*I Tim. 6:11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*

*12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

*13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;*

*14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:*

*15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;*

*16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*

*2Ti 3:17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

*Ga 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

*1Pe 4:6 For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.*

*De 33:1 And this is the blessing, wherewith* ***Moses the man of God*** *blessed the children of Israel before his death.*

*Jos 14:6 ¶ Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadeshbarnea.*

*Eli was called a man of God 1 Samuel 2:27*

*Samuel was called a man of God 1 Samuel 9:6*

*Unnamed I Kings 13*

Idolatry and false worship do not please the Lord. God totally opposes idolatry and false worship. But idols are not just images made out of wood, stone, metal, or some other material. We can make an idol out of anything, for idols are anything that captures our heart more than God. We can ignore and forget God, focusing and giving our hearts and primary interests to such people or things as…

•  husband, wife, children, or other family members

•  girlfriend or boyfriend

•  houses, property, cars, planes, or any other possession

•  wealth, the making of money, success, or fame

•  job, profession, position, authority, or power

•  an actor, an athlete, a politician, or even a minister or worship center

•  sports (watching or participating in), recreation or leisure activities, television, movies, or computer games

Whatever captivates our hearts, whatever the focus of our hearts is, whatever we give our hearts to—that person or thing becomes our god, our idol. For that person or thing possesses our hearts, our primary interest and attention. As a result, God is either denied or ignored or forgotten. Listen to what God's Holy Word says about idolatry:

**And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, *saying, It is* the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost" (Acts 12:21-23).**

**For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness….Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen" (Romans 1:18,** [**25**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+1%3A25)**).**

**Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen" (1 John 5:21).**

**Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth" (Exodus 20:4).**

**Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them" (**[**Deut. 11:16**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Dt+11%3A16)**).**

**Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see" (Isaiah 42:18).**

*Righteousness means being right with God.*

*⇒  It is having a heart that is right with God, that has approached God exactly like He says: through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*⇒  It is having a heart that has allowed God to recreate and remake it in righteousness: through the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*⇒  It is having a heart that has partaken of the divine nature of God (2 Peter 1:4)*

*Righteousness means doing right, that is, living exactly as God says to live. Simply stated, a righteous person is a person who lives right—a person who does his duty both to God and to man. He lives doing what he should do. He lives a righteous life, walking righteously before God and man day by day. As a result, he is free from guilt and has a free conscience and a strong self-image. The man of God follows and runs after righteousness.*

*Godliness means to live in the reverence and awe of God; to be so conscious of God's presence that one lives just as God would live if He were walking upon earth. It means to live seeking to be like God; to seek to possess the very character, nature, and behavior of God. The man of God follows and runs after godliness. He seeks to gain a consciousness of God's presence—a consciousness so intense that he actually lives as God would live if He were on earth.*

*Note: godliness means to be Christlike. Godliness is Christlikeness: it is living upon earth just as Christ lived.*

***"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18).***

*Eph 4:24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

*2 Peter 3:11Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [behavior] and godliness*

*I Tim. 6:11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*

*Meekness is a humble state of mind. But this does not mean the person is weak, coward, and bowing. The meek person simply loves people and loves peace; therefore, he walks humbly among men regardless of their status and circumstance in life. Associating with the poor and lowly of this earth. He desires to be a friend to all and to help all as much as possible.*

*b.  Meekness is a strong state of mind. It looks at situations and wants justice and right to be done. It is not a weak mind that ignores and neglects evil and wrong-doing, abuse and suffering.*

*If someone is suffering, meekness steps in and does what it can to help.*

*If evil is being done, meekness does what it can to stop and correct it.*

*If evil is running rampant and indulging itself, meekness actually strikes out in anger. The anger must always be at the right time and against the wrong.*

*c.  Meekness is strong self-control. The meek person controls his spirit and mind. He controls the lusts of his flesh. He does not give way to ill-temper, retaliation, passion, indulgence, or license. The meek person dies to himself, to what his flesh would like to do, and he does the right thing—exactly what God wants done.*

*In summary, the meek person walks in a humble, tender, but strong state of mind. He denies himself and gives utmost consideration to others. He shows a control and righteous anger against injustice and evil. A meek man forgets self and lives for others because of what Christ has done for him.*

*The Holy Ghost of God is meek.*

***But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23).***

*Jesus Christ is meek.*

***Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:29).***

*Believers are to be meek.*

***Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1).***

***I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephes. 4:1-3).***

***In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Tim. 2:25).***

***To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men" (Titus 3:2).***

***Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21).***

***Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom" (James 3:13).***

***But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price 1 Peter 3:4***

*1Ti 6:16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*

*dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto*

***LIVING IN THE SPIRIT***

*Jesus lived on earth - in humility, holiness, love,* ***IN THE SPIRIT****.*

*Mt 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:*

*Lu 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,*

*John 1:31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.*

*The danger is to think that we can imitate Jesus in these areas and thus become like Him. The glory of God is to be manifested through us, not through an imitation of Jesus, but through our partaking of the divine nature.*

*Many have tried to imitate His humility, purity and love, and think they have done a fairly good job of it. But it is like the painted fire, that gives no warmth. The painted pillar that can hold no weight.*

*Imitation diamonds can look so much like the real gems, that only an expert can detect the difference. But they are only pieces of glass, worthless in comparison. And man is an expert at imitation - even in the realm of imitating Jesus.*

*How then are we to escape deception? How are we to know whether we are merely imitating Jesus or actually partaking of the divine nature?*

*There is only one way, and that is by allowing the Holy Spirit to use the Word to expose and separate the soulish from the spiritual in our lives*

*Heb 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

*If we do not distinguish between the soulish and the spiritual we can be utterly deceived and not even know that we are deceived.*

*What believers need to understand most of all in our day, is how the power of their mind, emotions and will can hinder the working of the Holy Spirit. Where we do not distinguish between soulish and spiritual activity, not only is there the possibility of our being deceived by our own hearts, but also by evil spirits, who counterfeit the work of God.*

*Most believers are totally ignorant about the difference between soulish and spiritual activity, because they have not developed in their spiritual lives to the point where further progress becomes dependent on differentiating between the soulish and the spiritual.*

*A 9th-grade student may not know the difference between differential calculus and integral calculus (and probably considers them both to be the same), because he has not advanced far enough in his study of mathematics, to the point where further progress is dependent on distinguishing between these two forms of calculus.*

*If you are content with being considered upright and kind and gentle and compassionate by man, then you will not go beyond being a `soulish' Christian, and beyond a mere imitation of Jesus.*

*Paul divides Christians into three categories:*

1. *the spiritual man (1 Cor. 3:1);*

*1Co 2:15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.*

*1Co 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.*

*1Co 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.*

1. *the soulish man (1 Cor. 2:14-literal translation); and*

*1Co 2:14 But* ***the natural man*** *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

*(iii) the carnal man (1 Cor. 3:1).*

*The threefold division of man's being, 1 Thes 5:23 - spirit, soul and body.*

*When we are ruled by the desires of the body, we are carnal.*

*But we can overcome those desires and yet be only soulish - ruled by the desires of the mind and the emotions.*

*The spiritual man is the one who is ruled by the Holy Spirit and whose soul and body are under the Spirit's control.*

*Although the soulish man may not necessarily be "hostile towards God" as the carnal man is (Rom.8:7), he still cannot receive or understand spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:14), for they are foolishness to him.*

*Even the distinction between soul and spirit when presented to him will appear as foolishness and unnecessary splitting of hairs, because he is soulish and is content with being soulish, for he has a good testimony before men. He who seeks the honour of men can never advance beyond being soulish.*

*In these days of large-scale deception in the Christian church, with multitudes of voices and manifestations, all claiming to be from God, it is essential, as never before, that we distinguish between soulish and spiritual activity, if we are to keep ourselves from the wiles of the evil one.*

*"The first man Adam, became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45).*

*We who have been delivered from the headship of the first Adam and transferred to the headship of Christ (the last Adam), need to understand what it means to cease living from the soul and to live in the Spirit.*

*It is not enough that the carnal element of our flesh be rendered inactive. The soulish element, though less ugly, is just as dangerous to spiritual growth, and must be dealt with too. We must seek to be saved increasingly each day, not only from the power of sin but also from the restless activity of our souls.*

*Soulish people will never be able to understand why Jesus spoke as He did on certain occasions. Once, when He was in the midst of a crowd and was told that His relatives wanted to meet Him, Jesus pointed to His disciples and said that they were His closest relatives (Mt.12:49,50).*

*His relatives and others must have considered that to be a hard and inconsiderate statement. But Jesus did not desire to have any soulish attachment to His relatives.*

*His disciples too could not have understood why Jesus had to be so hard in His rebuke of Peter, when He said to him, "Get behind me, Satan."*

*Soulish people can never make of such statements, for they are always wondering what others will think of them.*

*We may have overcome the sins of the flesh. But the question that comes to us now is whether we are going to live by the resources of our human, soulish life, in seeking to be like Jesus, or by the power of the divine life.*

*Are we going to be made perfect by our own abilities or by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3:3)?*

*Soulishness is a hindrance to spiritual growth. When Peter tried to turn Jesus away from the cross, he was doing so with intense human love for Christ. But Jesus identified it with the voice of the Devil. He said to Peter, "You are minding what partakes not of the nature of God (spiritual) but of men (soulish)" (Mt. 16:23-Amplified). The soulish Christian is one whose way of thinking is still governed by the `life of Adam.' There may be intense human love and even a desire for righteousness, but it is not divine.*

*When God made man, He made him spirit, soul and body (1 Thess.5:23). Man was made to be the temple of God. And when God gave Moses the pattern of the tabernacle, the same threefold division was seen in it - for it symbolised man as the dwelling-place of God.*

*The tabernacle had three parts. One part was open - the outer court - and this corresponded to man's body, which can be seen. The other two parts - the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place - were covered; and these corresponded to the invisible part of man - soul and spirit respectively.*

*The presence of God was in the Most Holy Place. From there He talked with man. In regeneration, it is our spirit that the Holy Spirit makes alive, making us one spirit with the Lord (1 Cor.6:17) - even as a husband and wife become one flesh. God's intention in this is that through His Holy Spirit He might now rule over our redeemed soul and body. If we see this and submit to God in this His purpose for us, we can become spiritual men.*

*Man's soul consists of his mind (thinking faculty),*

*his emotions (feeling faculty) and his will (deciding faculty). He cannot contact God with any of these, just as He cannot touch God with his body, for God is Spirit (Jn.4:24).*

*As the material world can be touched only with the body, so too the spiritual world can be contacted only through the spirit. If we do not distinguish between soul and spirit, we can be deceived by the counterfeits of Satan in the soulish realm that masquerade as the work of the Holy Spirit.*

*With our soul by itself, we cannot know God. A clever mind has no advantage over a dull mind when it comes to knowing God, for the capacity of a man's soul gives him no advantage when it comes to what has to be received in his spirit. The spirit and soul are totally different. So, to try to know God through one's soul is as foolish as trying to see through one's ear!*

*Consider how we study the Scriptures. We use our body (eyes) and our soul (mind) when we read God's Word. But our spirit can still be dark as midnight, if the Holy Spirit does not grant revelation on the meaning of the Word. Bible-knowledge only proves that you have a good mind - a powerful soul. Your spirit can still be blind. God hides His truth from the clever and the intelligent, and reveals them to the humble (Mt. 11:25). The blindness of the theologians of Jesus day is the clearest proof of this (1 Cor. 2:7,8).*

*Our emotions also are a part of the soul. God cannot be felt by the emotions. Emotional exuberance is not spirituality, but merely the excitement of the soul. It can exist side by side with the deepest sin in an individual, even as intellectual sharpness can co-exist with sin.*

*The prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel were highly emotional, shouting and raving and dancing (1 Kings 18:26-29), but they were not spiritual. Such expressions can be found in highly emotional Christian meetings too, but they have nothing to do with true spirituality.*

*Judas Iscariot was probably the cleverest of the disciples, but his soul-powers did not help him to know the truth of God. The scholars in Jerusalem also could not understand what Simon Peter, with his lack of education, understood by Divine revelation (Mt. 16:17).*

*We cannot know God by the power of the soul. The soulish Christian is the one who attempts to do so.*

*The soulish Christian can appear to be humble, but he is always conscious of his humility. True humility is unconscious of itself. The soulish Christian has to make an effort to appear humble, whereas true humility is always spontaneous and effortless, for it flows from within.*

*The soulish Christian can also appear to have a zeal for righteousness. He can take the whip and chase people out of the church, and even thunder away against sin, imagining himself to be a prophet. But he seeks the honour of men for his actions. He always has one eye on the opinions of men. There can also be a more subtle variety of soulishness, where a man may say, "I don't care what anyone thinks about me." But the fact that he wants others to know that he does not care for their opinions reveals his soulishness.*

*The soulish Christian can appear to have great compassion too. But it will always be human and unwise. For example, a soulish Christian may, in seeking to be loving, send regular material aid to a needy man, who may actually be a prodigal son, being disciplined by God. Such help will actually be a hindrance to that man's turning to God. The soulish Christian however will get a satisfaction, imagining that he is serving God, not realising that he is actually fulfilling the Devil's purposes by his `acts of love.'*

*The above are just a few examples among many possibilities. But it should suffice to show us the desperate need of distinguishing between soulish and spiritual activity.*

*Soulish fruit can look like the fruit of the Spirit, and many have been deceived. We can be deceived ourselves.*

*Plastic oranges and bananas have fooled many people sitting at a dining table. But they are only decorative and have no nutritive value. So too with soulish imitation of the virtues of Christ.*

*All that has been said thus far does not mean that our soul is of no use. God Himself created the soul of man, and He has appointed a function for it. We do need to use our mind and our emotions, but true spirituality begins with our humbling ourselves under God's mighty hand, and yielding our will (which is the door to our spirit) to God utterly. It is outside this door of our will, that Jesus stands and knocks for entrance (Rev. 3:20).*

*When we are willing to say as Jesus did in the days of His flesh, "Not my will, but Thine be done," only then can we live as Jesus lived. Then God can rule our spirit. And our soul will become the servant of the Spirit of God. And then our body too will be brought under the control of the Holy Spirit. Only such a man can be called `a spiritual man' or `a Spirit-filled man'.*

*Conversion, being baptised in the Spirit and the exercise of spiritual gifts do not make a man spiritual, as is amply evidenced by the example of the Corinthian Christians. They exercised all the gifts of the Spirit, yet they were in bondage to the sins of the flesh, and gloried in their intellectual knowledge and their emotional raptures. They were not spiritual.*

*We have seen that in the tabernacle, the presence of God was in the Most Holy Place. Between the Most Holy Place and the Holy Place hung a thick curtain (veil). It was this that cut off the glory of God from shining through into the Holy Place. This veil symbolised the flesh (Heb. 10:20). It is as the flesh is crucified (the veil rent) that God's glory shines through into our whole personality (our soul).*

*If we faithfully walk along the new and living way through the flesh that Jesus has inaugurated for us, then the life of God will shine through our personality and will be manifested through us more and more.*

*Then the Scripture will be fulfilled in us, which says, "The path of the uncompromisingly righteous is like the light of dawn that shines more and more - brighter and clearer - until it reaches its full strength and glory in the perfect day (when Christ returns)" (Prov. 4:18-Amplified).*

*It is thus that the Holy Spirit transforms us from one degree of glory to another (2 Cor. 3:18), until we become fully like Jesus (1 Jn. 3:2).*

*We have seen that Jesus never did His own will. In other words, He never lived by the guidance of His mind or His emotions. He lived in the Spirit, and His human soul was subservient to the Holy Spirit. Jesus used His mind and emotions extensively, but always as servants of the Holy Spirit, Who was Lord in His life. Thus the glory of God shone through Him, unhindered in all its fullness.*

*The Bible teaches that all our life and labour will be tested by fire, in the day that Jesus returns to earth (1 Cor. 3:10-14). The test of fire will determine whether our work was soulish or spiritual. We are exhorted to build with gold, silver and jewels that can survive the fire, and not with wood, hay and straw that will be reduced to ashes.*

*What does it mean to build with gold, silver and jewels?*

*Romans 11:36 gives us the answer. There we are told that all things are "from God, through Him and to Him."*

*All creation originated in God, is upheld by His power and is meant to glorify Him. But Satan and man have violated this law.*

*However, only that which originates in God, and is done in God's power, for God's glory, is eternal. All the rest will perish, being reduced to ashes at the fire of the judgment seat of Christ.*

*So, that which originates in man's soul (from man) and is done through human power, for man's honour, is wood, hay and straw, even if it is called Christian work!!*

*On the other hand, that which originates from God, and is done through His power, for His glory, will be found to be gold, silver and jewels in the day of judgment.*

*The final day of testing is not going to test the quantity of our work but the quality. The material we have used will matter more than the size of our structure. The origin, power and motive of our labours are going to be far more important in that day than how much we did or sacrificed.*

*Jesus is our Example in this matter of not living by the soul, but living in the Spirit. He never acted on His own initiative, or through His own human abilities or for His own glory. He did only that which originated in God, and did that in God's power and for God's glory.*

*He repeatedly told His disciples, "Whoever wishes to save his soul-life shall lose it: but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake shall find it." These words of Jesus concerning hating (or losing) the soul-life are repeated seven times in the four gospels (Mt. 10:39; 16:25; Mk. 8:35; Lk. 9:24; 14:26; 17:33; Jn. 12:25).*

Surely this must be one of the most important things that Jesus taught if the Holy Spirit has seen fit to repeat it seven times in the four gospels. Yet, very few believers have understood what Jesus meant.

How are we to distinguish between the soulish and the spiritual in our lives? The answer is: By looking unto Jesus, the Living Word, as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures, the Written Word.

We are to judge ourselves, not by the light of our own soul, but by God's light (Psa. 36:9). And that light is found in Jesus (Jn. 8:12) and in the Word of God (Psa. 119:105).

Jesus, the Word made flesh, says, "Learn from My example.....and you will find rest from your soulish activity" (Mt. 11:29-Paraphrase).

We also read that "The Word of God divides and shows us what is soulish and what is spiritual" (Heb. 4:12-Paraphrase).

And so it is to Jesus, our Example (Forerunner) and to the Word of God as our Guide, that we are to look for light in this area. Perfection is found in the earthly life of Jesus and in God's Word. So let us look at these carefully.