

The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost ~ Sunday, June 25, 2023

“Life in the Spirit: A Mind Set On the Spirit”

Romans 8:5-8

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

(Romans 8:5-8)

One of the most dangerous \_\_\_\_\_ we could ever make is thinking that there's a \_\_\_\_\_ way between unbelief and a Spirit filled life. What I mean by that is, try as we may, when it comes to Jesus, there's no middle of the road way between outright \_\_\_\_\_ Him and living the whole of our lives in utter \_\_\_\_\_ on Him.

To believe that there is some middle road between a truly spiritual life and an openly irreligious one, may be the single greatest \_\_\_\_\_ to the advance of the Gospel today.

**TWO GROUP OF PEOPLE**

**Group #1: Those Who Live According to the \_\_\_\_\_.**

“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh...” (Romans 8:5)

The original Greek is actually much more direct, as it doesn't have the word 'live' in it, but reads; “those \_\_\_\_\_ according to the flesh.”

Paul isn't talking about a set of \_\_\_\_\_ or a way of living. He's isn't talking about a \_\_\_\_\_ choice. He's talking about something even more basic than that.

He's saying there are those “who are *according* to the flesh.” In other words, the \_\_\_\_\_ is their defining mark, the ruling \_\_\_\_\_, the dominant characteristic shaping them at the deepest level.

The expression “the flesh” is Paul's theological shorthand for human \_\_\_\_\_ dominated and governed by sin. That's what defines this group—they are

according to the flesh, dominated and governed by the power of sin dwelling in their fallen natures \_\_\_\_\_ from Adam.

When Paul uses the word “mind” here, he's not just talking about our \_\_\_\_\_ and our rationality. The language he uses includes the affections and the will. In other words, he's really talking about our \_\_\_\_\_—the whole interior self—our mind, will, and emotions—the “you” at the heart of who you are.

And so, he's not just saying that fleshly people are always thinking consciously about fleshly things—although that may be true. He's saying the deepest layers of \_\_\_\_\_ and inclination, back even behind their conscious thoughts, are set upon the things of the flesh. They're \_\_\_\_\_ on it.

“Now *the works of the flesh are obvious*: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Galatians 5:19-21)

The picture that Paul paints here is a person thoroughly dominated and \_\_\_\_\_ by the things of the flesh, the works of the flesh, and their sinful nature, with all its various motions and actions at the deepest level of their \_\_\_\_\_.

Coming back to Romans 8, in verse 6, Paul goes on to explain some of the \_\_\_\_\_ of this. The one who is according to the flesh has “set their minds on the things of the flesh,” which, according to Paul is \_\_\_\_\_.

He's not talking about the consequences of sin on down the line when we come to stand before God, so much as he's describing the state or condition of a life dominated by the power of sin, \_\_\_\_\_. The mind set on the flesh is death

Basically, Paul is saying if you're not a Christian, you're enduring a kind of \_\_\_\_\_ death. Or to put it another way: you are dead in your sin.

However, as uncomfortable as his language here might make us, there's no \_\_\_\_\_ involved.

“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of the world.” (Ephesians 2:1)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STATE OF SPIRITUAL DEATH

- \_\_\_\_\_ to God.

The spiritually dead are wholly \_\_\_\_\_ to God. They exist in opposition to Him. They're at \_\_\_\_\_ with Him.

“Adulterers! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.” (James 4:4)

- **Lack of** \_\_\_\_\_.

The evidence of our hostility to God is our refusal to submit to His \_\_\_\_\_. That's the natural state of our heart without Jesus. We don't want anyone to \_\_\_\_\_ over us. We want to be in charge. Without Christ, we are by nature, law breakers, unwilling to submit to God's \_\_\_\_\_. This makes us ultimately guilty in His sight.

- **Total** \_\_\_\_\_.

We are utterly \_\_\_\_\_ to alter our condition under His judgment. That's what spiritual death involves—total \_\_\_\_\_ to help ourselves, save ourselves, or change ourselves.

However, these very same Scriptures also affirm that Jesus died for \_\_\_\_\_.

“The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9)

“Come to Me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

### **Group #2: Those Who Live According to the** \_\_\_\_\_.

It's not just that they live “according” to the Spirit, but they \_\_\_\_\_ according to the Spirit. Their very selves have come to be dominated and \_\_\_\_\_ by the Spirit.

To use the language of Jesus from John 3, they've been “born of the Spirit, born from \_\_\_\_\_, born \_\_\_\_\_.” They were dead, but God, the Holy Spirit, has made them alive together with Christ and now they are a new \_\_\_\_\_. The old has gone; the new has come!

A radical, fundamental \_\_\_\_\_ has taken place at the deepest level of their lives. As a result, their whole interior life is now \_\_\_\_\_ toward, taken up with, governed by, \_\_\_\_\_ on the things of the Spirit.

“the things of the Spirit” refers to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit in contrast to the works of the flesh from Galatians 5 (list):

It involves the \_\_\_\_\_ and ordinary means the Spirit will deploy in our lives to work these \_\_\_\_\_ into us—the Word, the sacraments, prayer, and worship. It involves the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit, the fellowship of believers, for our mutual encouragement in the life of the local church.

The whole Christian life is summed up in the phrase, “the things of the Spirit,” and that's what Paul says, comes to \_\_\_\_\_ our mindset, our outlook, and our values.

When that begins to happen, when the Holy Spirit breaks into our life, Paul says that the result is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Instead of being dead, we come to \_\_\_\_\_. Instead of being hostile to God, alienated from Him, and guilty before Him, we enter a condition of being at \_\_\_\_\_ with Him. The Holy Spirit settles us into a new position under God. He's no longer our enemy. We are now His \_\_\_\_\_, reconciled to Him, \_\_\_\_\_ into His family, and enabled more and more to \_\_\_\_\_ Him.

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There's no \_\_\_\_\_ ground. There's no \_\_\_\_\_ position. Either we are according to the flesh and \_\_\_\_\_, or we are according to the Spirit, \_\_\_\_\_, and at peace with God through Jesus Christ.

### **Which is true of you today?**

**If you are dead, there's only one way to come to life and that is from the nail-pierced hands of Jesus. So flee to Jesus. Run to Him. Cry to Him. Do it now. He's calling you by name and He's mighty to save!**