17.1 "But the natural man receiveth not the things [the revealed or deep things] of the
Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they
are spiritually discerned." In this passage the natural man is not blamed for his inability.
This is simply an accurate statement of an unbeliever's limitations.

17.2 He has received only "the spirit of man which is in him." Though he may, with
"man's wisdom," be able to read the words, he cannot receive their spiritual meaning. To
him the revelation is "foolishness." He cannot "receive" it, or "know" it.

17.3 The moral principles and many of the religious teachings of the Bible are within the

range of the capacity of the "natural man." From these sources he may eloquently preach; yea, and most seriously, not even knowing that "the deep things of God" exist.

17.4 Satan, in his counterfeit systems of truth, is said to have "deep things" to reveal (Rev 2:24) and "doctrines of devils" (1Ti 4:1 and 2) which things, on the other hand, should not be received by the child of God; for it is said the sheep will know the voice of their Shepherd. (Joh 10:5)

Rev 2:24 Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan's so-called deep secrets (I will not impose any other burden on you):

1Ti 4:1 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.

1Ti 4:2 Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

Joh 10:5 But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice."

17.5 Yet the"things" of Satan are strangely adapted to the blinded natural man and are, therefore, received by him. Every cult and many denominations are examples of this phenomena.

17.6 The unsaved man, though educated with all of "man's wisdom," and though religious and attentive, is blind to the gospel. (2Co 4:3-4)

2Co 4:3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.

2Co 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

17.7 If called upon to formulate a doctrinal statement, the unsaved man will naturally formulate a "new theology" which is so "re-stated" as to omit the real meaning of the cross with its unfolding of the "deep things of God."

17.8 The cross, as a substitutionary sacrifice for sin, is "foolishness" unto him.

1Co 1:18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

17.9 Human wisdom cannot help him, for "the world by wisdom knew not God." On the other hand, the boundless "deep things of God" are to be "freely" given to the one who has received "the Spirit which is of God." The true child of God may, therefore, be taught the divine revelation, having received the Spirit. (1Co 1:21a and 2:10)

1Co 1:21a "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God ..."

1Co 2:10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

1Co 2:11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

17.10 A trained mind may or may not assist in learning; but apart from the presence of the indwelling Teacher, a trained mind avails nothing in coming to know the spiritual meaning of the revealed things of God.

17.11 The "natural man," with all his learning and sincerity, will find nothing but "foolishness" in the things which are revealed by the Spirit.

17.12 Apart from the Spirit there can be no regeneration, and the "deep things of God" are unknowable. When an unregenerate teacher openly rejects the vital saving truths of God's Word, those truths will usually be discredited and discarded by the pupil. This is the colossal blunder of many students in universities, colleges, seminaries and denominations today.

17.13 The ability to receive and know the things of God is not attained through the schools, for many who are unlearned possess it while many who are learned do not possess it. It is an ability which is born of the indwelling Spirit.

17.14 There are no divine classifications among the unsaved, for they are all said to be "natural" men. There are, however, two classifications of the saved, and in the text under consideration, the "spiritual" man is named before the "carnal" man and is thus placed in direct contrast with the unsaved.

17.15 This is fitting because the "spiritual" man is the divine ideal. He that is spiritual should be the norm, if not the usual, Christian. But there is a "carnal" man and he must be considered.

End Lesson