

# The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness.—Isa. 35-8

VOL. XXXVII.

MONCTON, N. B., OCT. 15, 1927

NO. 179

## CARNAL OR SPIRITUAL---WHICH?

By R. A. Belsham, Augusta, Ga.

Many times lately have these two words been forced to my attention by the prevailing conditions in the religious world around us. Questions have come from those whose hearts are stirred, and who have wanted some explanation from that infallible standard and test of all things—the word of God—apart from which we can form no right judgment in things that relate to the experience of the Christian life. Here are some things asked:

Do you think so-and-so is a Christian? What do you think about certain things that are being indulged in by people who are church members, and call themselves Christians? How is it that such-and-such a person, whom you do not feel free to say is not a Christian, will go to certain places, associate with ungodly people, and do such questionable things; all of which seem contrary to the word of God? Since we are told to "Judge not, that ye be not judged," is there any defined standard by which we may know who is, and what it means to be, a Christian?

The apostle Paul, in writing to the Corinthian church, said in his first epistle, chapter three, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

"I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"

Thus he divides Christians into two distinct classes—carnal and spiritual; and then goes on to explain, giving special emphasis to the carnal, leaving us to see that the spiritual presents what the carnal lacks, and lacks very markedly.

### WHAT IT IS TO BE CARNAL.

There seem to be about seven clearly marked evidences of being carnal. The word carnal means "fleshly," and indicates that the person, though a child of God, is living a life that is mostly controlled by and under the power of the "flesh;" or as has often been remarked, "take away the last letter of the word 'flesh' and spell it backward, and you have the true meaning at once—SELF—which is the dominating factor in the life, instead of the SPIRIT who dwells within. This is entirely different from the term commonly used today—a worldly Christian." Such is not really possible, for "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," says I. John 2:15, and "Whosoever

will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God," says James 4:4. They are merely professors and not possessors, and are as much lost as those who profess not. Such are more fully described in 2 Tim. 3:1-5, as "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." But "a carnal Christian" is truly a child of God, saved through a living faith in a crucified Saviour, who is trusted for acceptance with God, and the blessing of eternal life; yet a Christian whose condition of life and living is to be seen as follows, from the verses above quoted:

1. A Very Low Stage in the Life of God Within; a continued state of spiritual infancy—"babes in Christ;" having to be nursed a good deal, or else they are soon heard from; are upset at the least thing that goes wrong, and raise a great cry about it; weak and dependent upon others; rarely able to undertake any service for their Lord.

Christ hath redeemed us . . . that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith—Gal. 3:13-14.

I think God wants to teach us more than ever that since the Lord has bought us with His blood, we belong to Him utterly, and that all our time and strength and service are to be handed over to Him. He wants us for His service, and for His glory, and He wants to give us victory over sin. I want every believer to know that there is no sin and no temptation that the Lord cannot give you a splendid victory over. See that you are depending on the Lord Jesus Christ; and if He has never come into your heart, invite Him in now, because the outcome of that, through faith, is a new life.—Dr. Henry Montgomery.

2. Little or No Progress or Growth "in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." They are kindergarten scholars, having to be continually "tentertained or amused" in order to be satisfied or pacified; as spiritually "restless" as children usually are. From year to year they remain about the same in spiritual experience, and their prayer life is very poor.

3. Can only Receive Very Elementary Truths from God's precious word, "I have fed you with milk and not with meat." The richer, deeper things of God cannot be and are not received or understood by them. It almost amounts to choking or strangulation to hand out such truths as divine sovereignty, election, sanctification, or prophecy. Their interest in Bible study is not very keen, and the word of God is not too often read, seeing

their appetite is amazingly small, and a little goes a long way. Hebrews 5:12-14 speaks of them.

4. Greatly Influenced by Men and Circumstances. "Walk as (according to) men." Men's customs, fashions, pleasures, ideals, opinions, literature and movements greatly affect them and interest them; and they live mostly "under the circumstances." What goes on in the world's circles controls their thinking and acting far out of proportion to the unchanging and unalterable dictum of the word of God. They would not be "different" to the general trend of things for all the world. "Separation unto God" is too much to expect, for it tends to make one too "peculiar." They are perilously near being "worldly."

5. Easily Overcome by Trial or Temptation. "Envy, strife and divisions" readily exercise their influence over them, and they are drawn into and aside by them. Defeat, disheartenment, dissatisfaction, and even harshness and contentiousness at times overtake them; and they are more "down than up," "out than in," and "off than on" in matters spiritual and heavenly. They are more "overcome" than being "overcomers," victims than victors.

6. Unsettled Convictions of Truth. First they think this man is right, and then maybe that man is right, so that it is "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos." They are rarely heard to say, "Thus saith the Lord," because they really do not know their Bibles: they leave that to others to know and tell them. It is not "what saith the Scriptures?" but what does Mr. So-and-So say? Men's names are mentioned more by them, and that settles matters for them, rather than THE NAME of the Lord Jesus in its sweetness, powerfulness and peerlessness. They glory in men and things rather than "in the Lord;" and in ordinary conversation or letter writing they seldom, if ever, mention the dear Lord Jesus. They blush to speak His Name. They are church members, and will talk about their church activities, but not about HIM whose name they profess to believe and trust. It does not come easily to their lips.

7. Saved but Unsurrendered. With the apostle Paul it was "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? from the very start of his Christian career; but these dear ones have not reached that, even though many months and years have elapsed since they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ that they might be saved. To escape the disapproval of men and God is one thing; but to win the approval of God in all things is a far better and higher thing. Saved ones may do the first, but only

(Continued on Page Six)