

# Carnal Christians

by Ernest C. Reisinger

---

*The sermon explores the concept of carnal Christians, emphasizing the importance of spiritual maturity and the dangers of misinterpretation within the church.*

**Duration:** 1:14:18

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 5:2, 1 Corinthians 6:1-10, 1 Corinthians 7:1-17, 1 Corinthians 8, 1 Corinthians 11:1-17, 1 Corinthians 11:20-23

**Topics:** "Spiritual Maturity", "Church Unity"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses three important things to remember when thinking about the church. He references Matthew 3:12, where John the Baptist speaks about Jesus. The verse teaches that Jesus will thoroughly purge his floor, gather the wheat, and burn the chaff with unquenchable fire. The preacher then mentions a problem in the church of Corinth, where people were following different preachers instead of focusing on Christ. He emphasizes the need for spiritual maturity and unity, highlighting the presence of envy, strife, and division among the Corinthians. The preacher also references Romans 8, discussing the freedom from condemnation for those who walk in the Spirit.

---

## Transcript

I'll try to bring to your attention and try to bring you a few thoughts about it. But I believe that some of the controversies and ramifications of the misinterpretation of this passage of Scripture has caused no small amount of problems in the Christian church in the last 80 years. A hundred years ago, there was no such interpretation as we have now.

In fact, there's a hundred years ago, there was no such interpretation as probably the most common interpretation that we have now. And that's this idea that there are natural men, spiritual men, and carnal men. That is, two kinds of Christians, kinds.

That is, spiritual Christians and carnal Christians. That leaves a kind. And tonight I want to try to deal with that subject.

And I, again, invite you to do what our good brother has been doing. And that is, you've been kind and polite to hear and listen. And I wouldn't mind if everybody disagrees with me.

But I believe if you hear something from the Scriptures, you ought to tonight. It's your duty to your own soul to weigh it, whether it's true. I hardly know how to begin this subject.

But I'll ask you to turn tonight to 1 Corinthians chapter 3. And I think the way I'll approach it is by reading this passage and then maybe coming back to it and refer to it. First, let me just say a couple things. You know, when I was first a Christian, and even long after I became a Christian, I used to make such a statement as, Boy, I wish I could have been in that early church.

I wish I could have been in that early church. And then one day I started reading the book of 1 Corinthians and read it straight through. And I started to see the problem in that church.

And the church was not a hundred years old yet. Now imagine, the church isn't a hundred years old. And I jotted down all the pieces.

And when I finished, here's what I found. And this is not all of them. I just touched it.

Chapter 1. Chapter 3. I don't know which chapter we're in tonight. I find it. Chapter 5. I found immorality of the worst sort.

And no repentance in verse 2 of chapter 5. Chapter 6, verses 1 to 10. I find that Christians were having lawsuits, one with another. They were fussing over taking their brother to law.

I thought that was about it. Defrauding and wronging one another. Verses 7 and 8. You'll see it there.

In chapter 7, I found the apostle was called upon to deal with sexual problems between men and wife. That is, it's instructions explaining that sex was for more than procreation. And he had to deal with that.

Ignorance in the married life over sex. Chapter 7, verses 1 to 17. Chapter 8, verses 1 to 13.

I found that he had to deal with Christian liberty in connection with the weak Christians and the strong Christians. Fighting over meat offered to idols. Chapter 9, I find out that they weren't properly paying the preacher.

And there was some fuss over paying the preacher and the great apostles' apostleship. Chapter 10 again, Christian liberty. Chapter 11, verses 1 to 16.

Problems with men and women and their hats and their hairdos. Boy, if he'd have been here today, he'd have had it. How long is long? In chapter 11, verse 17, there was their public coming together did more harm than good.

Their public gatherings was doing more harm than good. Verse 17. Chapter 11, verses 20 to 23.

Disorder at the Lord's table. Of all the problems to have in a church, disorder at the Lord's table. And he had to set that straight.

Chapter 12 to 14, spiritual gifts and lack of love, which he deals with in chapter 13. Chapter 15, doctrinal errors of the worst sort. The fundamental doctrine of the faith, the resurrection.

The longest chapter in the whole epistle is dealing with errors on the resurrection. In chapter 16, some problems with the collection. And when I finished with this and this, I thought, I've never said sin if I could have been in that early church.

Because I've been in a lot of churches, and I don't say anymore, Boy, if I could have been in that early church, I'll just take yours. A church not yet a hundred years old. Now, I believe there's one church that is,

as far as our eyes is concerned, one church made up of professors and possessors.

And then there's that church in the Godward sense that we call the invisible church. It's made up of only true believers. And the difference many times is known only to God.

And the distinction is not always clear to human eye. However, when the apocryphal addresses this epistle to the church, he sometimes calls them brothers. Now that throws a lot of people.

They say, because he says brothers, he means they're all Christians. I'd like to dismiss that from your mind immediately, because he certainly didn't think they were all Christians, despite. That's like me standing up here tonight and saying, brethren.

Well, when I say that, I don't mean that I think everybody here is a born-again Christian. That's charity. Paul didn't think they were all Christians.

If you read 1 Corinthians 6, and if you turn to his second epistle, which is softened down, or actually the first epistle too, in chapter 11, you'll find that he told them to examine themselves before they come to the Lord's table. But in the end of the book, because of all these problems, examine yourself whether you be in the faith. Now, he either thought they were all saved, examine yourself whether you be in the faith, except.

And I say to you tonight, there are three things that must be remembered when we think of a church at any time, or any denomination, or any body of people come together and call themselves a church. You know, we always ought to remember three things. It's found in Matthew chapter 3, verse 12, concerning our Lord, where John the Baptist is speaking concerning our Lord.

And there's three things. The verse says this, speaking of our Lord, it says, "...whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into the garner, and he will burn up the chaff." And that verse teaches three things. And this is not anything to do with my message tonight.

It's just by way of, because I want to deal with one of the problems of 1 Corinthians. But there are three things that you ought to remember. And I do, as I come from church to church, I remember this.

And there's all three things found in that simple little verse. There will be a separation someday between the possessors and the professors. There will be a separation, point one.

Point two, the time is not now. The Bible doesn't teach us that that separation will be now. And the third thing in there, the winnowing fan is not in our hand.

And if you remember those three things, then you won't be trying to put everybody in a category. One, there will be a separation. It will not be now.

And the winnowing fan is not in our hand. Now, coming to this tonight, since we mentioned the problem, what is the problem of 1 Corinthians 3? Well, we must face this problem, or we won't understand the passage. So let's turn to that chapter now.

And I want to read to you. It really goes way over into the fourth chapter. Paul keeps dealing with the same problem, and that is, who's the best preacher? Or maybe not their preaching, but they were followers of men.

Now, notice the problem. He's dealing with a problem. Just the same as in the other chapter.

In chapter 15, he's dealing with a problem. In chapter 7, he's dealing with another problem. And he deals with these various problems, as I mentioned.

But in this particular chapter, way over into chapter 4, he's dealing with one particular problem. But as unto Carnal, even as babes in Christ, I have fed you with milk, and not with meat. For hitherto you were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

For ye are yet carnal, whereas there is among you envying and strife and division. Now here's the problem. What was the envying, strife, and division over? Now listen.

And are ye not carnal and walking men? Now here's the problem. For while one say, here was the problem, I am of Paul, another will say, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul? Now he's dealing with the servants of God. Remember that.

He's dealing with the servants of God because these people were fussing over the servants of God. That was the division. Who then is Paul? And who is Apollos? But ministers, by whom he believed, even as the Lord gave to every man.

Still with the same subject. I have planted. That's one minister, he, Paul.

Apollos watered, but God gave ye in Christ. So neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. He's dealing with that problem still.

Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one. And every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. Who's he talking about? The servants of God.

So when is he talking about reward? There may be a place for that. But ministers, for we are labors together. Apollos and me and all the rest of us.

For we are labors together with God. Ye are God's buildings. We're doing the building.

God's doing the building through his servants in this way. Ye are the building. Ye are God's building according to the grace of God which has given me as a wise master builder.

So he's talking of himself and the servants of Christ as builders. And he's now distinguishing himself from the others, calling himself a wise master builder. I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon.

But every man taketh heed how he build thereon. For other foundations can no man lay, that that is laid which is Christ Jesus. Now if any man build upon this foundation, that is Christ Jesus, this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, hay, wood, hay or stubble, every man's work.

Who is that? That's the servants of Christ. If I load up the church with unsaved people, my labors will be tried. He's talking about... This is not talking about... I don't believe in the common... If the servants of Christ, if the leaders of the church, the builders, build the church with wood, hay and stubble, it'll be burned.

But the man, as he's saying, if you load up your efforts and your church with unconverted people, that's what's going to... that's the wood, hay and stubble. If a man's work abide he shall... If any man's work shall

be burned, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so is by fire. Now take it into context.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? Him shall God destroy. For he has written, He taketh the wise in their own correctness, and again the Lord holdeth the thoughts of the wise, which are vain. Therefore, let no man glory in men.

He's coming back to that... Whether Paul... You see, it's still the same subject. He's still talking about Paul and Apollos. This is... But with me it is a very small thing.

For I know nothing by myself, yet I am not hereby justified. But he that judges me is the Lord, who both will bring to light the hidden... ...transferred to myself, which is written. Don't... I've told you this.

This is a picture. This is a figure. Why that no... Take it to differ from another.

If thou dost receive it, if thou hast not received it, as if thou hast not received it, now ye are full, now ye are rich. Ye have reigned as kings without us. And I would to God that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

For I think... I think that God hath set forth us, this is the preachers again, as apostles, last. As it is appointed unto death. He's still dealing with that problem.

For we are made a spectacle unto the world and to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake. But ye are wise in Christ.

We are we, but ye are strong. Ye are honorable, but we are despised. And if you read it on, clear down to the 14th verse or so on, he's still dealing with that problem.

Now, the reason I labored so long, and I won't do that again, I haven't done that all week, but I wanted to give you a complete picture of the context of that problem. What is the teaching? What is the teaching? What is this that I'm getting at as far as the carnal Christian teaching? I don't want to be guilty of caricatures. I'm sorry I don't have a blackboard, because I have in my files at home cards.

I have in my home illustrated sermons. I have cards. There's one whole system of evangelism in the United States that's making great strides, and I have their literature.

But this is the picture. It has three circles. It has the natural man, and Christ is outside of him.

Then it has two other circles, and it has one with Christ is in him, but he's just like the other fellow out here except Christ is in him. Then the third circle is, now, that means, and they don't say this, but that means that you can't take any other interpretation of that, that there's two ways to heaven. You can go by just giving a nod to Jesus, but your life doesn't change.

It's still like this fellow over here who was before. And they're listed, and that's what the book does, it lists them as carnal Christians. They're just like these other people, except they've taken Christ.

He's not in their heart, and so they're carnal Christians. And they get angry, and the whole bent of their life is just like me, giving Christ a little nod. And then there's the spiritual one with Christ on the throne.

Now, I have that, and I actually have that thing. Well, and of course, the place to support that is, the only passage that they use to support that is the passage in 1 Corinthians 3. And they say, here he is. Here's

these three kind of people.

And because he says brother, see, well, they're brothers. Well, you read chapter 6, and read at the end, chapter 13, you see if you thought they were all brothers. Here we are.

These three different groups, and this is the passage. Now, I want to ask you something else tonight. First of all, I want to see, and I'm sure you do, if you're a Bible student, or you agree on me, on what I feel is the basic, a very basic principle of approaching the Bible, even to read it or study it.

If I could only give a person one rule approaching the Bible, to study the Bible, on interpretation, this is the rule I would give them. That we must interpret all subordinate passages in the light of the whole Bible. In other words, to put it another way, we must interpret every single passage in the light of all passages.

Now, that's fundamental. That's basic. In other words, if I have 10 passages, and all through the Bible from Genesis, and it's reasonably clear there's 10, 15, 20 places, and then I come up with one that teaches, that seems to teach something else, I must interpret that single place in the light of the whole.

I'll give you an example. I sailed across the ocean once with a fellow who was of the Campbellite, and he knew one verse of Scripture, Acts 2.38, and that's a tough verse, because he was telling me that he taught, that that verse taught baptismal regeneration. Now, there was one thing I'm sure.

I had to say to that fellow, I don't know what that is, but I'm sure because of 12, reading the verse, and you look, baptismal regeneration. Same thing here. And they are fought by themselves, and the reason I'm so deaf again, and you never heard anything like that over 100 years ago.

You never dreamed of that. All the old people interpreted it just like I read it to you. Now, I asked the bishop the other day, we were riding, and he thought I was going to have a theological spasm.

I said, George, I said, what do you feel as far as doctrinal teaching is concerned are the two key books in the New Testament for doctrinal teaching? Boy, I tell you, he knows. And he gave me what I think is the right answer. We have a perfect unanimity.

1 Corinthians is not particular. So we don't think of 1 Corinthians. But I don't get my doctrine particular in Galatians.

Now, I want you to turn not only to the doctrinal, it's a great chapter for doctrine. Now, I want you to read a doctrinal chapter. How many kind of people do you see? Do you see two or three? You see Paul in Romans 1, he lays down, well, I'll hold that.

Let's just read Romans 8 for now. It's a very important thing that I'm touching. I don't know if I'll, I don't know if I'll get it across.

I just, God by his Spirit, there is therefore now no condemnation to this. For the law of the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.

Now notice this first. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. And the righteousness that's fulfilled in Christians by the Spirit, what the Spirit does is fulfill the righteousness of the law in us.

That's not talking about justification, that's what Christ does for us. This is what he does in us. For the righteousness of the law might be, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For they that are in the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. That's one group. And they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit.

That's the second kind of people, isn't it? Huh? That's two. For to be totally minded is death. That's one.

But to be spiritually minded is life and peace. That's two. Two kind of people.

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God. For it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. Now if a man has not the Spirit of Christ, he's not. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if we live after the flesh, we shall what? Die.

But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage against the Spirit, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereover ye cry, Abba, Father, and so on.

Now in that whole passage, you see two kinds of people. Those after the flesh, those after the Spirit. Not three.

Galatians chapter 5. You see the same thing. See the same thing. Galatians chapter 5, verse 17 to 24.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. These are contrary one to the other. There's two.

So that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these.

This is the works of the flesh. Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness. That's immorality on the mental level.

Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, amulation, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, ending, murder, drunkenness, reviling, and the such like, of which I tell you before, as I have told you in times past, that they which do such things shall, what, class? Not inherit the kingdom of God. Now you can't just say, oh they're carnal Christians, they'll go to heaven second class. The Bible says they won't inherit the kingdom.

Now you can fight with the Bible all you want. The Bible says if that's your crowd, and that's the bed of your life, you will inherit the kingdom of God. You can't just say you're carnal Christians.

There's two people, those after flesh. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Against that there is no law, and they that are

Christ's have crucified the flesh with the objections and the love.

Now, let me say right here at this point, all Christians are carnal. All Christians are carnal. I heard something that thrilled me in this church when I started these meetings, and that is when my good brother, he didn't name it specifically, but made some outward confession of something that he wasn't happy about that he did or said.

I believe when we sin before our children and our neighbors, yes, we should confess it to God because we've sinned against God. But if you've sinned in front of your children and neighbors and people, you ought to confess it to them and say to them, George or Mary or Honey, I've sinned against God in this thing and I've confessed it to Him and I believe He forgave me. So it was a great thrill.

But whatever that act was at that time, we didn't find out. Somebody knows, but I don't know what that was. That was carnality.

And at that moment, when that dear brother did that thing, whatever it was, or said that thing, he was a carnal Christian in that area of his life. You're looking tonight at a carnal Christian. Now that doesn't mean that's the bent of my life, but when I get mad, I'm a carnal Christian.

And if I'd look you in the eye tonight and put on some kind of pious little act and act like I never get mad, there would be a full liar behind this pulpit and then there would be a carnal, carnal Christian because I'd be adding insult to injury. Now that's not the bent of my life and I hate it and I hope you do too. Whether it's that sin or some other sin.

But every Christian is carnal sometimes in some area of his life. Every Christian. And every Christian is, or he's not a Christian, Romans.

All Christians are spiritual. All Christians are carnal. But you see, the problem with this other thing is, it, and I want to tell you some of the problems that's involved with that doctrine.

And if you hold it, I love you anyhow, because I believe many a man and woman, and I don't believe all the people who teach this are all way out north somewhere in their Christian experience. I believe some of the people who hold this view are of the high type of useful of God's service. I believe their understanding is wrong.

I believe it's an erroneous teaching and although it may never have hurt them, I believe it hurts others. And I'll tell you why. It's the doctrine of our generation that breathes, breathes antinomianism.

Now I'm not trying to throw big words around and I'm not trying to impress you with my Greek. The only Greek I know makes submarine sandwiches. But I do know what that word means because I've looked it up and it's a very important word.

It comes from anti meaning against and nomos meaning law. And an antinomian is somebody who's against the law of Christ. He's against the rule of Christ.

He's against the reign of Christ. He's against the government of Christ. He's an antinomian.

And that doctrine breathes it. And antinomianism is as old as the church. It started in Romans 6 where Leopold finished telling about justification by faith in those first chapters after he was finished with that and telling about the wonderful grace of God and said well what shall we do then? Shall we sin more? Will we

get more grace? That was the idea.

Well let's sin more! Shall we get more grace? And the great apostle said God forbid! Romans 6. How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein? And that was the first pop-up of antinomianism because they felt that we're under grace let's sin more that we get more grace. And Paul put a death blow to it. So I say it's the doctrine that breathes antinomianism.

I say I know people don't mean it and that's not what they say and they've never said it in this way but it really whether you want to believe it or not and I'm not characteristic it offers actually as I mentioned you can go spiritual and live like a world and have the best of two worlds and just call yourself a carnal Christian.

Because when people explain it the ones I've heard and I have this in writing I have it in pictures I have it in graphs when they explain it they explain it that you're act like a world you live like a world and you're all the world except you're not as a Jesus whatever that means however that means you've taken Jesus as your Savior but there's absolutely no difference in your practical outworking and living now if that isn't it I don't know what it is that's mine I believed it for 15 years or more so I'm not talking to you about something I never believed I held it I taught it I propagated it I thought anybody was a heretic that didn't believe it so I think I understand what the doctrine is because I've taught it for 15 years and that's it it's very dangerous another bad point about the

doctrine is it's very dangerous in counseling others especially those that we love I told you this week about a boy in our church who was leader of the young people and I see these young people these dear young people go off to college time after time after time after time every church I go in I haven't been in one church in two years where some of the young people haven't gone off to college every church I go in without exception almost every person is carnal Christian they're out of fellowship they're Christians I know they're Christians I remember this and I remember that and then if they're living like the devil they don't say only they're Christians then they have to put another adjective on it they're carnal so I'm not exaggerating it's dangerous in counseling now here's this boy in

my church head of the young people he had the greatest prospects of any young person and for a whole year and a half he lived like he wasn't a Christian and he didn't profess to be a Christian I told you about him this week I took him away with me nice fellow, I loved him don't be mad at these young people don't fight them don't write them off don't do that you gotta put your arm around them love them a little bit hug them a little bit so I called this boy on the phone to take him away with me now here's how it would work in counseling if I still believed my old doctrine I'd have been trying to tell him that he's a Christian and I'd have been trying to tell him that he's just a carnal Christian but the truth of the matter is he didn't even believe he was a Christian himself and the truth

of the matter is there's two possibilities he may have been a Christian and out of fellowship with God but there's another possibility he may never have been born again but you see, my carnal Christian theory didn't allow for those two things my carnal Christian theory didn't allow for two possibilities it only allowed for one he's a carnal Christian because he made a little profession back here as a lad when the evangelist come along and told the deathbed story of all the people who were serving Christ and I led to the Lord I wondered where they are I used to think, well what's the matter he said the right answers he put his name in the Bible they didn't live like Christians they didn't act like Christians they didn't love what Christians love he's a carnal Christian then I'd go back

after him and try to get him to consecrate himself you know, well the problem is he just got to Jesus and the thing of it is he saved I know he saved because I heard him say it and he did it and he said the right words at the right time in the right place and I did it I know he saved so it's very important and the error is increased in our dealing with people and then another great problem with it with this error is that it makes obedience optional now I don't care what you call it and that's not the meaning of the teaching I never I taught it for 15 years and I didn't mean to say and I wasn't saying well you can obey the Lord if you want and that's never what I meant but the implication is that that's what it teaches whether you believe it or not because it's saying that it'll be well

and best and you'll receive rewards and a thousand other things if you're a spiritual Christian but if you're not you'll lose a few yo-yos and maybe your bicycle in heaven and a couple other things you'll lose a few yo-yos and maybe you won't have any marbles but you'll get there by fire that's what I'm telling you and so I was really and I didn't mean it I didn't mean to do that that was not my intention because I wanted to know all these spiritual Christians but I was giving them an option and the thing that makes it bad dangerous is it makes obedience and holiness optional and any doctrine whether it's this one that I'm talking about or some other doctrine any doctrine in the Bible that makes obedience and holiness optional optional is not biblical doctrine and I want you to turn with

me some verses tonight because I feel that that statement needs to be buttressed by some scriptures needs to be buttressed by some scriptures would you turn to me turn with me please to Hebrews and follow in your Bible now please Hebrews chapter 12 verse 14 I can't touch all the verses that have to do with this but will you just follow a few Hebrews chapter 12 verse 14 follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall turn back a few pages to 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 15 and 16 1 Peter 1 chapter 1 verse 15 but as he which hath called you as holy be ye also holy so be ye holy in all manner of conversation conversation, that's manner of life because it is written be ye holy, I am holy now somebody's saying and I'm going to anticipate this well, nobody's perfectly holy

no, but the Bible commands it and that's where we're to shoot for that's where we're to shoot for I'll tell you one thing I don't believe that there's anybody here tonight that's perfectly holy but I do believe that every true Christian here tonight longs to be holy I believe that every true Christian tonight would like to be perfect I don't believe there's anybody here tonight like Christ but I believe all true Christians in their best moment at their best time would like to be like you see God doesn't say well you can't hit the bullseye so shoot over to the side somewhere when you took somebody out to learn them to shoot their very first lesson you put up the bullseye now you knew they weren't going to hit it but you didn't say shoot off here somewhere and that's alright if you saw them

after they were shooting for ten years you wouldn't say well now you're ten years along you've got to shoot over a little closer I used to tell you aim over here now you shoot over be ye holy but the first day you're born again you shoot from if you made it I'm going to run from I'm scared of you when I meet these people who've made it oh boy let me out now I want to turn to you some other passages we turn to 1 John chapter 2 verse 2 to 5 quickly right there at the end you're almost at it when you're at 1 Peter chapter 1 1 John chapter 2 verses 3 to 5 this is a verse that has to do with assurance the apostle was not telling men how to be saved told John or he would have said what he did in the gospel when he told men in the gospel how to be saved he said behold the Lamb of God that taketh

away the sin of the world but this is doing with assurance he's telling how they may they know how they may know that they aren't this is not how to be saved chapter 2 verse 3 to 5 hereby we do know that we

know him that's assurance that's not optional he did say if I know him and keep not his commandments as a liar the truth is not in him but whoso keepeth his word in him there it is the love of God perfected hereby we do know that we know him because he planted that within him now of course the Christian sins and God made provision for that you see it in verse 1 and 2 of chapter 2 look again with me please to John chapter 14 we see the words of our Savior all I'm trying to establish now is this that obedience and holiness is not optional John chapter 14 please verse 15 John 14 verse 15

if you love me it would be nice if you keep my commandments no Jesus said if you love me keep my commandments just drop down a couple verses to verse 21 22 23 notice it here my only point is this I'm trying to buttress with scripture the statement that obedience and holiness is not optional he that hath my commandments and keepeth them he it is that loveth me that's the test and he that loveth me shall be loved unto my Father I will love him and will manifest myself to him verse 23 Jesus answered and said unto him if a man love me he will keep my words and my Father will love him and we will make and we will come to him and make our abode he that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings and the words which he hear are not mine but the words of the Father which over the chapters oh you could

go to 15 but let me take you to two other passages let me take you to two other passages there's a great truth in the Bible that those who are once savingly joined to Christ are kept and preserved for his eternal kingdom and then there's an antedominian doctrine of eternal security that fits right in with the carnal Christian theory and that is once saved you're always saved and put the period there now there is a sense in which you put the period there because you don't get saved twice you don't get converted three times or four times you don't get born again a third time but a lot of people may be deceived about their new birth but usually with the antedominian view of eternal security it's only a half truth presented as a whole truth and becomes very dangerous and the half truth that they

present is this the preservation of the savior he preserves his own and they don't say anything about the perseverance of the saint but the old doctrine is that the preservation of the savior and the perseverance of the saint are the same people and let me tell you I asked somebody once it was a girl at a meeting where I was and she heard me one night and you know she didn't run out on the meeting and quit the meeting but she did chase down to the front right after I was finished and she came up to me with a statement and she said to me Mr.

Reissinger she says I assume that you do not believe in eternal security I said no really I said well now first of all before I say I do or I don't it was one day I used to just popped off and told her she's all wrong I do but you see I wanted to know what she meant before I say yes or no I want to know what is her definition of eternal security so she said to me I assume you don't believe in eternal security I said really I said well what is it and then I'll tell you if I believe in it or not she said well she says it's you know once you're saved you're always saved your father's a missionary and he taught us in the family that once you're saved you're always saved she said that's what I mean I said well now I said are there some scriptures that your father taught you along with this I'm

sure there must be some scriptures that your father taught you with this with this great truth that you're asking me oh she said yes sir there are some come now I said well maybe I can help you I said does it sound like this my sheep hear my voice and I know them and I give unto them eternal life and they ah she said that's it I said well let's turn to it this is a verse that she said her father taught her my sheep hear my voice verse this is John 10 verse 27 ought to read verse 26 you believe not because you're not my sheep as I said unto you my sheep hear my voice and I know them and I give unto them eternal life and they

shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand my father which gave them me is greater than all no man is able to pluck them out of my hand so I

said to her well what is that supposed to say she said well you see I give unto them eternal life I said you're a hundred percent right I said who does he give eternal life what is the verse she said my sheep I said well if you're asking me do I believe the sheep have eternal life I said if that's eternal security I believe it but I said wait a minute I said my problem is not do the sheep have eternal life I said I have another problem honey I have a problem who are the sheep and these two verses give two distinguishing marks for the sheep and that's who he gives eternal life and I want you to see those two distinguishing marks this is the Bible my sheep hear my voice that's an open ear to me that's as a disposition to know the will of Christ ah he's got an open ear a disposition to know

the will of Christ that's a mark of a sheep and the second mark of a sheep I see is this they follow me that's an obedient foot that's a disposition to do the will of Christ now in that passage without resting the text without interpreting the text I see two distinguishing marks of a sheep a disposition to know his will and a disposition to do his will I believe with all my heart that the sheep distinguishing marks not only here but throughout scripture let me tell you one other passage you know the word eternal security is not in the Bible the word eternal security is not in the Bible but there's another phrase that's very close to it anybody know what it is? somebody it's very close close enough it's called it's eternal salvation that's the closest you can get to that expression and

it's found in Hebrews chapter 5 verse 8 and 9 it's really verse 9 and I want to show you tonight because this is the closest phrase you can get to eternal security in the Bible Hebrews chapter 5 verse 8 and 9 though he were a son speaking of Jesus though he were a son of God and he was and he was a son of God of God and he was a son of God son of God and he was a son of God and he was a son of God and was a son of God and son and he was a son of God and he was a son of God and he was a son of God and But this is the--somebody asked me if I believe in the second word, the great, and the third, and the fourth, and the fifth,

and the seventh, and the eighth, and the ninth, and the hundred and tenth.

It's all great.

It's all great. Do you see what I mean by the divided Christ? Christ is not offered divided. The Bible says, He that hath a Son hath life.

He that hath a Son hath life. And when you have Him in that sense, you have Him as He's offered in the Bible. And I learned from the Bible that He is the mediator.

He's the great mediator between man and God. And as a mediator, He has three principal offices. You know what they are? We see them in one of these.

What's the three principal offices? The prophet. You can't say, well, I'd like to have one of his offices. I'd like him to be my priest, but I don't want him to teach me anything.

What did the prophet do in the Old Testament? He taught the people. What did the priest do in the Old Testament? He offered sacrifices for the people to God and interceded. What did the king do in the Old

Testament? He reigned over the people.

He ruled over the people. Ah, but he protected them from his enemies and theirs. And when we have Christ in all of his offices, and if you don't have Him in all of his offices, you don't have Him, then you want to be taught of Him.

The New Testament says that. When Christ fulfilled those three principal offices, He's the one that teaches every true Christian. I could write tracts that said He trusted Christ as the personal prophet, and it would be proper.

Who made any law of that? That's why there's really nothing wrong with saying you trust Christ as your personal Savior. That's the priest's work of Christ. Whether He is the Savior, He sacrificed Himself for us, fulfilling the office of the prophet, of the priest.

And as a king, He rules over us, and reigns over us, and protects us from His enemies and from ours. In theory, always, and I know, there may be an exception. I haven't gone all over the world.

But every place I've been, everyone I've heard preach it, always connected with it is a divided Christ. That is, that you can have Christ as your Savior, and His lordship is optional. And I say, there's only one way He's offered.

He that hath a Son, as many have received Him. Him, Christ, written to Christ. Oh yes, there's a thousand.

That's just the problem. There's a thousand Christs. Mary Baker's lover, Pat Asinetti, has a Christ.

My Jehovah Witnesses friends have a Christ. But it's not the Christ of the Bible. Let me tell you something.

My fundamentalist friends have a Christ. If you do not have the Christ that's prophet, priest, and king, you do not have the Christ of the Bible. You see, this whole idea of making the higher life, or the second act of consecration, more glorious than coming to Christ.

Oh, my dear Christian friends, let me ask you. Wasn't there anything more glorious than coming to the Savior? Huh? Have you experienced in these years that you live, Oh, anything more glorious than meeting Jesus face-to-face? Ah, you see, when I listen to some people, when they talk to me about this second thing, you know what I say in my mind? I say, well, I believe He got converted. Oh, He lives.

I believe it happens to Him. You say, I don't believe those people are lying. But I think many times, either one or two things happen.

They either got converted, or they got full assurance. I'm not disagreeing with their experience. I have no right to question that.

But I certainly have a right to question the name they give it. Huh? Yes, yes, yes. All right.

One other thing. I don't know if I'm on it. I wanted to deal with the greatest from.

Two more sheets of notes. I just did this this morning. The greatest, this is above all.

I don't know which is greater, the greater area. But you see, this also has to do with the two great doctrines. It shows an erroneous or faulty or defective view of the two most important doctrines of the Bible, justification and sanctification.

You see, it separates them. It makes sanctification optional. My dear, in regeneration, the C is sanctification.

Justification allows for no degrees. You're either justified tonight or you're not. Sanctification, there's as many degrees, probably there is Christian.

And probably there are Christians here tonight who could say, I experienced a greater degree of sanctification sometime last year than I'm experiencing now. Sanctification may go like that, not justification. But let me tell you, there's no justification.

The two great truths that come out of the New Covenant, two great truths are justification and sanctification. They're two different things, but they're related in such a way that they are inseparable, inseparable. You see, justification is what Christ's blood does for me.

It covers my record, my bad record. That's justification, that's the blood of Christ. But when the blood of Christ is applied to the spirit of Christ, and if the spirit of Christ is not nothing in your heart, then don't you believe that the blood of Christ... You see, His blood blots out my sins.

They're blotted out by virtue of His blood. But when He does that, He writes His law on my heart by the power of the Spirit. Now this is a statement.

Get it? The working of His Spirit and the cleansing of His blood are inseparably joined in the application of His grace. May I say it again? This is a very important statement. It kind of puts together all I'm trying to say tonight.

The working of His Spirit and the cleansing of His blood are inseparably joined in the application of His grace. And therefore, any attempt to place the basic act of submission to Jesus Christ subsequent to conversion is to cut the living nerve out of Christianity. It's to pervert Christianity and it's to deceive souls and bring dishonor on the blood that was shed through an act of... You see, we need two things for heaven.

We need our sins. That's our legal right to get a legal right to heaven. That's why that word is called justification.

A man needs a legal right for heaven. That's why we call it justification. But he needs something else.

He needs practical fitness. Heaven would be hell if men went there unchanged. Heaven would be hell if people went unchanged.

And therefore, justification, yes, we sang it in a hymn tonight. Double cure. Double cure.

Justification and thanks. And I close with this thought. In reading the old men that I read a lot, I find they used to ask, See, when we are interested in somebody's relationship to God, we seem satisfied with asking one question.

What did Christ do for you? That's a very important question. I don't believe anyone will be saved that doesn't have a right answer to that question. What does Christ do for you? That's your creed.

Christ died for my sins. Don't let me minimize that. And we seem to be satisfied with one question.

But they always ask two questions. They say, what did Christ do for you? That's justification. That's your creed.

Christ died for my sins. And then they ask this question. What? What has Christ done in you? You see, if Christ is not nothing in you, then don't you believe that he's dead.

The blood covers our spirit. He that hath not the spirit of Christ. So you see why I'm so zealous about this.

But I want to say again, I do know many dear Christians whose shoes I would not be worthy to shine who hold a very erroneous view on this subject. So I'm not talking about people. And I'm not talking about people's experience.

I'm talking about the teaching of the Bible. And the reason I'm talking about it is because of the devastating results of this teaching. Not so much from the teachers, but the self-deceptive people hiding behind unconverted people who do not have a reason to believe that they've been converted.

And an awful lot of carnal Christians who've never been born again. And you can see why this burdens me. I don't get any delight about speaking on this.

No particular delight. My salary's not going up at all. I'm in trouble.

I've kept you long. Let's pray.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/15/SID15567.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ernest-c-reisinger/carnal-christians/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**