

## The Carnal Christian Doctrine

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The very term "Carnal Christian" seems to be a contradiction in terms, and as it is used by many today it is indeed a contradiction in terms. Exactly what is meant by the "Carnal Christian Doctrine"? This article will try to answer that question and also show why we reject this doctrine. The arguments over the rightness or wrongness of this doctrine go all the way back to the early church and keep coming up in Church history. The term "Carnal Christian" as opposed to a "Spiritual Christian" has not always been used but the basic idea of the difference has always been true. What is unique about the Carnal Christian doctrine today is the extreme lengths the modern advocates have gone, consistently I should add, in carrying out the logical implications of their bad theology.

One group of Christians insists that Christ must be both acknowledged and received as Lord as well as Savior before an individual can be saved. Another group of Christians vehemently opposes this position and insists that bowing to Christ in repentance and receiving Him as Lord has nothing to do with salvation. If we insist that "Christ must be Lord of all or He is not Lord at all," we are accused of denying the gospel of grace and preaching a false gospel of works. Two statements will demonstrate the two sides of the argument.

The thought of surrender is also implied in the exhortation to "believe on the *Lord* Jesus Christ" (Acts 16:31), and the declaration that we must confess "Jesus as *Lord*" (Romans 10:9), if we would be saved. To believe in Him as Lord is to recognize Him as Lord; and we cannot recognize Him as Lord until we ourselves abdicate. This note in faith is today often overlooked or even referred to a later time of consecration; but the Scriptures connect it with the initial experience of salvation. From: *Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology*, by Henry Thiessen, p. 359

The second statement just as clearly sets forth the opposite view, namely that neither preaching or receiving Christ as Lord is necessary in salvation.

The message of faith only and the message of faith plus commitment of life cannot both be the gospel; therefore, one of them is a false gospel and comes under the curse of perverting the gospel or preaching another gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). As far as sanctification is concerned, if only committed people are saved people, then where is there room for the Carnal Christians? From: *Balancing the Christian Life*, by Charles Ryrie, Moody Press, p. 170.

I think everyone will immediately see that Ryrie has radically changed the biblical meaning of "faith." He has reduced faith to mean nothing but an intellectual act of the mind. You can believe in Christ in exactly the same manner that you believe "Columbus crossed the ocean blue in 1492" and be a true Christian. In the next issue of Sound of Grace we will look at the word faith as it is involved in the Carnal Christian debate. The only thing with which I agree in Dr. Ryrie's statement is that Thiessen's position and Ryrie's position cannot both be the gospel of the Bible. Ryrie is indeed correct when he states that one of the two is indeed "under the curse of God."

Let us first of all be sure we understand precisely what we are discussing. As Ryrie has correctly pointed out, the stakes are enormous! According to Ryrie, heaven and hell, gospel truth and rank heresy are the

choices. The Carnal Christian doctrine is the teaching that there are two distinctively different types or categories of Christians. The one is called a *Carnal* Christian and the other is called a *Spiritual* Christian. Both types have distinct and radically different characteristics that are clearly discernible and easily categorized. Every Christian is in one of these two categories, and, according to the advocates of this doctrine, it is not difficult to know whether one is a spiritual or a Carnal Christian. Several lists of traits are made available and one only need pick the list that best represents their life. In a matter of seconds you will know if you are to look upon yourself as being in the "spiritual" category or the "carnal" category. One of the strange things about this teaching is that it is far easier to discern the difference between a carnal and Spiritual Christian than it is to discern the difference between a Carnal Christian and a *lost person*. This amazing fact alone ought to be enough to warn any thinking person that something is wrong.

There are several other things that are basic to, and an integral part of, the Carnal Christian teaching. The very statements, when honestly faced, should force people to be skeptical.

One: Both the carnal and Spiritual Christians are *genuine believers* even though the Carnal Christian acts exactly like a non-Christian. The Carnal Christian is just as "eternally secure" and sure of heaven as the Spiritual Christian despite the fact they are radically different in their respective life styles. This point ought to make anyone raise his eyebrows. It seems rather ridiculous to proclaim, as the advocates of this doctrine do, that the Carnal Christian is headed for heaven even though he lives like the Devil.

Two: The Carnal Christian's assurance and safety is in no way connected to, or to be examined by, the fruits of sanctification. One knows for sure that he is saved because he has "accepted Christ as his Savior," which actually means he has "*professed* to have accepted Christ." A profession of faith is never to be tested in any way by life and experience. Regardless of one's present state, he is to be assured he is "eternally secure" if he has "asked Jesus to come into his heart."

Three: A person may become, live, and die as a Carnal Christian and still go to heaven—even if he has never bowed to Christ as his Lord. Such a person will suffer losses, or rewards (either in heaven or the "millennium"), of a greater or lesser degree but he need not fear for his soul's salvation. The absolute and unconditional security of every person, regardless of how they live, who has "made a decision of Christ" is to be protected at all cost.

Four: A whole-hearted turning from all known sin is neither demanded nor considered to be an essential part of evangelism. The *necessity of repentance* is not to be preached to lost sinners since doing so would deny grace and bring in works and merit. The Savior-hood of Christ alone is the message to sinners and must not be confused with the Lordship of Christ which is the message to believers in order that they might also become disciples. In the Carnal Christian doctrine being a Christian and being a disciple of Christ is not the same thing. Becoming a true Christian does not involve a person bowing to Christ as their Lord. When a Christian "accepts Christ as his *Lord*," which is usually at a later date, it is at that point that the Christian becomes a disciple of Christ. Not all true Christians are disciples. Discipleship is in no way related, or essential to, salvation, security, or assurance. "You accept Christ as your *Savior* and you are ready for heaven regardless of how you live. You accept Christ as your *Lord* and you are ready to live the Christian life. Carnal Christians are ready for heaven but not ready to live the Christian life." The three preceding quotations are the words of a professor of theology from Dallas Theological Seminary.

Five: The two classifications of Christians are clearly distinctive and opposite. It is a simple matter to know (1) whether you are in the spiritual category and (2) if you are in the spiritual category exactly

when and how you got into this group. Incidentally, I have never met a person who was prepared to say they had ever crossed back over the line and became a Carnal Christian after having become a spiritual one. Listening to the testimonies of Carnal Christians who became Spiritual Christians is like hearing someone testify, "I used to be proud and now I am humble." I fully expect any day to hear one of them add, "And I am quite proud of my spirituality" (humility).

The next question we must ask is this: "Where and when did the Carnal Christian doctrine originate?" We will say more about this in the next issue of *Sound of Grace*. As mentioned above, the basic idea goes all the way through church history back to the New Testament. However, the Carnal Christian doctrine is being defined in different terms and has taken on new strength in our generation.

The Carnal Christian doctrine, as we are discussing it, was the immediate and logical consequence of the 'new evangelism' of easy believism that J. C. Ryle and others criticized. For a full discussion and proof of this fact read B.B. Warfield's *Christian Perfectionism* and J. C. Ryle's *Holiness*. The *Scofield Reference Bible* gave the teaching creditability and was probably the most significant factor in its spread. A single footnote in that Bible provides the supposed foundation of the whole Carnal Christian concept. The footnote is found at 1 Cor. 2:14 on page 1213 of the first edition of the *Scofield Reference Bible*.

Paul divides men into three classes: *psuchikos*, "of the senses" (Jas. iii:15; Jude 19), or "natural," i.e. the Adamic man, unrenewed through the new birth (John iii:3, 5); *pneumatikos*, "spiritual," i.e., the renewed man as Spirit-filled and walking in the Spirit in full communion with God (Eph. v:18-20); and *sarkikos*, "carnal," "fleshly," i.e. the renewed man, who walking "after the flesh," remains a babe in Christ (I Cor. iii:1-4)..."

The phrase "after the flesh" used to describe a Carnal Christian is obviously lifted from Romans 8:4, 5, 13. However, Scofield's use of it makes it say the opposite of what Paul intended in Romans 8. Paul emphatically states in those verses that any man who "minds," "walks," or "lives" after the flesh will *perish*. It is impossible to impose the concept of a "...renewed man ... walking after the flesh..." into "if ye *live after the flesh* ye shall *die*...." (Romans 8:13).

Lest anyone say we are reading more into Scofield's note than he intended, let me quote from his footnote on Romans 7:14:

"Carnal" = "fleshly" is Paul's word for the Adamic nature and for the believer who "walks," i.e., lives, under the power of it."

What is a Carnal Christian according to the *Scofield Reference Bible*? A Carnal Christian is a *renewed* man who "walks after the flesh." What does *walks* mean? It means nothing less than "living under the power" of the Adamic nature. Stated another way a Carnal Christian is a Spirit-born, blood-washed, justified, adopted saint of the most high God who walks, that is he lives, under the power and control of the Adamic nature. That is no caricature. That is precisely what the Carnal Christian doctrine is saying. A man can be totally committed to obey the Adamic nature and still be a renewed man and secure in Christ. Seriously, what kind of salvation is that? Where is the freedom and liberty won by the Redeemer in His battle with sin and Satan (John 8:32, 36)? Where is the power and life infused by the Holy Ghost in His mighty work of regeneration? This is not a salvation *from* sin. It is a salvation *in* sin. The very essence of biblical salvation is expressed in the Angel's announcement that Jesus would "save his people *from* their sins" (Matt. 1: 21). Carnal Christian salvation is security and assurance *in* sin and makes Christ a minister of unrighteousness instead of righteousness.

It will do no good for the advocates of the Carnal Christian doctrine to cry, "You grossly misrepresent us. We never teach that Christians *should* be carnal, in fact the whole purpose of our preaching is to plead with them to accept Christ as Lord of their lives so that they will become spiritual. We advocate spirituality not carnality." No, my friend, you don't! You may think you are advocating spirituality, and it may be your sincere desire to promote more holy living, but you are still apostles of carnality. Regardless of what the intention may be, the result of this most unbiblical doctrine has been disastrous. Rome may loudly proclaim that the confessional box and indulgences are an attempt to restrain sin, but history proves she has actually encouraged sin and hindered holiness by those awful practices. The modern doctrine of the Carnal Christian is just as wicked as Tetzels selling indulgences for sins before they were even committed. The Carnal Christian doctrine gives the same license to sin.

We admit that some souls may have been helped in a Roman confessional box by verbalizing their guilt and shame, but has this brought them closer to Christ and true forgiveness or has it driven them farther away from both? Likewise some true saints may have been raised to a new joy in Christ by elements of truth in the 'higher life' teaching, but hundreds of others have been given carnal security to continue in sin. It is impossible to plead for a second type of Christian without dogmatically protecting the assurance and security of the first type. Practical sanctification and holy living cannot be considered optional without giving iron-clad assurance that unholy living and true salvation are perfectly compatible as long as an individual has mentally "accepted Christ."

Listen carefully to a famous advocate of the Carnal Christian doctrine:

If you have received the Lord Jesus Christ as your Redeemer, then the Holy Spirit, as we have already seen, has come to take up residence within your human spirit, and you have been born again and God has set His seal upon you as His child. But if that old, Adamic nature, the flesh, still dominates your soul and monopolizes your personality by coloring your thinking, sparking your ambitions, capturing your affections and subtly persuading your will into submission to its claims upon you, then you are a Carnal Christian." From: Major Ian Thomas, *If I Perish...I Perish*; Zondervan Publishing House

There are no *ifs* or *buts* and certainly no possibility that the Carnal Christian was never really saved. There is no suggestion that he should examine himself to see if his professed conversion was real. There is no warning or admonition that to continue in a carnal state may be disastrous. To do this is to be guilty of preaching salvation by works. On the contrary, Major Thomas emphatically assures that sin can "*Dominate* your soul and *monopolize* your personality" but that in no way means one is to question his salvation. No, no, don't let bondage to, and domination by, sin cause you any alarm about your soul's security. You have "received the Lord Jesus Christ as your Redeemer" (True, He is a Redeemer that leaves you a victim and slave of sin). "The Holy Spirit has taken up residence in you" (True, He never made a particle of difference in your heart and life). "God has set His seal upon you as His child" (True, no one can see any evidence of that seal). How glorious! Redeemed by the Son of God, regenerated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, justified and adopted by the Father; all of this *and not one whit different than an 'unsaved' sinner!* A slave of sin but nonetheless sure of God's stamp of acceptance—dominated and monopolized by the Adamic nature but assured of being the temple of the Holy Spirit! Again, it may not be the deliberate intention of Carnal Christian advocates to encourage the above, but that is what they are doing whether they realize it or not.

I want to emphasize that we are not implying that a true Christian may not act in a very carnal manner at certain times. We are not claiming that no Christian ever back-slides, yea, very badly sometimes. We are just as opposed to the "spiritual" Christian concept as we are to the "carnal" Christian idea. Every

Christian is *both* carnal and spiritual. It is a matter of degree. Some of the people who fight the Carnal Christian doctrine are just as dangerous as those who uphold it. Unless you condemn the "spiritual" Christian concept, which in reality is a form of perfectionism, just as strongly as the Carnal Christian idea, you are laying the foundation for the very atmosphere that made the Carnal Christian doctrine possible in the first place. Most of the so-called Reformed responses to the Carnal Christian doctrine have totally confused the issue of sanctification by grace. We will say more about this later.

Let no one who reads these lines think me unkind or unloving in writing this article. We 'Lordship Preachers' whose concept of the gospel does not make "room for Carnal Christians" have been accused of proclaiming a 'false gospel' that "comes under the curse" of Galatians 1:6-9. If a 'nobody' had made such bold and far-reaching statements, we could smile and go on our way. However, when the accusation carries the authority of the Systematic Theology Department of Dallas Theological Seminary as well as the endorsement of a publishing house of the stature of Moody Press, it is an entirely different matter. It is time for a church council to convene and determine who is adhering to God's Word and who is departing from it.

Now back to the business at hand. The illustration at the bottom of this page graphically depicts the basic premise of the whole Carnal Christian doctrine.

As you can see "The Bible says" refers to one text of Scripture. I Cor. 2:14-3:3 is the basic "biblical proof" for the Carnal Christian doctrine. This one portion of the Bible supposedly identifies three classes of people. Notice the two questions concerning identifying which class you are in and then how you can "right now" move from carnal to spiritual. I am sure you see how clearly they demonstrate most of the statements made at the beginning of this article. They fairly exude the notion that knowing for certain which of these three groups one is in is a matter that can be easily and quickly determined. Not only is it a simple matter to immediately classify oneself, but it is also just as simple to become a "Spiritual man right now." In a matter of moments one follows the steps and takes upon himself the title 'Spiritual Christian' with an unshakable assurance that such is really the case.

It is no accident or coincidence that Campus Crusade, the originators of the three circles, is such a strong advocate of the Carnal Christian doctrine. They have a sure-fire evangelism approach that enables anyone with an effective salesman's personality to get 'decisions' for Christ in a matter of moments. This approach grossly misrepresents and distorts some wonderful biblical truths into "Four Spiritual Laws." Sadly, their spiritual laws produce a host of Carnal Christians who did not receive genuine spirituality from the so-called Spiritual Laws. Since they practice the easiest 'easy believism' in evangelism, it logically follows that Campus Crusade needs an easy believism form of sanctification.

A careful examination of the three circles depicting the three classes of people demonstrates the basic error of the whole doctrine. The circle depicts one's life. The chair in the center of the circle represents the throne or control center of the individual's life. The "E" is the real person, i.e. the "ego or finite self." The cross is the symbol for the Lord Jesus Christ. The dots are the various interests, goals, and pursuits of life. The most important lesson being stressed is the fact that Christ bears three distinctly different relationships to the three kinds of people. *This is the heart of the Carnal Christian doctrine*, and it is also the heart of the violent opposition to 'Lordship preachers.'

Carefully look at each of the three kinds of people and note especially the relationship that Christ bears to each one.

*The Natural Man:* Christ (represented by the cross) is outside of the life of the natural man. This man is unsaved. He is under the control of "E" or self. Scattered around the circle in a disorganized manner are dots of varying sizes. The picture is that of the meaningless, disorganized life of the man who has rejected Christ and has chosen to run his own life.

*The Spiritual Christian:* The second picture shows all the dots have been changed to the same size and placed in perfect symmetry. Christ is on the throne. "E" is still part of the person (it is inside the circle), but has been displaced as ruler.

*The Carnal Christian:* It is no accident that the third circle is identical to the first circle in every detail except one. One may be tempted to think the artist was lazy or the layout person wanted to skim by using the same figure twice. Such is not the case. The dots are identical and in the same position in order to show that the life, habits, desires, etc., of the Carnal Christian are *the same as the natural man!* Later in the booklet that I mentioned, and in other material, the specific characteristics of both the natural man and the carnal man are listed and the two lists are *identical*. In placing these two circles one on top of the other, the only difference will be revealed to be the position of the cross. In the first circle Christ is outside of life, and in the third circle Christ is just inside the circle but "E" is still on the throne. In other words, there need be no basic change in a person's mind, heart, will, or life as a result of regeneration. Both the natural man and the Carnal Christian are controlled by the same sins. Here is Bill Bright's list of the attributes or characteristics of a Carnal Christian. He is a fruitless witness for Christ, poor prayer life, no desire for Bible study, disobedient to God, legalistic life, impure thoughts, jealousy, worry, controlled by self, self seeking, doubt, critical spirit, defeat, wrong doctrine, frustration, aimlessness and envy. From: *Have You Made the Discovery of the Spirit-filled Life?*, Campus Crusade, p. 7

The only difference between the person described in that quotation and a lost man is that the "Carnal Christian" has made a mental decision to believe that Jesus is a real person who died on the cross. That is what it means to "accept Jesus as his Savior" and be "eternally secure in Christ."

It would be impossible to build a better bomb shelter for carnality and give a sense of security to men in sin. A second or higher experience cannot be magnified without minimizing the first one. Carnal Christians who "*live under the power of the Adamic nature*" cannot be encouraged to become Spiritual Christians without condoning carnality. Whether they admit it or not, the Carnal Christian advocates are directly responsible for the arrogant assurance of many lawless professors who have no marks of grace. It is impossible to preach that carnality can rule in one's life as king and that Jesus can be denied as King in the same life, but in spite of those facts, that individual is still saved, secure, and certain of salvation. You cannot have two masters at the same time. You cannot preach that Jesus is willing to be Savior from the penalty of sin but at the same time also be rejected as King or Lord without many people believing and living out in practice such a monstrous contradiction. God forbid that we should be accused of saying the Carnal Christian advocates are deliberately aiming at producing a generation of people who sincerely believe they can serve sin in this life but still have glory and happiness in the next. Regrettably, their doctrine has produced just such a state of affairs, and it couldn't have been brought about much more quickly if they actually had intended to do so.

The very titles or headings in the above-mentioned booklet betray the fact that the whole Carnal Christian system produces carnality because it is a system based on carnal human wisdom. I could hardly believe my eyes the first time that I read it. I thought I was back in a Wear-Ever (pots and pans) sales meeting. "How to Promote the Assurance of Christ's Presence in Life After one Commits His Life to Christ" is the main heading and the first sub-heading is "How to Communicate Assurance." Of course,

if we call attention to this obvious attempt to play Holy Spirit, we will be told, "Oh! We believe it is the work of the Holy Spirit to do this." Believe me, armed with the methodology of the Four Spiritual Laws to get decisions, and the "four basic truths involved in understanding how to become a Spiritual man," the *Holy Spirit is not at all necessary*. If we have to "promote and communicate" with gimmicks and sales psychology the assurance that Christ has come into a person's heart in cleansing power and saving grace, then I humbly suggest that such a Christ is not worthy of being a guest in the first place. And while we are on the subject of "communicating assurance," I still have not found out how these people are able to look into other people's hearts and know for certain that said people really have genuine faith in Christ. Please don't respond, "But John, you must ask them if they were *sincere* when they prayed." If there is one thing I am sure about it is the fact a sinner is the very last person capable of being the judge of his own sincerity. The Word of God says that "the *heart is deceitful* above all things... and *who can know it...*" John Bunyan speaks well on this point of a man's heart being the judge of his own sincerity.

Chr. ...But why, or for what, art thou persuaded that thou hast left all for God and heaven?

Ignor. My heart tells me so.

Chr. The wise man says, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." (Prov. 28:26)

Ignor. That is spoken of an evil heart, but mine is a good one.

Chr. But how dost thou prove that?

Ignor. It comforts me in hopes of heaven.

Chr. That may be through its deceitfulness; for a man's heart may minister comfort to him, in the hopes of that thing for which he has yet no ground to hope.

Ignor. But my heart and life agree together; and therefore my hope is well grounded.

Chr. Who told thee that they heart and life agree together?

Ignor. My heart tells me so.

Chr. Ask my fellow if I be a thief! Thy heart tells thee so! Except the Word of God beareth witness in this matter, other testimony is of no value,...

From *The Pilgrim's Progress*

Fourthly, why do we reject the "Carnal Christian" doctrine?

It hardly seems necessary to list specific reasons for rejecting such a non-biblical doctrine. Nonetheless, the following lists some of the more obvious objections to this false doctrine.

1. It directly opposes the Analogy of Scripture on the subject. Nowhere in the Bible is there a suggestion of three kinds of people (except 1 Pet. 4:18, but there the *sinner*s are divided into two classes). The Bible divides men as saved and lost, believer and unbeliever, sheep and goats, children of darkness and children of light, etc. It knows nothing of a creature that looks and lives like those in one category but possesses the nature and benefits of those in the opposite group.

2. It breaks an important rule of biblical interpretation. A passage of Scripture must never be used as a foundation for a doctrine unless that passage is specifically dealing with that doctrine. Most certainly a non-doctrinal passage cannot be used to contradict a passage where that specific doctrine is the subject of discussion. 1 Corinthians 3 is not a doctrinal passage and by no stretch of the imagination can it be thought of as providing the foundation of the doctrine of sanctification. Yet this is exactly what the Carnal Christian advocates do with these verses. Examine Romans 8, where security and sanctification are the subjects being dealt with, and see what happens to *every* person who is dominated by carnality.

3. It leads to 'security in sin' and spiritual pride. The moment a man is *sure* he is a Spiritual Christian, one can be sure he is *not*. Where is the dividing line between the two classes? Is it a 100% to zero situation? How does one test his heart in this classification? Can one be proud that he is no longer a Carnal Christian and still be a Spiritual Christian?

4. It denies what is (a) recorded of every Bible hero, (b) imprinted on the heart of every honest Christian, and (c) the uniform experience of the greatest Saints in history; namely, that (1) *every* Christian is carnal and *every* Christian is spiritual, (2) that *no* Christian is *dominated* by carnality and *no* Christian is *sinlessly perfect*. It may well be that a believer is the most spiritual when he feels in himself to be the most carnal and vice versa.

5. It divorces what God has joined together. It separates justification from sanctification. These two are most certainly different. They may be isolated in order to be better studied and understood but they cannot be separated in experience. He whose justification does not lead to practical sanctification has never been justified, and he who attempts to earn, or keep, his justification by means of sanctification knows nothing of the free and sovereign grace of God that "justifies the ungodly."

We call this 'optional' sanctification and consider it to be the heart of this awful error. We believe a holy heart (not a sinless life) that wants to please God is wrought in every person born of God's Spirit. "Follow...holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord...(Heb. 13, 14)" is not an option for Carnal Christians, it is a command that is obeyed by every saved person. "Sin shall not have dominion over you ... (Rom. 6:14)" is not a promise to be claimed by faith, it is the actual experience of every child of grace.

I remember reading an article where the author said, "no Christian would desire that type (i.e., a carnal) of life" Did the man mean by "would" that no Christian *could* desire that and be a genuine Christian? If such were the case, we would reply, Amen, brother! That is exactly what we are contending for. However, such is not the case. Two paragraphs later the same writer says, "The Lord *desires* (emphasis mine) a holy life of His people." What is he saying? God wants you to desire to please Him, you will be far better off if you will desire to please Him, and we earnestly urge you to desire to please Him, *but* it is *optional*. It has nothing to do with your salvation or security. Desiring to live a holy life is like a CD player or air conditioning in your car. It is an option. It plays no essential part in the car's ability to get you where you want to go. It merely makes the trip more enjoyable. God desires you to be a Spiritual Christian because you will be happier now and also when your 'works' are judged at the judgement seat of Christ, but it is optional and has nothing to do with whether you get to heaven or not.

Is that really what the Bible teaches? Listen to some clear words from Paul. "...to be carnally minded is *death* if ye live after the flesh, ye shall *die*...(Romans 8:6, 13)." That doesn't sound very optional to me, and it does not sound like something God merely *desires* you not to do, but rather something that God *demand*s. How dare anyone say that what Paul really means is, "to be carnally minded is to lose all your rewards and be saved yet so as by fire." I say for the third time, these dear sincere souls may be horrified at the suggestion, but they are apostles of carnality. You cannot continually put *should* where God says *must*, and add *ought to* where God says *has* without people being led to think and live as if holiness was merely an option in the Christian life. No matter how desirable you make such an option, you cannot help but say that it really is not an essential part of God's plan of salvation.

6. Carefully consider the following and after searching the Scriptures determine whether the Carnal Christian doctrine is true.

A. The goal, or purpose of God the Father in electing grace is denied and frustrated by the Carnal Christian doctrine.

*You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain,... (John 15:16 NKJV).*

*But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, (2 Thess. 2:13 NKJV).*

*Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, (Eph. 1:4 NKJV).*

*Therefore, beloved, ... be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; (2 Pet. 3:14 NKJV).*

B. The goal, or purpose for which God the Son came into this world is denied and frustrated by the Carnal Christian doctrine.

*For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. (Rom. 8:29 NKJV).*

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God (Rom. 12:1-2 NKJ).*

*Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked (1 John 2:3-6 NKJV).*

C. The goal, or purpose of God the Holy Ghost in His work of quickening and sealing is denied and frustrated by the Carnal Christian doctrine.

*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Rom. 8:1 NKJV).*

*And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience ..... For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:1-2; 2:10).*

*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. .... If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16, 25).*

It is impossible to even remotely understand the implications of the above verses and still insist, "These are goals that God merely desires will come to pass, but whether they do or don't come to pass is of no eternal consequence.