

I Am My Worst Enemy

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At the beginning of it all, God the creator began with a blank canvas and proceeded to paint a picture using all the resources available to Him. He took his time and inspected every step of the way to make sure what was created aligned with what He desired. At every step of the way, it was good. When He had finished all of creation and crowned man as its principal, He again evaluated, and it was indeed very good.

Creation was and still is a masterpiece that is far beyond our limitation of understanding. Everything worked together in perfect harmony; one giving life to the other and receiving life back from another. God had what He wanted. His creation complete and desires fulfilled, the work in each of its phases pleased Him. It was not just wonderful for creation itself but a place where He was pleased to come and enjoy. Everything reflected a portion of the Creator's nature.

Man lived in this perfect place with God. He was in covenant relationship with God; a perfect partnership where man could tap into the heart of God and rule according to God's desires. As he remained in that role, all creation brought the highest level of pleasure to God. This is what He wanted. This is the purpose for all creation in the first place; to please Himself.

Genesis 3:7 states that both Adam and Eve's eyes were open. For the first time they began to explore a different reality than God's prescribed way. Man, in his covenant relationship with the Father, could explore the infinite understanding of God. He was the source they depended on since the beginning. However, the path they chose led to death. Satan called it the pathway to wisdom. Man believed the lie and saw it as desirable. It meant going past a hard rule which they understood and covenanted not to break. The meaning and consequences of this death I am certain was readily available information by tapping back into the mind of their Creator.

The immediate tangible change that man experienced was that they were physically naked. The Bible was silent on all of the other inner stages of metamorphosis that death brought. We saw them expelled from the Garden specifically made for them to now fend for themselves. They had taken on a nature that was repulsive to God.

Man died in all three areas of his being. His spirit was disconnected from God and is now compelled to hide from Him. His soul, which forms the personality of man and is responsible for decision-making, is now led by an alternative source of wisdom that advocates rebellion to and independence from God. His body also experienced this death and is now vulnerable to divers diseases and sicknesses and unprofitable desires.

That death created an alternative reality for man which eroded the level of pleasure God derived from His creation. It was like a tiny cancer cell was just formed in man that would eventually take over the whole body causing eventual death. That tiny cancer cell is called the self-life, carnal nature, the world or the flesh. That cancer developed and quickly spread to envelop all creation. God is recorded (Genesis 6:6) as expressing regret for the same creation that once brought his great pleasure and proceed to destroy it in the days of Noah.

What about man today? Listen to Apostle Paul's stern warning:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest

in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; ²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality,^[e] wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, ³⁰ backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, ³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving,^[d] unmerciful; ³² who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. Romans 1:18-32

This can be quite a mouthful but listen closely to the heart of God:

- He has proven Himself to man displaying His invisible qualities since creation. This leaves no excuses for man not honoring Him as they should.
- As a result, man became futile (unprofitable) in his thinking and his heart became darkened
- He could no longer steward creation with the mind of God so began to bow down to elements of creation worshiping them as God
- What follows is so heart wrenching. God gives over man to himself in three waves. The end result: man operates with a debased mind, being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful.
- Man, who is without excuse is fully aware of the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

Take a close look at these symptoms that are evident in the lives of those people provoking the wrath of God. These describe the people who live a life that is in rebellion to God. It is what the bible calls the self-life, carnal nature, worldliness or simply the flesh. Do you see any of these symptom in your life?

Now consider further what God's word said about that life.

*For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, **those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** Romans 8:5-8*

*I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which **I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.** Galatians 5:16-21.*

how do we then differentiate between man's soulish nature and the Spirit of God? *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* Hebrews 4:12

The word of God is the only effective tool that can discern between both soul wisdom and the mind of God. The soul expresses itself in three formats: I think, I feel, and I want. It is all about itself. If the thoughts contradict the word of God, then be sure the flesh is in control.

From this definition of carnality and its fruits, carefully reflect on the following questions:

- Do you know any carnal, worldly, or fleshly Christian?**
- What does the bible say about those who live a carnal, worldly or fleshly life?**
- Do you see any of evidence of a carnal, worldly or fleshly lifestyle in your life?**
- Are you a carnal Christian?**
- Are you willing to pay the price to overcome carnality?**

If the Word of God is dependable, then it is evident that what is in us is the greatest enemy from a life of intimacy with God. I know it is easier to blame the devil or other people for the way we live. The truth is, the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary gives us the power to overcome the works of the flesh and live a life being led by the Spirit of God.

