

THE GOSPEL OF SATAN IS FLESHLY

“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” Gal. 5:17

By Pastor Del Wray

A man is the founder of religion, of fleshly religion. As in the regenerate child of God the “flesh always is in conflict with the spirit and the spirit with the flesh.” The gospel of Satan is of the flesh and of the earth and any religion of the flesh is continually at war with the spirit. Nothing in the flesh is spiritual it is always enmity against the spirit. There is not a bit of spirituality in the flesh. Men may have a formal, natural, superstitious, and self-righteous religion; they may make great sacrifices for their church or creed, and even yield up ease and name, property and life itself for it. How plainly may we see this in innumerable instances both in modern and ancient times? What built up our churches and cathedrals but this natural religion? What carries hundreds and thousands every Lord's day to churches and chapels? What sets up family prayer in thousands of houses? And what raises thousands of dollars on every side but this spirit of natural religion? In ancient days particularly, how we see this religion in lively action! How ancient warriors, men guilty of every crime, abandoned the world, shut themselves up in monasteries, macerated their body, lashed their back with scourges, fed on coarse food, dressed in sackcloth, and died in what was termed the very odor of piety and holiness; and yet, viewed by the spiritual eye, must we not say that they began in the flesh and ended in the flesh? Where in all this, were Jesus and his blood? Where is the work of grace upon the heart? Where is the total renunciation of all hopes or help in self, and living a life of faith in the Son of God?

All this natural religion, to whatever height it may be carried, whatever form it may wear, or however fair to the eye it may seem, is quite distinct from the work of faith with power, from the teaching and testimony of the blessed Spirit in the heart, and from that vital, spiritual, and saving religion which is the very life and breath of God Himself in the soul of his saints. Where, in all this natural and fleshly religion, is there the new birth, without which none can enter the kingdom of heaven? Where is there any manifestation of Christ to the soul, or any shedding abroad of the love of God in the heart? The flesh may rise to a great height, but it never can rise up to anything spiritual, heavenly, saving, and divine. Like water, it can never rise above its own level. It is of the earth, earthy, like the first Adam, from whom it comes by natural descent. It may do for a time, but will not do for eternity. It may gain the favor of man, but can never win the approbation of God; it may be crowned with human applause, but will never wear the crown of glory.

The Spirit is at War with the Flesh: But now may we see, with God's help and blessing, what the spirit is as opposed to the flesh, for the Word of truth declares that these are "contrary the one to the other." So in taking a view of one, we at the same time take a view of the other.

Thus, whereas the flesh is hard, stubborn, and impenitent, the spirit is “tender, contrite, repenting, and broken”; God producing this godly sorrow for sin in the spirit by the operations of His grace; for the blessed Spirit acts upon the spirit. He is expressly said "to bear witness" to it Rom. 8:16, which he could not do unless he acted immediately upon it. We must ever bear in mind that the operations and influences of the Holy Spirit are upon the new man of grace. He does not act upon the flesh, making it thereby holy and spiritual, or indeed any better than it was before. He does not change flesh into spirit, or sanctify nature into grace; but he acts upon the new man of grace, and brings forth, by his breathings upon it, every holy fruit and heavenly grace, to the honor, praise, and glory of God. For though born of the Spirit and itself pure and holy, and the very life of God Himself in the soul, yet the new man of grace cannot act by itself. We may almost compare it to a locomotive, which cannot move except under the influence of steam; or the sails of a ship, which cannot act except under the power of the wind. So the new man of grace needs the power and influence of the blessed Spirit breathing upon it to move it forward into heavenly acting's. Under, then, his divine influences and sanctifying operations, the spirit in a man's bosom repents of the sins of the flesh, falls down before the footstool of grace, confesses and acknowledges them, and begs for some sensible manifestation of mercy, as feeling how suitable mercy is to a poor sinner's case.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS IN THE BUSINESS OF FULFILLING GOD'S REDEMPTIVE PLAN!