

Christians - Carnal or Immature

by Manley Beasley

Manley Beasley addresses the distinctions between carnal, immature, and spiritual Christians, emphasizing the urgency of spiritual maturity and the importance of obedience to God's call in the life of believers.

Duration: 38:05

Scripture: Exodus 12:21

Topics: "Carnal"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells a story about a young man who is eager to experience the power of God. However, he gets distracted by worldly pleasures and neglects to apply the blood of the lamb to the doorpost, symbolizing his lack of commitment to God. The preacher emphasizes the importance of playing to please God rather than ourselves. He urges the congregation to seize the opportunity for salvation and shares his own personal journey of searching for fulfillment before finally accepting Jesus as his savior.

Transcript

2 Corinthians, the 6th chapter. Now, I was asked to make this statement. I do not think so well of myself that I think people just like to come to hear me preach.

But I'm not going to be speaking the same message in the second meeting that I'm speaking in this meeting. And if you want to stay around, then that's good. We'll invite you to stay around.

In this book, or in 1 and 2 Corinthians, Paul is dealing with a group of people that he refers to as immature, carnal, and spiritual. There was that different many classes of people in the church. The only one that's class out of those three that's a disgrace is to be carnal.

It's not a disgrace to be immature. It is a disgrace to be carnal. And of course, it's not a disgrace to be spiritual.

Paul was dealing with these three different groups. An immature person is a person that has not received light and therefore has not grown up. And any healthy church has immature people in it.

They could be called baby Christians. But every church that's healthy has got baby Christians in it. I have been blessed by one particular new Christian this week in this meeting.

It's just been a blessing to see this new Christian and how he acts. It's just been a blessing and refreshing to see how spontaneous things are and how he's growing. It's no disgrace to be an immature Christian.

What is a carnal Christian? Now, this is the area that's awful. A carnal Christian is a person that's seen light and refused it. A carnal Christian is he that knoweth to do good and doesn't do it.

A carnal Christian is knows what's right, but just refuses to do it. And a carnal Christian is a disgrace in a church. Paul was dealing with that crowd, and he was dealing, of course, with some spiritual people.

You might say, well, what's a spiritual person? A spiritual person is a person that knows God and how to cooperate with Him and cooperates with Him. That's a spiritual person. Knows God.

Knows how to cooperate with Him. And he doesn't only know how, he does it. That's a spiritual person.

It's not how many Bible verses you know. It's not how many years you've been saved. It's how you know God and how you cooperate with Him.

I've known some people that's been saved for 20 years and aren't cooperating with God. I've known some that's been saved longer than that. My grandfather and I had an issue.

I went to his church and preached that you had to be right with your fellow man or you weren't right with God. And he disagreed with me. And the reason was, he wasn't right with his fellow man.

He had an argument with a man that was in one of these little old country churches. And you know, it was almost like a family feud. And he was dying, and he told my aunt, his daughter, he said, I can't die.

Until I'll apologize to Manly. He said, the Lord has shown me on my deathbed that I was wrong. And of course, I received such an apology.

But I never will forget him being saved for years, 50 years. And me and him sitting in front of a fireplace talking about it, and him arguing with me that that wasn't sin. It's just a man standing up for his rights.

And I'll tell you, you can be saved a long time and not be spiritual. A lot of people get the idea because they are faithful in Sunday school attendance, and they memorize so many verses, and they know so much about the Bible, they're spiritual. I've run into people that quote this Bible, it's not spiritual.

One of the most unusual articles I have ever read was written about the Bible. It was an exposition of the 15th chapter of the book of John that was written by the same man that wrote the Descapitale, the communist document. Spirituality is to be able to know God and know how to cooperate with him and do it.

Now, what I'm going to say to you this morning is Paul was dealing with this church at Corinth, and it was filled with these people. And Paul, as always, was working on the fact of doing his best to mature the saints. And he wrote them this verse that I want to leave with you today.

Second verse of that sixth chapter of the book of 2 Corinthians. For he said, I have heard thee in a time accepted in the day of salvation have I succored thee. Behold, now is the accepted time.

Behold, now is the day of salvation. For years I looked at that verse, and I would take it out of its context, and I would say to a man that was lost without Jesus, I said, today is the day of salvation. Now is the accepted time.

You need to get saved today. This is it. But being honest about my interpretation of that verse, I discovered one day that that verse is talking to Christians.

And I asked this question. I said, Lord, what in the world are you saying to Christians? Today is the day of salvation. Now is the accepted time.

Why do Christians need to know that today is the day of salvation? Now is the accepted time. What are you saying to them? The Lord began to show me what he was saying. And let me establish a fact here this morning.

It's called the law of imputation. As the Lord began to show me what this verse of scripture meant, I discovered the law of imputation. I was in Mexico visiting some missionaries, and I was in the home of a missionary.

And we had just got through seeing some film and talking about the Mexican people that lived across the river from this house. And I had learned something about these people. And I was standing in the backyard of the missionary's home, looking across the bed of the river to some of these Mexican people working what you would call a garden.

And they were actually growing corn. And I knew what they were going to do with that corn. And so I was going through it in my mind.

I realized that they would grow that corn. They would gather it, harvest it. They would then take it and shuck it and shell it and then beat that corn into cornmeal and turn that cornmeal into tortillas.

And then they would take those tortillas down on the street of that little town, a big town, and they would sell those tortillas. And they would keep that money, those pesos from those tortillas, for an occasion, a special occasion in their life. And that special occasion was this, that once a year they made a pilgrimage to a stone statue of Jesus Christ up in the mountains.

Now, I want you to know something. Rather than buy meat that they needed with those pesos, they would save those pesos for that pilgrimage because they wanted to give that money to God. Rather than buy meat, they would go out and catch these huge lizards and eat those lizards.

I mean, they would sacrifice to keep that money. The time would come for that pilgrimage to that statue and they would literally have to crawl on their hands and knees to get to that statue. Or at least some of them would.

And many of them would be stained with their own blood where they were cut on the rocks. And they would get to that stone statue and there would be a priest saying, Look, Jesus wants you to give to it. And they would reach in their little containers many times with bloody hands and get that money and drop that money into a tub-like apparatus that had a chute down in the bottom that would go down inside.

That chute would lead right down inside of that statue. They would hear a message in Latin they could not understand and the priest would say, Look, Jesus is crying. And they would literally want to know why.

Why is he crying? And they would say, Because you haven't given him everything. And they would give everything they had. And I was aware of that.

And I was looking at those Mexican people, thinking about how deeply dedicated they were to God. And the Lord began to deal with my heart. I knew that I was headed to heaven.

And I knew for sure that those Mexican people were not headed to heaven. Because there's no other name given among men whereby you can be saved but Jesus. You aren't saved by sacrifice.

You aren't saved by dedication. You aren't saved by giving in such like you're saved by knowing Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is your living Lord and Savior. And I stood there, and my heart was breaking, and God asked me a question.

He said, Son, why is it that you are standing here? Why is it that you are standing here, saved, on the road to heaven, even in a suit that costs more than those people will see in a lifetime? Why are you here saved, and they are there lost? Well, I wanted to pull out my theology. But after all, I was dealing with God, not man. So I pulled out my theology, first of all, and said, God, you know the sovereignty of God.

But I found out that the sovereignty of God that man teaches doesn't convince God of anything. So finally, I came to desperation, and I said, Lord, I do not understand why I'm standing here saved, and they are there lost. And all at once, the Bible began to become real to me, and history began to unravel to me.

I'd always liked history, and I'd studied it a lot, and it began to unravel to me. And I began to see something that is known as the law of imputation. I had never seen this before in my life.

I'd always thanked God, my Father, for salvation. I'd always thanked God, the Son, as my Savior. I'd always thanked the Holy Spirit as the Convictor, the Deliverer, and so on.

But I never realized the law of imputation. I never thanked the saints of God who realized that their day was the day that God wanted to do great and mighty things. And they embraced the cross, paid the price, suffered the shame, and went all the way with Jesus so that a holy God could move in them and through them and for them and bring redemption to those people that they were responsible for.

And I began to see that I needed to thank God for those saints, my dear friends, that realized the significance of the Christian life, and that they so totally gave themselves to the Lord that a holy God could move through them, in them, and for them to bring redemption to the lost in that world. And I realized that the opposite of that was that when people claim to be Christians and they play church, they please themselves, they do what they want to do. Rather than embracing the cross, they do not make themselves available to God.

They cut off redemption to the people that could get saved if they had obeyed God. Now, let me just drop into another illustration or two in the Bible, and maybe I'm wrong in doing it, but I'll try you here in Georgia. Let's go down in Egypt.

Here is Moses and Aaron, and they are declaring the Passover. They are declaring the Passover. In other words, the children of Israel are in Egypt, in bondage, and God has a way out of bondage.

God has a way out, and they're in death. God has a way out of death, and that way is through the blood. Amen? It's through the blood that a person is saved from death, eternal death.

It's through the blood that a person is saved from bondage. And here, Moses and Aaron is giving the message of the Passover, the shedding of blood, the applying of the blood. And it's through this blood that

people will be saved from bondage and from death.

And the message goes like this, that you responsible men, heads of halls, you go home. You get that lamb that's without spot or blemish, that little lamb. And you take that lamb, and take that blood from that lamb.

And you put that blood in a basin. And you take that blood to the house. And you take a piece of hyssop, and you dip that hyssop in that blood.

And you apply that blood to the doorpost, each post, and the lintel. For at midnight, the death angel is going to pass. And if that blood is not applied, that elder child is going to die.

But if that blood is applied, that death angel. Boy, what a message. Amen? So here stands two men listening to Moses and Aaron.

Both of these men have a son each, twenty-one years of age, handsome. One of them has a son, black-headed, brown-eyed, six-three. My, what a specimen of a man, and how that dad loves that son.

The other one has a son, a little different. He's about six-five, black-headed, brown eyes. Man, how he loves that son.

We're going to take the first and the second man. The first man hears that message. He knows he has a little lamb at home.

Soon as that message is over, he said, I must be obedient to this heavenly vision. The more he goes home, he gets that precious little old lamb. He takes that lamb, lays that little lamb up there and takes that life, drains that blood.

That little body takes that blood in that basin and just goes over to the house and gets that hyssop, dips that hyssop in that blood and applies that blood to the doorpost and the lintel. And this man has been obedient to the heavenly vision. The second man, he hears that message.

In his mind, he thinks about that big old boy, six-five, what a man, how he loves him. He said, you know, I've got a fishing trip today, and I'll be back in around three-thirty-four, and I will take that lamb and apply that blood then. He goes out fishing.

Man, you talking about catching fish? He catches. It's a sin not to clean them and eat them if you catch them. That's his reason.

He comes in and says, I've got to clean these. So man, he comes in and he starts cleaning his fish. About the time he gets through, he's really tired.

He's had a long day. His wife calls dinner. Man, he goes in there.

She's got his favorite meal. And as he walks to the house from cleaning the fish to the house for dinner, he hears the blating of that little sheep. And he says, you know, I've got to take that sheep, take that blood, and apply it to the doorpost and the lintel.

But he said, I'll do it right after dinner. He has his dinner. And it's so filling and so real to him, the fellowship around the table.

There's that big old boy, and he thinks about that lamb. One of the little girls says, Daddy, your favorite show is on TV. Well, I must go in there.

And so he goes in and he watches the TV. And of all things, he falls to sleep. He falls so fast to sleep that he wakes up when the clock strikes twelve.

He jumps out of his seat. He runs to that son's room, and that boy is there in bed, dead, dead, dead, of no sin of his own. He's dead.

Because of a dad's procrastination over a heavenly vision, he's dead. We go back to the first man. When that clock strikes twelve, he's awake.

Since he'd never seen anything like this before, he goes to the bedroom. And there are that big old six, three boys on that bed, just sleeping. But he says, you know what happened that night at midnight? That death angel came to that first man's house, and he ran into Jesus, standing on the porch.

That blood was Jesus' friend. He ran into Jesus. And the death angel passed over.

He ran into Jesus. But you know why he ran into Jesus? Because there was a dad, realized that today was the day of salvation, now was accepted time. Realized there was a heavenly message, and he had a responsibility.

And, beloved, he was obedient to God Almighty in his responsibility. The second home, the death angel came. And Jesus wasn't there.

He went in, took that boy's life. You know why? Because the dad did not give heed. He procrastinated.

Do you see the law of imputation? Do you see it? I understood then why I was standing there. Just knowing a little history, I know. In fact, I can make just a couple of statements, and you will understand perfectly what I'm talking about.

I understood exactly why I was standing there saved, and why those people were standing there lost. It was the law of imputation. And God will be justified in heaven at the judgment to execute this law of judgment.

Because of people not obedient to the heavenly vision. Are you still listening to me? Are you still here? You're not asleep. History books, at least my history books, told me that when people went to South America, they went looking for what? I see you saying it on your lips.

Can you say it? They went looking for gold. When people came to America originally, they came looking for what? God. That tells the story.

In essence, that tells the story. When it's all reduced, all the peripheral is knocked off, that tells the story. That tells the story.

Now, what I'm saying to you is this. Beloved, today is the day of salvation. Now is the accepted time, Paul is saying.

You know what he's saying? He's saying to a bunch of Carl Christians. He said, while you are sitting there playing church, doing your thing, buying your homes, buying your boats, buying your cars, building your

bank accounts, and buying your kingdom, while you are playing church, it's Bill and Joe and Mary and John's day of salvation. And you are sitting there playing church, and they are going to hell.

There's nothing wrong with a nice home, cars, boats, motors, all that junk. There's nothing wrong with that. If God is first.

But if God is not first, friend, your own children will go to hell over it. And if your children don't, your grandchildren will. The law of imputation is there.

Let me give you one illustration. There was a great church in the Midwest in the Depression days that gave a half a million dollars a year. A half a million dollars a year to missions.

It wasn't a Baptist church. We had not had our day yet. Things were still too spiritual for Baptists to have their day.

We had to get humanistic for us to have our day. And it was rough, but that church was one of the outstanding churches. A half a million dollars a year to missions.

But that old church lost its power, and the glory of God left it. People all had different explanations, but I think this was the best I've ever read about. Two preachers in town one day after that old church had lost its glory.

One was an old preacher and one was a young one. Both of them belonging to that denomination were deeply spiritual men, and they wondered about that old church. But these two young men were staying in the same place.

The young man and the elderly man were staying in the same place, and they got to talking about that great old church. Well, the young man was supposed to preach at the great old church that had lost its power. And he was so inquisitive because he wanted to know what the old gentleman had to think.

He said, sir, what caused that church to lose its power? He said, son, the old man said to the young man, son, he said, I'm not going to tell you. But tonight when you go to that church, there's a sign on the road up to that church that will tell you why that church lost its power. He said, when you go to the first red light and take a right, you'll see the old church up on the hill.

He said, go slowly, because right on the right, on the way up to the church, after you turn at the light, right on the right, you will see a sign. It has a yellow field with black letters, and it will tell you why that church has lost its power. That young man could hardly wait.

By the time it was time for him to leave, it was dark. He got in his car, he drove to that red light, took that right, his whole heart was just a beating. Man, he could hardly wait.

And all at once his lights picked up a sign, yellow field and big black letters. Do you know what it said? It says, caution children at play. Children play to please themselves.

If you don't do it my way, I'm going home. They play to please themselves. When we grow up, beloved, we play to please Him.

Would you bow your heads with me, please? As our heads are bowed this morning and our eyes are closed, let me ask you this question, young man, young lady. Mother, Father, I preached to the church this

morning, but I want to change the message in the invitation to both saved and lost. Let me ask you this morning.

Are you saved? Do you know Jesus? Are you a Christian? If you are, would you raise your hand just indicating that you're saved? Thank you so much. If you could not raise your hand this morning and say that you're saved, you could not raise your hand saying you know the Lord, you're a Christian, and you'd like for us to just pray for you. Would you slip up your hand and just say pray for me? I'm not a Christian.

I'm not saved. Just slip your hand up and then just take it down. No one's going to embarrass you.

Just slip it up and then take it down. Preacher, I'm not a Christian. Let me just tell you something.

At 14 years of age, I started traveling all over this world. And by the time I was 17, by the time I was 16, I had made two trips around the world just looking for something. What I was looking for, I didn't find it in money.

And what I was looking for, I didn't find it in pleasure. And my mother kept telling me that I could personally know Jesus. And I just kept telling her I didn't think so.

I didn't want Him. He wouldn't save me. I was too wicked.

But one day I saw myself as a sinner. I really did. I saw myself as a sinner, not knowing Jesus.

And a preacher stood in the pulpit like I've done this morning. You know what he said to me? He said, as many as come to me, I'll in no wise cast out. He was talking about coming to Jesus.

He said, if you'll come to Jesus, He'll save you. I said, I don't understand that. He said, you know you're a sinner.

Well, I knew I was a sinner. You know you want to be saved. I knew I wanted to be saved.

He said, well, come to Jesus. He'll save you. I said, I don't understand that.

They started singing an invitation hymn, and a young lady got out of the choir, walked down out of the choir and walked up to me and said, Mammy, would you like to be saved? And I said, yes, ma'am, I'd like to be saved. She said, why don't you just come and go down to the front with me? And I said, I just can't do that. I was too timid.

And she said, well, I'll just stand here till you do. Boy, that's faith. And standing between that young lady and my mother, I met Jesus.

You know what I did? I said, Lord, I don't understand how you can save a sinner and make yourself known to a sinner, but I want you to come into my heart and save my soul. Would you come in, please? And Jesus came in. Jesus came into my heart and saved my soul.

He really did. This morning, I want to tell you something. Jesus can save you.

He can come into your heart and save your soul this morning. Would you come to Him? Would you give Him your heart? She said, I don't understand everything about it. You don't understand everything about a light you switch on, but you still switch it on.

You come to Jesus this morning and let Him save you. And dear saved friend, God has touched your heart this morning. That today is the day of salvation, and you've been playing church.

You've been playing church. You've been living to yourself. I wonder if you'd just let Jesus have His way in your life.

May God help you. Would you all stand with me for a word of prayer? Lord Jesus, have Thine own way in this service this morning. I can't do a thing.

I've done what You said do. Now, You don't do the rest. Lord, it will not be done.

Have Thine own way, Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Would you come? Until the church is shaken, the lost community will never be shaken.

So I ask the church to respond to Jesus as the choir sings the invitation hymn. Would you come?

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