

The CARNAL MIND and how it differs from the CARNAL NATURE

W. D. STREIT
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For many years I have counseled people that they have not experienced a single temptation that Jesus did not face and conquer without sinning, and that their victory over it comes by looking to Jesus and asking for help. But I received a deeper revelation in the 1999 June Campmeeting at Shepherdsville, KY that changed my understanding forever.

The discussion that day was “how much” and “what kind” of temptation that Jesus went through on this earth. One brother stated that though Jesus was tempted, he was never tempted with certain temptations, such as homosexuality.

As I began to consider this in my mind, I suddenly saw there was a missing part in our understanding between man’s fallen carnal nature and the scriptural carnal mind.

My understanding is based on two scriptures: 1 Cor. 10:13 (one of the first scriptures I memorized) and Heb. 4:15...

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation

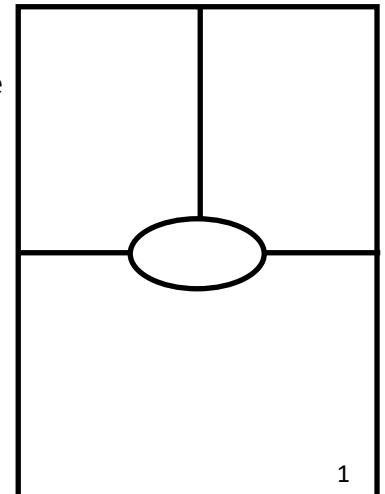
also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. (1 Cor. 10:13)

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Heb. 4:15)

This wording, “in all points like as we are” seems proof to me that Jesus was tempted with all the various temptations that fallen humanity goes through, because he can save any and all who turn to him. I began to understand the whole process of temptations more clearly and have a greater respect for God and more hope for all humanity.

This article with the following diagrams is my attempt to communicate that revelation.

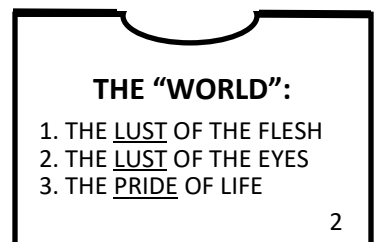
In my mind, I saw this diagram pictured on the right. It was like looking through a wall into a house with two rooms above a basement, except for the circle right in the center. At the same time, I knew what was in each of these areas, but it is easier to communicate it by taking one area at a time. Therefore, the diagrams shown are necessary.



It seems it was my turn to be one of those who “sitteth by” and receive a revelation from the Spirit of God. As a result, many scriptures fell into place, and the victory resulting from this new understanding is working in myself and many others.

THE FIRST AREA IS THE “WORLD”:

1 John 2:15-17
Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh,



and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

In this setting, the “world” is not the planet Earth. This “world” consists of the three things listed above and was brought into existence when Adam disobeyed God. His disobedience caused him to lose the heavenly nature God had breathed into him and he became subject to his fleshly body. Adam’s “world”, therefore, is really **our nature**, our HUMAN nature - it is not the nature of God.

Try an experiment. Quote the above scriptures saying “human nature” instead of “world”.

A SIMPLE DESCRIPTION OF ALL THAT IS IN THE WORLD:

The Lust of the Flesh = strong desire for any **physical** comfort, ease or pleasure.

The Lust of the Eyes = strong desire for any **mental** comfort, ease or pleasure.

The Pride of Life = strong desire for any **social** comfort, ease or pleasure.

Any one of these, or any combination of them will always be trying to affect the way we think, how we feel, and our decision making. This condition will last as long as our bodies last. This is what Jesus also went through, but he learned how to keep his soul free and pure by walking in submission to the Spirit of his Father.

This “world” that we are studying is really our FALLEN NATURE! The word “carnal” just means “natural” - not “unrestrained lust” as it is commonly used today. With this understanding, we will continue.

THE SECOND AREA IS FOR THE WAY OUR MINDS FORM:

Every baby born is born of Adam, and therefore born with a nature that is carnal/natural. The baby’s mind is not much formed at this point. The first time it becomes hungry, it’s mind “reaches” for something, (it doesn’t know what) and mother puts milk in it’s mouth. The baby’s mind focuses on it and says, “AH!” The baby doesn’t know what to call it, nor how to ask for it except by crying, but after it’s first experience, it’s

mind becomes focused on MILK, and it becomes a goal to reach for in the future.

The baby’s desires begins to grow toward MILK each time it gets hungry. Then along comes its first banana, and again there is an “AH!” and now the baby’s mind begins to branch toward BANANA as well.

This “branching of the desires” toward differing goals resembles a tree. The roots are firmly settled in the basic desires of the flesh and life, and the mind quickly develops more branches as we grow. This is NOT the carnal mind that the scriptures describe at this point. It is just a simple, natural mind seeking natural satisfaction. It is not yet in rebellion against God.

A “full-blown carnal mind” is something quite different, but it also begins in just this way.

THERE ARE SIX STEPS TO A SCRIPTURAL CARNAL MIND

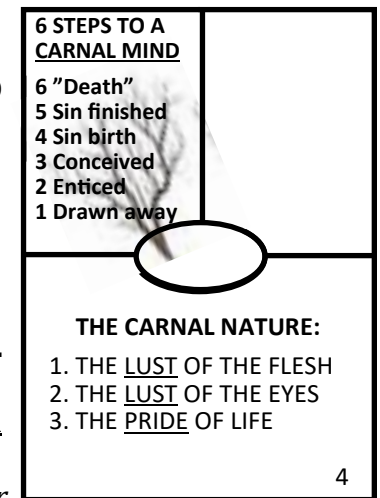
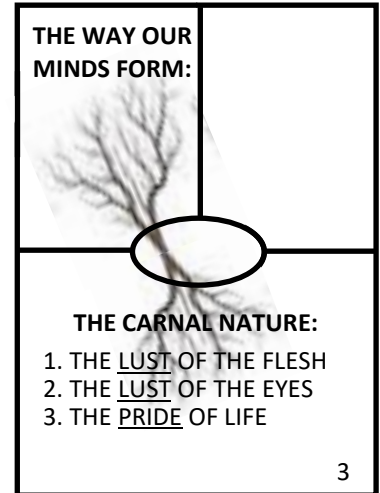
These steps are found James 1:14,15...

But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, (or matured) bringeth forth death.

Step 1 = Drawn away (from God’s ways) by our own desires.

Step 2 = Enticed (means our attention is captured or focused on something).

Step 3 = Conceived (means we ‘swallow’, accept the thoughts into ourselves and become “polluted” by them).



Step 4 = Brings forth Sin (means we have become “pregnant” with a committed sin which will shortly be born).

Step 5 = Finished sin (means we have not repented or changed our thinking and the sin has continued to grow up and mature in our hearts).

Step 6 = Brings forth Death (means the sin can propagate itself without any more help from the lusts of the flesh, eyes and the pride of life).

It is this sixth step that is the deadly carnal mind spoken of in Romans 8:6...

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

The first FOUR steps of temptation become the foundation of what the scriptures call our “old man”!

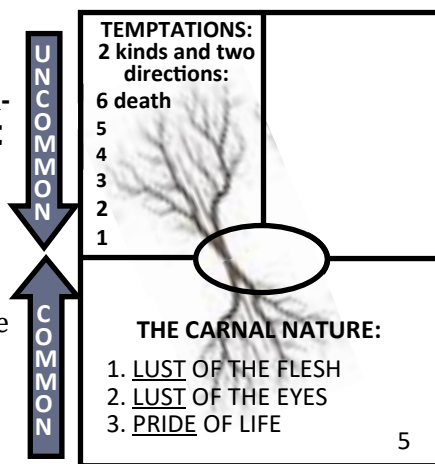
Eph. 4:22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

Rom. 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

THERE ARE TWO DIFFERENT KINDS OF TEMPTATIONS THAT COME FROM TWO DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.

This is something we should take time to stop and observe, for it is very important. The carnal **nature** and the carnal **mind** are two different things! But related.

Some temptations feel like sap **rising** in a tree. We can feel the pressure building up over a period of time, rising more and more into our awareness and trying to engage our conscious minds. This upward direction exposes the source as our **natural/carnal natures**.



Then at other times our temptation seems to **fall**, or rush downhill like water in a dry riverbed. It also tries to engage one or more of our physical, mental or social drives and to dim our awareness of what is really happening. This downward direction exposes the activity of our carnal mind from it’s weaker beginning stages to it’s strong and rebellious maturity. It is pure selfishness and always justifies itself. It can be very destructive to ourselves and others if not stopped.

The natural/carnal nature by itself is blind and unfocused. It is simply natural human drives that come along with our bodies. It is the **mind** that brings focus to those drives.

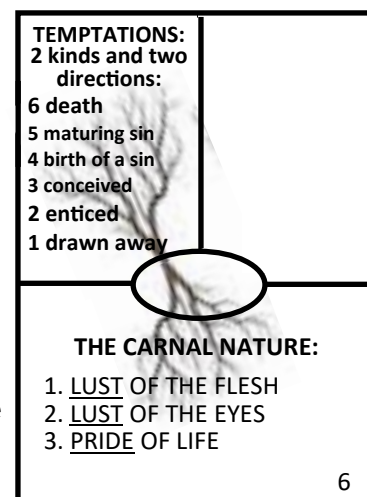
COMMON temptations arise from the natural carnal nature. Sexuality is only one part of that nature. The basic sexual drive just looks for ease, comfort or pleasure—without specific focus. Hunger is another part. We say we are hungry, but have to make a choice as to how to satisfy that hunger. “Hungry for WHAT?” The choice to focus on some specific food rather than another is done by our MINDS, and that is where we all begin to differ. We think differently. Not like God.

We have been taught or learned to focus on **specific targets**. These targets each promise to provide ease, comfort or pleasure. But without God, humanity’s choices result in chaos. Each of us forms our own mind, natural, spiritual or rebellious - choice by choice as we struggle through our lives.

Now for step 5. This is the carnal mind that develops an enmity against norms with no accountability and repentance to God. It goes down a slippery slope. It will seek to survive by forcing to get further nourishment from the natural human nature. And when that mind set controls the tongue, it can become “a fire,” setting on fire the course of nature.” (James 3:6)

Jesus had a carnal nature, but he never formed a carnal mind. He was “drawn away” and “enticed”, but before he “conceived” the lusts and pride he caught it and cried out to his Father, God:

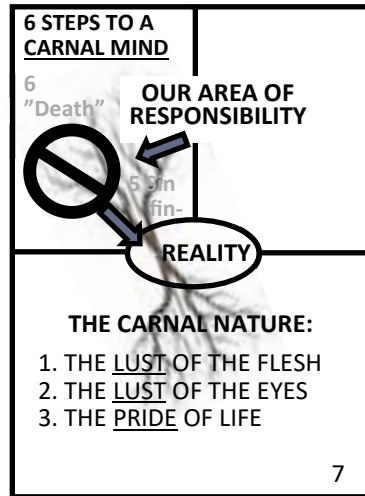
For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Heb. 4:15)



Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;... (Heb. 5:7) Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. (Heb. 4:1)

OUR RESPONSIBILITY IS TO HANDLE OUR OWN TEMPTATIONS THE RIGHT WAY:

If anyone handled temptations the right way, it was Jesus! Jesus learned from the Holy Ghost how to cast down imaginations and bring every thought into subjection. He learned how to obey God through the things he suffered and he suffered being tempted.



Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; (Heb. 5:8,9)

For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. (Heb 2:8)

Jesus "knew what was in man" because he learned how to fight it within himself! I asked him one time just how much he was tempted. He answered me, "I tasted everything - I swallowed nothing." You can ask him yourself if it is true or not. I'm satisfied.

Most of us start out being ignorant of the difference between our carnal nature and a carnal mind. We think they are the same thing, so we begin to resist and battle our "flesh", fighting the lusts of our flesh and eyes and our pride of life in our own strength.

Then when our thoughts begin to harass and accuse us, we cry out to God and wonder why He won't give us peace in our minds from some possible evil spirit that seems to be afflicting us. Our problem is that we are trying to do what we imagine GOD'S work is and expecting Him to do OUR job!

OUR JOB is to be casting down our imaginations, (2 Cor. 10:5) and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ and

keep our minds stayed on HIM, rather than US with our worries and fears. That centers us on reality. Then **GOD'S JOB** will fulfill 1 Cor. 10:13 by **adjusting our common human temptations** to become just a bearable light affliction! Keeping our minds on Him results in perfect peace. (Isa. 26:3; 2 Cor. 10:5)

SO HOW CAN WE CAST DOWN IMAGINATIONS AND SUBJECT OUR THOUGHTS?

- By quoting scriptures Luke 4:4,8,12. That nails down our flesh to the will of God.
- By speaking and singing to ourselves. Eph. 5:19,20. Good practice for testifying.
- By encouraging ourselves in the Lord. 1 Sam. 30:6. Don't wait for others to do it for you.
- By thinking on those things the scriptures tell us to think. Phil. 4:8 Guard your mind!
- By using your tongue to say "I don't have to think that way" and praising God.
- Keep the rudder of our tongues speaking the truth! Not speaking our complaints or unbeliefs - just the truths of scripture like Jesus did when he was tempted (and that was before his ministry began.)

All these ways result in the SAME THING. **We are re-establishing reality with God!** That is faith/trust with proper works. That is righteousness or 'right-way-ness' in God's eyes, and that causes Him to move in our behalf. And it keeps us in that place of rest, waiting for each revelation of the mind of Christ.

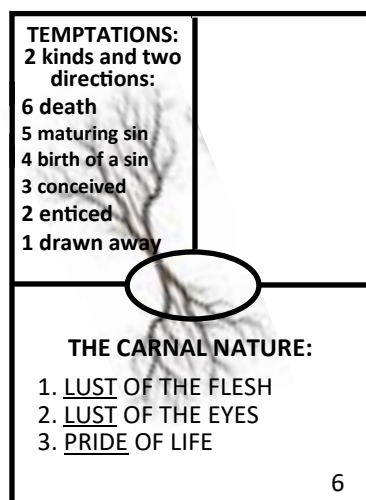
The human carnal nature will pass away with these bodies. The carnal mind must be destroyed in order to have the mind of the new man take it's proper place in our soul's thoughts, emotions and will. However, once we begin "smiting, killing and utterly destroying it", let's be very careful not to rebuild it, or we make ourselves transgressors.

This process of cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit comes only after God exposes something within us. It's like when we were children. Didn't your mother tell you to "wash your hands, face or something else?" - things that we didn't notice or didn't think necessary? My mom did. But God is the best parent we can ever have! Just look how he raised his Son, our big, saving brother and trained him how to save us all (as we cooperate). 😊

This is how Jesus comes to "know" us, and will share his life and immortality with us if we continue to grow up into him in ALL things! May God bless you!

THE UPPER RIGHT AREA.

This upper right area will show the exact opposites of the upper left area. It also has six steps, and scriptures in the center to prove each step.



This 6th picture copied here for easy reference.

VICTORIES:

6. 2 Cor. 4:10,11 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus (*to temptations*), that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death (*lighter afflictions*) for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made in our mortal flesh. (*It's a learning process!*)

5. Eph. 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

1 Pet. 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

2 Pet. 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

4. John 3:5,6 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

3. Acts 2:38 Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

2. Mat. 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

1. James 4:8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

Jer. 29:13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

NOTE: Try adding other of your favorite scriptures to this progressive list. You can do it! Be blessed!

