

# But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God

by William MacDonald

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## Transcript

“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,” (1 Cor. 2:14)

The natural man is the one who has never been born again. He does not have the Spirit of God. He is disinclined to receive spiritual truths because they sound like nonsense to him. But that is not all! He cannot understand spiritual truths because they can only be understood by the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

This must be emphasized. It is not just that the unsaved man doesn't want to understand the things of God. He cannot understand them. He has a native incapacity for doing so.

This helps me in properly evaluating the scientists, philosophers and other professional people of the world. As long as they speak about mundane matters, I respect them as experts. But as soon as they start intruding into the spiritual realm, I write them off as unqualified to speak with any authority.

I am not unduly surprised if some college professor or even some liberal clergyman grabs the headlines with doubts or denials concerning the Bible. I have come to expect that and disregard it. I realize that the unregenerate have gone beyond their depth when they talk about the things of the Spirit of God.

F. W. Boreham likened the great men of science and philosophy to second-class passengers on an ocean liner, barred from the first-class promenade. “Scientists and philosophers—as such—are, so to speak, ‘second-class passengers,’ and they must be kept on their own side of the barrier. They are not authorities on the Christian faith...The fact is that we have a faith which cannot be shocked by the contempt of second-class passengers, and which derives no real support from their corroboration and patronage.”

Of course, there is the occasional scientist or philosopher who is a saint. In such a case, Boreham said, “I always discover a ‘first-class ticket’ peeping out of his pocket; and as I stroll the promenade in his delightful company, I no more think of him as a scientist than I think of Bunyan as a tinker. We are fellow passengers—first-class.”

Said Robert G. Lee, “Men may be critical and scholarly and scientific, knowing all about rocks and molecules and gases, and yet be utterly incompetent to sit in judgment upon Christianity and the Bible.”

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