

MEDITATIONS ON THE TRUE CHRISTIAN LIFE

....*"This book of the law [the Word of God] shall not depart from [always be in] your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful [take heed] to do according to all that is written in it; for THEN you will make your way prosperous, and THEN you will have success".... Joshua 1:8 NASB*

February 2nd

*"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal".... (1 Corinthians 3:1) The apostle here speaks of two stages of the Christian life, two types of Christians: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." They were Christians in Christ, but instead of being spiritual Christians, they were carnal. "I have fed you with milk and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet are ye able, for ye are yet carnal." Here is that word a second time. "For whereas" - this is the proof - "there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one sayeth, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"

Four times the apostle uses the word carnal. In the wisdom that the Holy Spirit gives him Paul perceives that he cannot write to the Corinthian Christians unless he knows their state and unless he tells them of it. If he gives spiritual food to men who are carnal Christians, he is doing them more harm than good, for they are not fit to take it. He cannot feed them with meat; he must feed them with milk. And so he tells them at the very outset of the epistle what he sees to be their state. In the two previous chapters Paul had spoken about His ministry being by the Holy Spirit; now he begins to tell them what must be the state in order to accept spiritual truth: "I have not liberty to speak to you as I would, for you are carnal, and you cannot receive spiritual truth."

That suggests to us the solemn thought that in the Church of Christ there are two classes of Christians: (1) those who have lived many years as believers and yet always remain babes; (2) those who are spiritual men and women because they have given themselves up to the power and leading of the Holy Spirit - ie., to His entire rule. If we are to obtain a blessing we must first decide to which of these two classes we belong. Are we, by the grace of God, in deep humility living a spiritual life, or are we living a carnal life?