

Doctrine of Carnality

1. The doctrine of carnality is found primarily in the *New Testament* epistles. The apostle Paul first uses the term “carnal” to declare that by nature he is “fleshly” or “given over to sin.”
 - *Romans 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.*
2. The natural state of carnality is a state of wickedness because the natural heart of man is hostile to the will of God
 - *Romans 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*
3. To Paul being a carnal man was something to be ashamed of which is why he used the term when rebuking the wayward saints in the Church of Corinth.
 - *1 Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.*
4. Paul associated carnality with childish immaturity and worse.
 - *1 Corinthians 3:3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*
5. The carnal Christians is a professing believer who is petty, selfish, angry, strong willed and walks as a natural man. The carnal Christian is one enjoys dividing the body of Christ.
 - *1 Corinthians 3:4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?*
6. Unfortunately in recent years a new concept has been introduced into Christian theology that teaches that it is acceptable behavior for a Christian to act in a carnal or fleshly manner.
7. Satan is so subtle that he has convinced many Christians to believe that it really does not matter how life is lived because the security of the believer assured.
8. This is a primary example of how *Scriptures* can be twisted so that men are destroyed. The Apostle Peter warned that men who studied Paul’s letters would not understand them and misinterpret them.
 - *2 Peter 3:16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*
9. The modern Carnal Christian Doctrine as it is now called is the fulfillment of Peter’s warning.

10. The only way to sort out true teaching from false teaching is to return to the *Scriptures* in context. Here then is what the Bible conveys about carnality in summary form.
11. It is possible for a Christian to act in a fleshly or carnal manner as the saints in Corinth did during the days of the apostles and as David did during the days of his fleeing from King Saul.
12. However, having said that, evil is not to be called good or acceptable behavior and that is what many people do with sin today. With reckless abandonment people engage in rebellion and all forms of wicked attitude and actions and then excuse everything with a false confidence that they are eternally secure. That is not the intent of the word carnal. It is meant to be a word of shame.
13. A secular parallel to what is happening in the Church spiritually can be seen in the homosexual community. There was a time when the word “*queer*”, “*homosexual*” or “*gay*” was associated not only with deviant behavior but created emotional shame and embarrassment. Today, the words are used with honor.
14. A carnal Christian is nothing to be proud of. The reason why Paul used the term “*carnal*” in a negative moral sense was to communicate the shame associated with the word.
15. A person who has had a past interest in spiritual matter but now has no present love for the Lord, no interest in Church, no appetite for Bible doctrine may be like the saints in Corinth or David and be full of carnality. What is certain is that such a person cannot persist in such a state. The security of the believer is not a doctrine that gives license to sin.
16. When a person is in emotional revolt of the soul, turns from the Lord, turns from the church, discards the Bible and recognizes no authority structure that is not carnality that is damnation.
 - *Matt 13:18-23 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. 19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. 20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; 21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. 22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. 23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*