

BECKY COMBEE MINISTRIES, INC.



Lives Lives With Potential

I love home improvement programs! I am captured by the potential inherent in old structures when skilled workman repair, renovate, reconstruct and remodel. Sometimes, the finished product is just mind-boggling. I never tire of seeing them go from gross to glory.

Our lives have that same potential if we walk with the Lord. When we allow God's Word to rule our lives and God's Spirit to guide us, we too can go from gross to glory.¹ God has a home improvement program that works in us as we yield to Him. Unfortunately, we often live by our own rules instead of God's wonderful plan. It is like driving our car as we choose, ignoring the road signs. There is potential in our rebellious behavior for disaster.

The Scripture describes this self-willed life when it records "to be carnally minded is death."² In the Greek language, the word *carnal* means the flesh or the body as opposed to the spirit or soul.³ Therefore, the carnal man is the outward man, not the inward man, or spirit. The Word of God teaches us that we are a spirit being, an inward man, living in a physical body, the outward man.⁴ The soul,

which is our mind, our will and our emotions, bridges the gap between the spirit and the body, making us a wholly functioning being.

Someone once said the mind is like the pendulum of a clock. It swings left and right choosing to agree with the body or the spirit. If the mind has little or no knowledge of God, it unites with our flesh. We are then "carnally minded".

The carnal mind does not obey God. In Romans 8:7, we read that it is the enemy of God. The New Living translation declares it is hostile to

*"If I love you and honor you,
I will not argue with you."*

God. The Contemporary English Version says, "Our desires fight against God." Oh, to be spiritually minded! The spiritual mind honors God's Word and yields to the leadership of God's Spirit.

The apostle Paul enumerated the characteristics of the carnally-minded Christian in his letter to the church at Corinth. He characterized them as baby Christians who lived in envy, strife, and division. Envy, or jealousy, is a formidable opponent of truth. Strife, debate, and quarrelling shatter our God-given peace beyond recognition,

and without any doubt, division is the thief of our united effort in God. The glorious gospel cannot be effective in our lives if we honor these carnal foes.

Jealousy is always discontent when others are blessed. It is intolerant of rivalry, apprehensive, and suspicious. Strife fights for its own plan and purpose, promoting conflict and division. According to the Scripture, "Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."⁵ Opening the door to every evil work ought to bring us to our knees in repentance.

The apostle Paul writes "Let nothing be done through strife and vainglory."⁶ NOTHING is a big, big word! He follows this Word from the Lord saying, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings."⁷ The New Century Version declares, "Do everything without complaining or arguing." The New Living Translation says, "STAY AWAY from complaining and arguing."

How is that possible? First, "Do not be interested only in your own life, but be interested in the lives of others."⁸ This is the counsel of the Scripture. The Contemporary English Version explains this Word from the Lord saying, "Consider others more important than yourselves. Care about them as much as you care about yourselves."⁹ The Message Bible writes, "Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage." This means life is NOT ALL ABOUT ME!

Jesus said we must love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, but He also said to love our neighbor as ourselves.¹⁰ If I love you and honor you, I will not argue with you. I will listen to you and help you walk in God's prosperous plan. I will not fight to the death for my idea.

Because we love God and obey His Word, we are able to overcome all strife and selfishness. His Word is alive, and it works mightily in us. The power of His indwelling Spirit also works in our lives, enabling us to say *no* to every carnal foe. This means that strife cannot conquer us! Jealousy cannot lead the parade of our heart! Division will not overwhelm us! Leaning on the everlasting arms of God, we prevail.

What a glorious life! We have victory because of God's provision through Christ Jesus! We

triumph because we follow God's Word and His Spirit. Oh, how we praise the Lord for His goodness to us!¹¹ He that is mighty has done great things and because of Him, we overcome. AMEN!¹²

¹2Co 3:18 ²Ro 8:6 ³G4561 Strong's Exhaustive Concordance ⁴1Th 5:23;2Co 4:16 ⁵Jas 3:16 ⁶Php 2:3 ⁷Php 2:14 ⁸Php 2:4 NCV ⁹Php 2:3-4 CEV ¹⁰Mt 22:37-39 ¹¹Ps 107:21 ¹²Lk 1:49

Truth From The Scripture Conquering Strife

- I. Strife is Forbidden
Romans 13:13
Philippians 2:3
- II. Strife is a Sign of Immaturity
1 Corinthians 3:1-3
- III. Strife is a Work of the Flesh
Galatians 5:19-20
James 4:1
- IV. The Flesh Must Be Crucified
Romans 12:1
Galatians 5:24
- V. Others are First
Romans 12:10
Philippians 2:3
- VI. Forgiveness is Essential
Ephesians 4:32
- VII. Depend on God's Spirit
Romans 8:13

