

Discerning Truth in a Post Christian Culture

Lesson 3: Questions Regarding the Deeper Life

What does the Bible say about what the C&MA calls the deeper life?

The question calls two things to mind:

- 1) What the C&MA calls the deeper life
- 2) What the Bible says about this interpretation of Scripture

WHAT THE C&MA TEACHES, A SUMMARY

We can begin with what the C&MA refers to as the Deeper Life. From its own website (in a Q&A forum) these comments are made:

The "higher life" or "**deeper life**" was the passion of a great work of God in Europe and the U.S. during the nineteenth century. This hunger for God was much broader than the C&MA, but the C&MA was born in its fire and, in our time, is one of its foremost proponents. It was the Keswick Bible conventions in England that gave the movement its global voice.

The Christian & Missionary Alliance teaches what has been called the deeper life, although one is hard pressed to find those exact words on the website due to confusion about their meaning and a certain degree of archaism. The teaching is most clearly explained under the topic SANCTIFICATION in the document sent to you this week. This is the gist of the C&MA doctrine:

- 1) the NT teaches that there are two kinds of Christians—spiritual & carnal (worldly)
- 2) the crucial difference is "Spirit-filled" vs self-effort and failure in holiness
- 3) which kind we are is largely a personal choice
- 4) a small percentage of modern Christians understand or live the deeper life; the majority fail to enter this Spirit-filled life due to ignorance, sin, fear, or lack of desire

THE REAL QUESTION IS, DOES THE BIBLE TEACH AND SUPPORT THIS DOCTRINE?

A careful reading of the C&MA web pages on this doctrine will eventually lead you to an understanding of Romans chapters 6-8 as the *locus classicus* of the deeper life teaching:

Romans 6: We have died to sin, it no longer has power over us

Romans 7: We have died to the Law, it no longer controls or condemns us

Romans 7: Those who try to live by the Law will end in utter failure & frustration

Romans 8: If we walk by the Holy Spirit, we will live like Jesus in victory over sin

¹Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

³ For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,

⁴ so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Romans 8:1-4