

13. TO KNOW WHETHER A CHANGE IN US IS

SPIRITUAL

As already discussed, there are those people who can temporarily be affected by Spiritual circumstances but who are not indeed Spiritually minded. So how are we to know when any change in our natures is something that God has done to alter our natures?

The difference between a moral change and a Spiritual change is that the moral change is often only temporary. If it is only a moral change, the change could be lost due to some traumatic incident or persecution. We need to be in a place where when we are experiencing trials we automatically turn to the Lord for comfort. This comfort is a conscience at peace with God.

Moral changes in themselves are not to be rejected, as they can be the Lord's preparation for the work of salvation. But a moral change will not be our guarantee to a life in heaven with the Lord.

With a moral change, there would be a change in behaviour with regard to only certain shortcomings in our lives. With Spiritual renewal, there will be a change across the whole spectrum of our lives. **1 THESS 5:23** "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify (set you aside, make you Holy) you through and through "We as individuals may be more prone to sin by means of one emotion (see lesson 12), than by others. I believe this to be true for the majority of people. We may be more likely to grow angry than to fear, or to dislike than to love. But if we are truly sanctified, all our emotions will be cleansed. True Spiritual change never speaks like Naaman. "Oh God, be merciful to me in this one thing, in all others I will be for Him" – **2 KINGS 5:18** True Spiritual Holiness calls us to devote the whole of our lives to God, or He will have none of it.

1 JOHN 1:9 makes it clear of what we are to do. "If we confess our sins, (note the plural) He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify (cleanse) us from all unrighteousness". We are to bring every emotion under the influence of holiness. **HOSEA 10:2** "Their heart is deceitful, and now they must bear their guilt"

Moral changes only affect some parts of our nature, and so as a change in moral behaviour improves some parts of our nature, there are other parts that secretly enjoy the fruits of sin – the love of money, an uncontrolled tongue, a religion that lacks the works of faith. Many are those that have persecuted true believers in the name of Christianity. It is possible for professing Christians to subdue many lusts in the public eye yet cherish a secret one in their hearts all the while.

Another sure sign of true Spiritual renewal as compared to moral reformation is that the true believer will love all Spiritual things without exception. There will be no selection or rejection, but an obedience to all the commands of the word of God.

If we may be ignorant of certain teachings of scripture, we will in due time be enlightened as to our shortcomings by the Blessed Spirit of God.

Spiritually minded people love God, not only for the benefits we receive from Him, but especially for the excellence of Himself and the beauty of what He does. (More on this in “This Glory of Christ”)

We love Jesus Christ who is uniquely God in human form. We love all that God, through His Spirit, has made known to us. We love the truth as revealed in God’s word. It is life, hope and peace to us.

Thus, the whole of us is affected and uplifted by the precious knowledge of our triune God. There is a universality, both subjective and objective, about the genuine experience of Spiritual mindedness.

Subjective – affecting us personally

Objective – affecting our relations with others