The Perception of Spirituality That Makes the Church Run Well

Introduction:

A. The perception of being spiritual varies widely with different people.
   1. To some it being spaced out – almost out of touch with reality.
   2. To some it being spontaneous in religious expression.
   3. To some it is having no interest in this world at all.

B. The words “spiritual” and “carnal” have basic meaning, but vary in application.
   1. Sometimes spiritual versus material (Rom. 15:27; 1 Cor. 9:11)
   2. Sometimes spiritual versus literal flesh (1 Pet. 2:5)
   3. Sometimes being led by the H.S. versus the impulses of the flesh (Rom. 8:5-14)

C. The Bible is the best guide on how to tell difference between being carnal and being spiritual:

Discussion:

I. One Can Tell the Difference by the Law One Serves (Gal. 5:18; cf. vv. 4,5)
   A. The O.T. had a special fleshly connection (Heb. 7:16; 9:10-15)
      1. It was in a sense spiritual (Rom. 8:14; cf. 2 Pet. 1:21)
      2. But still overwhelmingly carnal: in its subjects and ordinances.
   B. The N.T. has a special connection to the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:6-8)
      1. A spiritual nation rather than a fleshly nation.
      2. Spiritual sacrifices rather than fleshly sacrifices.
      3. Called “the law of Spirit and life” (Rom. 8:2)

II. One Can Tell the Difference by the Loyalty One Shows (1 Cor. 3:1-6)
   A. Loyalty to men based on fleshly considerations.
      1. Overly influenced by fleshly attachments: kinship.
      2. Overly influenced by fleshly association: friendship.
      3. Overly influenced by fleshly admiration: academics - charisma.
      4. Overly influenced by fleshly ambition: “my own man.”
   B. Loyalty to the Godhead based on spiritual considerations.
      1. Objectively weighs teaching in light of Bible – not matter who teaches it.
      2. Accepts or rejects only on basis of what the Spirit teaches.
      3. Loves and appreciates teachers, but accepts only if shown that the Spirit teaches it.
      4. Divisions, strife, etc. – fruit of carnal minded loyalty to men.

III. One Can Tell the Difference by the Lusts One Suppresses (Gal. 5:16, 17)
   A. Natural and unnatural desires (v. 19; Rom. 1:26-27)
   B. Natural reactions (v. 20)
   C. Natural aspirations – “selfish ambitions” (v. 20 NKJ) – popularity, power, etc.
   D. Natural inclinations – toward pleasures (v. 21)

IV. One Can Tell the Difference by the Life One Seeks
   A. For himself (1 Cor 9:27)
   B. For others (Gal. 6:1)
   C. For Now (Gal. 2:20; Tit. 2:11-12)
   D. Forever (Gal. 6:8-10)

Conclusion:

A. Are you a spiritually or carnally minded person?
   1. Do to try to serve God after New or Old Testament order?
   2. Do you base your convictions more on personal relationships than on scriptural reasons?
   3. Do you keep your natural desires and inclinations in check?
   4. Do you seek to live as the Spirit directs for now in view of eternity?

B. Are you truly spiritual? Then you will respect the commands written by the apostles (1 Cor. 14:37)