



## “sarkikós - Doing Life with a Spotty Connection”



The Ministry of the Spirit

January 11, 2026

**INTRO** ...Promised Lands with "Natural Resources & Natural Consequences"

...We're Supposed to do a LOT of NATURAL Things!

### Deut 8:1-11

...v. 1 ... you are supposed to "live and multiply, and go in and possess the land"

...v. 2 ... "AND you shall remember... you're supposed to have a certain "active mindset"

...v. 3 ... "**and He humbled you and let you hunger and fed you manna**" ...a strategic explanation for their Wilderness Experience ... a God-Provided experience of "humbled & hungry & unnatural bread"

- "**Humbled**" ...by placing you in circumstances that were "Bigger-Than-You"  
...Don't be surprised that God "Humbles Us" by letting life be TOO BIG for us!!
- "**Hungry**" ...a condition attached to their NATURAL Frame. ...**This is God "intentionally dialing back the "natural" in order to strengthen the "spiritual"**.

**WHY??** —v. 3 ... "**to make you know that man does not live by natural elements alone**—but by ALL that comes to us from God!"

**NOTICE:** This does not translate as ..."Bread is Bad!" Or "Bread should not be enjoyed!"

...v. 7-9 ...**There's a LOT of NATURAL Stuff to Engage and to Touch with our "Natural/Physical Faculties"!!** ...there's Sensory Pleasures ...there's Exploration & Invention ...there's Tastebuds & Technology

...THEN—v. 11

- We're supposed to go into the land and use intelligence, talents, and skills! ...Our Senses are Supposed to be "Experiencing Natural Things"
- **BUT... remember, chap. 2!! ...We have "FALLEN" from our Life-Connection with God by the Spirit! ...We live in this world with the Great Danger of becoming Exclusively "EARTHLY & NATURAL Creatures"!!!**



1 Cor 2:12-14 <sup>12</sup> Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. <sup>13</sup> And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

<sup>14</sup> **The natural person** does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

...**MEET...** "**the natural person**"

Gk. **psychikos** (from psychē); sensitive, i.e. animate (in distinction on the one hand from pneumatikos, which is the higher or renovated nature; and on the other from physikos, which is the lower or bestial nature): — natural, sensual

**pneumatikos** (from pneuma); non-carnal, i.e. (humanly) ethereal, or a spirit, or (divinely) supernatural, regenerate, religious: — spiritual

[1Cor. 2:14] Here again *psychikós* means natural humanity without the eschatological gift of the *pnéúma*. If the unbeliever is *psychikós*, the believer who makes no progress is *sarkikós*. ... The *psychikós* becomes a *sarkikós* when confessing faith but remaining set on what is earthly, i.e., the *sárx*. (Theological Dict. of the NT (Abridged - Kittel))

1 Cor 3:1, 3 <sup>1</sup> But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people (Gk. *pneumatikos*), but as people of the flesh (Gk. *sárx*), as infants in Christ. ...<sup>3</sup> for you are still of the flesh (Gk. *sárx*). For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh (Gk. *sarkikós*) and behaving only in a human way?

1 Cor 12:1 "Now concerning [spiritual gifts](Gk. *pneumatikos*), I do not want you to be ignorant."

**So... it is clearly a Biblical Concern in the N.T. Church—that genuinely born again, Spirit indwelt Christians can experience life that is TOO NATURAL (Spiritual Conditions known as "psychikos" or "sarkikós")**

**"sarkikós"** is a real condition that ebbs and flows among us individually ...and may become a "plague" or "contagion" on a larger spiritual scale!

-- 1Cor 3:1, 3 ...there's a "disconnect" or "inability" to "do pneumatikos" (N.T. life in the Spirit ...ie, the "new normal") ...the "Spirit-Influence" is closer to the level of an unspiritual person or maybe just an "infant in Christ" ...a condition where "naturalness is dominant" and the Spirit's Influence is Small ...THIS is *sarkikós*!!

**The Filling of the Spirit (Sovereign Grace Statement of Faith)**

When Christ ascended, he poured out the Holy Spirit on the church, ushering in a greater experience of God's presence and power among his people.[1] The Spirit transforms hearts by the miracle of regeneration[2] and indwells all believers in abundant, new covenant measure.[3] The Spirit also desires to fill God's people continually with increased power for Christian life and witness.[4] To be filled with the Spirit is to be more fully under his influence,[5] more aware of his presence,[6] and more effective in his service.[7] All Christians, therefore, must continually seek to be filled with the Spirit[8] by living and praying in such a way that invites the Spirit's work among us, actively longing for God to accomplish his gracious purposes in us and through us. The filling of the Spirit brings to God's people a deeper knowledge of Christ,[9] an increased desire for holiness,[10] a stronger commitment to unity and love, a greater fruitfulness in ministry, and a deeper gratitude for our salvation.[11]

## **"sarkikós" ...in the Land of 2026**

...Remember the concerns of Deut 8. ...the "stuff of earth" (circa, Promised Land 1400BC) Could Become a Problem! ...CLEARLY, the "stuff of earth" (circa, America 2026) Can Become a Problem!

"Heads down. Phones out. Fingers scrolling. This is the humanoid posture of our age. We see it everywhere. ... From the rising of the sun to its going down, we scroll our way through the day. We scroll our way through life. And we are scrolling ourselves to death. ... "The internet, like television, traffics in the currency of attention."<sup>12</sup> Every app, every website, every social media influencer whose bottom line depends on keeping eyeballs engaged is in the business of audience building. And the business of audience building—whether you're the New York Times or the NFL, Barack Obama or Blippi—is ultimately an amusement business. What will captivate a scrolling eye long enough to pause the fidgety finger and get it to click? What content will maximally trigger adrenaline or dopamine rushes and cultivate addictive behavior, keeping audiences tuned in? Make no mistake: these questions drive almost every corporation, advertiser, editor, performer, creator, thinker, and influencer vying for attention in a vastly crowded media environment. And it has serious implications for them. And for you." **Brett McCracken**, "Scrolling Ourselves to Death", p. 11, 18

"In the words of Satya Nadella, the CEO of Microsoft: 'We are moving from a world where computing power was scarce to a place where it now is almost limitless, and where the true scarce commodity is increasingly human attention.'" **Tony Reinke**, "Competing Spectacles", p. 57

### Algorithms of the Sarx ...The Heightened Elements of "Natural Engagement"

- Discovering Dopamine and Other "Algorithms of the Sarx"
  - Pleasure Sensors ...God created them NOT the Devil! Corruption has damaged them!
  - Addictive Behaviors
  - Natural/Neurological Junkies!
- **The Strengthening of Sarkikos at the Expense of Pneumatikos!**

"Researchers have made compelling correlations between smartphone (especially social media) usage and rising mental unhealth (depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, loneliness), especially among teens and young adults.<sup>1</sup> Consider the staggering rise in suicide rates among US youth and young adults since the dawn of the smartphone age. ... it has skyrocketed, rising 62 percent between 2007 and 2021.<sup>2</sup> ...Our critical faculties struggle to keep pace with the scope and speed of the digital revolution. As a result, we're often blind to the ways we're being transformed." **Brett McCracken**, "Scrolling Ourselves to Death", p. 11-13

...cracking this confusing code (ie, why is this happening)?

**Ecc. 2:1-2, 10-11, 17** <sup>1</sup> I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself." But behold, this also was vanity. <sup>2</sup> I said of laughter, "It is mad," and of pleasure, "What use is it?" ...<sup>10</sup> And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. <sup>11</sup> Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun. ...<sup>17</sup> So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me, for all is vanity and a striving after wind.

-- "**whatever my eyes desired**" -- the iPhone's Infinity Pool of Eye Candy (ie, "Sensual Stimulus - Cyber-Psychikos")

-- It's as though our devices have enlarged and accelerated our ability to "ingest" the natural realm of our existence—but with it has come a desert of the Spiritual Realm! ...and the destiny of a "mere natural existence" = Excessive FUTILITY!!

"For our own spiritual health, and to maintain a prophetic power and witness in a world being changed faster than it can even recognize, Christians in this cultural moment should slow down and think wisely about the ever-changing technologies swirling around us. ...New technologies shape our thinking: what we think about, the symbols and metaphors we think with, and the forums in which thoughts develop. ...current technology is changing the way we think." **Brett McCracken**, "Scrolling Ourselves to Death", p. 19

### "Sarx on Steroids"

"Rather than being a neutral tool, the internet (particularly the social internet) is an epistemological environment—a spiritual and intellectual habitat—that creates in its members particular ways of thinking, feeling, and believing. ...The web speaks to us. We talk to the web, and the web talks back, and this dialogue constitutes an ever-growing aspect of life in the digital age. ...Rather than thinking of the web and social media as merely neutral tools that merely do whatever users ask of them, it is better to think of them as kinds of spaces that are continually shaping us to think, feel, communicate, and live in certain ways. In other words, the

social internet is a liturgical environment. ...the form of the internet has radically altered how we read, think, feel, and believe." **Samuel James**, "Digital Liturgies", p. 9-10

***A Case for "Fasting" and "Solitude"*** ...a biblical practice! ...the consistent practice of the Ultimate Man—  
Jesus!

"Attention is the skill of withdrawing from everything to focus on some things, and it is the opposite of the dizziness of the scatterbrained spectacle seeker who cannot attend to anything. Thus, attention determines how we perceive the world around us. ...we must learn the art of refocusing a wandering mind... We are creatures shaped by what grabs our attention." **Tony Reinke**, "Competing Spectacles", p. 18-19