

Romans 8:5–8

⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. ⁷Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Which of the Two Types of People Are You?

Main idea: There are two types of people—dead and alive, at enmity with God and at peace with God... living according to the flesh and living according to the Spirit.

Introduction: The most important question in your life: am I in Christ Jesus? It can be answered by any (and all) of three other questions.

1. What is my mindset?

- We already know that there's a war on, but which side is my mind on? Which am I aiming at—what the flesh wants, or what the Spirit wants?
- Another way of asking: am I seeking to obey God's law?
 - Am I seeking to obey God's law, because the Spirit Who wrote it is now ruling my heart?
 - Am I seeking to obey God's law, because the Christ Who loves it is my life?

2. Is my soul alive or dead?

- Much more at stake than just living a better sort of life. The question is actually whether or not I am alive at all!
- As long as I am in myself, in my flesh, in my sin, I'm still dead (cf. Eph 2:1, 5).
- But the only way I could have come to love pleasing God is if I am alive.

3. Am I at enmity with God or at peace?

- If I have been given life, then I have peace with God. Not just the ceasing of hostilities but actually having God Himself as an ally.
- The fleshly mind has already claimed the throne; there's nothing that it can do from there that is "friendly" toward God.

Conclusion: Has your flesh been dethroned? Praise God! You are alive, and your desire to please God has come by the help of your almighty Ally! But are you still an enemy? God's Son is dead precisely for the reconciliation of such enemies (cf. 5:10)

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 8 verses 5 through 8, these are God's words. 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. The things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded as death. But to be spiritually minded, as life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against god. For it is not subject to the law of god nor indeed can it be So then those who are in the flesh, Cannot please god.

So, for the reading of god's inspired, and Inherentworth. Well, we had this. Uh wonderful phrase that appeared in verse 1, those who are in christ jesus and And it took us back to verse 25. From chapter 7 last week where we thanked god through jesus christ. Our lord And forward into verse 2 where it was the law of the spirit of life in christ jesus.

That made us free that has made me free the apostle talking about himself, in that case. And inviting each of us to wonder about our own self. The law of the spirit of life in christ, jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. And this is the most important question.

For every one of us. And it is m. I n. Christ, jesus. Am i still with myself? Am i still in my flesh? Arrive. I come to be in christ jesus. Am i united to the lord jesus christ? Do i have a shared life with him? Who, of course, will live forever.

And therefore, if i have a shared life within i have not only a shared life with him. Who is almighty and infinitely? Good. Uh, but everlastingly. So It does answer the same question of am i forgiven for my sins? And am i safe for eternity? Am i safe from hell?

But the one who has come to be in christ jesus, the one who has as we Are going to be thinking about a little bit from this, passage the mind of the spirit. Uh, what they really want to know is am i in union? With the lord jesus christ.

That's the That's the question. That the beginning of the chapter put to us last week. It is what the whole chapter is going to have us rejoicing in. Well, when we get from There is no condemnation to those who are in christ jesus, at the beginning of the chapter and by the time we have followed the logic, the argument of the chapter, as a whole, we get to no separation from the love of god.

Which is in christ jesus. Our lord. And so, The no condemnation for our sin, the no separation from god's love. These are actually ancillary benefits and what can be such a great and glorious thing that it's the primary benefit of which forgiveness of guilt is a fringe benefit. And, Knowing that god has for us as a fringe benefit.

And the primary benefit. Is to be in christ. Jesus, our lord. To be brought into fellowship. With the god, who is love in himself. And and knowing that. What we have in union with christ. Is a Participation in being a recipient of an object of A love. That is.

As big and eternal as The living god. And so, that's the most important question for your life. And if it's not that your question, if it hasn't been the most important question for you, do i have the Lord jesus. Am i united to him? Well, the passage invites you to ask that question and it does so By giving really three other questions that are asking the same thing so that you can discover why it's so dangerous not To have the lord jesus christ.

And the three other questions that we find answered, or put to us at least by implication in these four verses, his first, what is my mindset? What is my mindset or as you can hear in the word? Can't you? What do i set my mind upon upon? What do i set my mind?

What is my mindset? And so that's the the first thing that we will be thinking about and asking about. Because, Um, Or rather in versus five and six. And then the, the next question this is one that is The directly flows out of the previous one. The each one flows into the other.

Is my soul. Alive or dead. So what is my mindset? First of all? And then we discover That that's a very important question. Because what my mindset is will help me think about whether my soul is a live. Or dead. And then an even bigger deal. Not just as my soul alive or dead or But am i at enmity with god?

Have i made myself an enemy of god Or i made myself, god, my enemy. Or at peace with god. Is god my ally instead of my enemy? And so we start with something that At first glance, doesn't seem. Like it is. As serious. How what are we setting? Our minds upon what is my mindset?

This is for those who live according to the flesh, and it's actually the to be verb, those who are according to their flesh. And in other words, this isn't just an abstract category. A Complex thing to think about am i in the flesh? Or am i in christ? Am i in the flesh?

Or am? I in the spirit? It's actually something that shapes our whole existence. What is saying, is that there are two kinds of people There is the in flesh being And there is the in spirit and in christ. Being. And so, he says, those who live or are According to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh.

But those who, and it's implied who are According to the spirit. And again, the The implication is set their minds upon the things of the spirit. Now we're already a little bit used to him using language like this set their minds upon because you remember how he described it when he came at last and the spirit who originally gave us the law and he said the law of spiritual, but i am fleshly sold under sin and yet he was no longer.

Uh, tempted to call the loss in, or he was no longer calling the lost, anyways, calling the law, holy and righteous, and good, and delighting in god's law from his inner being. And you remember this wonderful discovery in the towards the end of Romans 7 that the the fight that we are in against our sin, if we're believers.

It's actually a reminder that we have a new law of our mind. That is our desire, our aim, our purpose, Is to love god and obey his good law that we Now have come to delight in. And so we're used to him using this language. Now, the law of my mind, And i wonder what it is.

That you set your mind upon. Not are you always successful in thinking about what the holy spirit wants you to think about? And you could tell what the holy spirit wants to think about. We just mentioned it, didn't we children? What was it? That was spiritual from the beginning.

The law of spiritual. God, the holy spirit caused the bible to be written. And so if i'm asking the question is my mindset upon the things of the holy spirit? It's actually something that we can measure something that we have a test for and is it is my mindset upon the things that the bible talks about that.

The bible teaches about And mostly then is my mind upon the glory of god in jesus christ. Who is god? Who saves sinners. Is is my mind set upon god himself and how he glorifies jesus, by saving me and by making me like jesus. And by making by adopting me, as his child, making me to know him as father and be thankful for all of his goodness to me and wanting to be like him and participate in the family business as it were.

Of. Of obedience and love unto god, love unto my neighbor and so forth. The bible is the the plain test for what am i Am i setting my mind upon the things of the flesh? Or am i setting my mind upon the things of the spirit? Now, if we're very Unsuccessful in this if we're not, if we're not being diligent to be watchful about what we think about, Than this will be something that That may be.

Difficult or painful. For us to consider. There are many people and in fact, all of us, it's at some point or to some extent who don't actually pay attention to what's going on in their minds. They're just kind of let their mind run off to to anything and They use just as much as is necessary for whatever task they're doing and their mind is just kind of given a, a life of its own.

I'm afraid that this is to have your mind set upon the things of the flesh. But if you hate your sin and you do desire that you love god, more and it pains you that you don't please him and don't bring honor to christ. The way you would the way you should the way that you desire to then it's encouraging to be reminded that the holy spirit has given you that desire so that it's actually painful for you that you don't think and live the way that you should He actually.

You read and learn here. But he is, he wants to train your mind. One of the things of the spirit that we are to set our minds upon Is. To have a particular mindset to be intentional with our thoughts to take them. Captive as it were and make good use.

Of our hearts and minds our thought life. So, Another way of asking it then is, am i setting my mind upon god's word? Because the spirit, Who i whom i want to direct my mind. He is the one who wrote the bible? He is the one who carried men along as they spoke from god.

So am i setting my mind upon god's word because the spirit now rules my heart. Now. If if you and i don't have a desire. To set our minds to set our thoughts upon the word of god. Then why would we think? That the holy spirit who wrote, those words is actually the one who is ruling our hearts.

And so, we can bring that to the lord. That we can. Plead with him. That by his means, even by our hearing the word preached. Now, by prayer, Uh, then all day on the lord's day. Attending in the public worship. By the fellowship that he gives us with saints in the home, stirring up one another to love in.

Good works. And and saints in the assembly, especially On the lord's day, stirring up one another to love and good works. That we would set Set our minds upon god's word and not just to consider it, but to do it. Am i seeking to obey god's law? Because the spirit who wrote it is now, ruling my heart.

Am i seeking to know god's word and obey God's word because the christ who loves god's law and who hates sin is now my life, You remember from last week. Jesus is the one who condemned sin in the flesh. And so if i'm united to christ, won't i hate sin too like jesus hates sin.

Won't i love holiness? Love for God and obedience. The way jesus loves those things. So that's the first First question, then that can really start to open up for me. The answer to m. I united to christ. Am i in christ, jesus, or am i in the flesh? The first question is well, what is my mindset?

Is my mind set upon things of the flesh. Or is my mindset? Upon the things of the spirit. Well, one another reason that that's important is because that's also to ask and to answer the question, is my soul alive or dead? So, look at verse 6. For to be carnally and that just means fleshly to be fleshly minded is death.

But to be spiritually minded. Is life. And peace. So this question of do i have a right mindset? Do i have the the proper mindset in life? Am i using my thoughts? Well, and setting them upon the correct things. It's much. There's much more at stake here than You know, these are there are these talks that you can see videos of sometimes they're called dead talks and there are other similar things, you know, the The professional motivational speaker types, who want to help you live a better life, and be more successful and be more effective and influence others.

And and And all these sorts of things. And, I'm sure there are many of them who speak about things like, attitude and mindset. Well, there's much more at stake. In our setting, our minds upon the things of the spirit. Rather than the things of the flesh, then just am i going to be really effective?

Am i going to be successful? Am i going to influence? Others. Because what's at stake is either, i am dead or i am alive. If my mind is set upon the things of the flesh. If i'm fleshly-minded, women's eight six says, then, i'm still dead. I may be a member of the church.

I may be called a saint. I may have a sign and seal that is unto faith. Uh, but i don't have the faith. Unto which that signed seals. Per being united to christ and partaking of of his benefits. And so there are many things that i may have. I may have good behavior.

I may have the appreciation and admiration of my friends, or my parents, or my children or my spouse. There are many things that i may that i Many good things that i may have. But if i am still fleshly minded, If that which controls the desire of my heart, Is not the same.

Holy spirit. Who wrote the bible? Who is the spirit of christ? Then, i am still. Dead. As long as i am in myself. In my flesh. Then i am in my sin. And i'm still dead. Perhaps you're familiar. With the opening verses and ephesians chapter 2, where there it's explaining why it had to be only by god's grace.

That we came to be saved in the first place that we came to be made right with god in the first place. But there's that language of death verse 2. And you he made alive who were dead in trespasses and sins. And then, ephesians 2. Um, verse four and five, but god, who is rich in mercy because of his great love with which he loved us.

Even when we were Dead in trespasses made us alive to gather with christ. And so union with christ doesn't just isn't just some added benefit. That makes life more enjoyable and more sweet and Having our mindset upon the things of the spirit isn't just a technique for a more effective.

More successful way to live. These things are literally life and death. And if my mind, Is set. On the things of the flesh. If my goals in life, desires and life pleasures in life motivations, Have more to do with what i can enjoy now. And that doesn't just mean.

The most crass, physical things like food, and drink, and so on. But even the praise. Of others and entertainment and comfort. And And good times, anything other. Really then god himself. If my mind is set on the things of the flesh, then Then i'm still dead. So we have our first two questions then.

What is my mindset? And is my soul alive. Are dead. And this brings us to another question. Because you notice that there's something added there at the end of verse 6, he said to be fleshly-minded as death. It shows that i'm still in my transgressions in my self instead of jesus.

But to be spiritually, minded is life. And we heard that, didn't we when we looked at Ephesians 2:5 made alive together with christ. In effusions, two five, but it's not just life. What else is it? But to be spiritually, minded is life. And, Peace. You see if while we were dead in our trespasses.

God made us alive together with christ. He did so because he is rich and mercy. He did. So because he has loved us with a great love. This means that god has been bending. All the he is and all that he is doing in all of creation and time and history, right up until the time that i came along in his plan, he's been bending.

All of that, upon me in his love, he has been for me, even when i was his enemy. He loved me and gave his son to die for me so that i could be reconciled to god through the death of his son while i was his enemy and how much more if that's what happened when i was his enemy will, i now be saved.

Will everything else that comes with jesus and everything else that comes with christianity? Surely the god who has been forming from before time began? Is working all things together is bringing me to be conformed, to the image of his son, his ensuring that nothing separates me from his love.

You see how the the back half of the chapter is actually flowing out of the battle with our sin and which i have my mind set upon the things of the spirit. And i always don't always do what the law of my mind wants to do but it is the law of my mind because my mind is set upon the things of the spirit.

And that's because i am alive in christ jesus. And the reason i'm alive in christ jesus is because god is for me. And we have, Peace. With god. You remember that from the beginning of chapter 5 as well? We have peace with god through our lord jesus christ. What a wonderful thing it is to have peace with god.

It's not just The. The ceasing of hostility. Uh, where we where gods we were. We had made enemies of god. And we were at war with one another, but the fact that there's a war still to be waged, actually helps us see that now we are god's allies. We don't become neutral in the spiritual battle, you know, you know you don't become like spiritual switzerland.

Where Where you just pull out of the conflict and now you just live in the mountains and drink cocoa. Which i know is not all that swiss people do. Um but the the battle you're in is actually something in which you get to enjoy and alliance with all mighty god.

And how wonderful? To have god as your ally. There's, There's a very anxious man in russia. Who is worried about who all his neighbors, allies are going to be Well, we have a much greater ally. Than nato, or the u.s or all the nations of this world. If you have life, If you have your mindset upon what the holy spirit wants, That's because all mighty god is your ally, well, as wonderful as that is.

There's only two options. There are no switzerlands. Either god, is your ally. Or he's your Enemy. And i can think of nothing more dreadful. Than to have god. As your enemy. Oh, my dear ones.

I would not have you. Have god. As your enemy. But this is exactly the case if you are still Fleshly minded. Unless we see in verse 7 and 8 because the carnal mind, the fleshly mind is enmity against god. It's in mity against god. Now you may think well, it doesn't It doesn't hurt god.

Any if i serve myself and if i enjoy myself a little bit, if i'm always making my plans about what i can uh, what i can enjoy and and who i can get to admire me and notice me and You know, why is that enmity against god? And here's the simple answer.

Because he's got,

If we are following our flash, Then we have already given. Someone else a throne. That belongs to the living god. Notice the language of being subject here, because the fleshly mind is enmity against god for it is not subject to the law of god, because god is god, because all things are from him and through him, and to him, because all things are from him through him, they are also supposed to be to him.

They're supposed to be done for his glory, they're supposed to be done according to his law. And so, if we Do not have him on the throne if if we are subjects to the flesh. Then we have already. Dethroned god. And until We give back until we are yielded to him, made alive united to christ and dwelt by his spirit.

So that what he says, rules our life, Then we continue to be his enemies. It's not like, you can add A little bit of obedience. To a life that has lived according to the flesh. And somehow decrease, your enmity with god. You can add going to church. You can't add talking spiritual.

You can't add doing your devotions. You can't add family worship or an entire lord's day and public worship twice. You can't add. Working on any any number of sins. So long as your flesh is still controlling the desires and purpose and motivation of your life. With flesh on the throne.

You have displaced and attacked. The living god. You see the fleshly heart? The fleshly mind the fleshly life? Cannot be subject to the law of god. And you can't bring any of those things and think that it will please God to have them. So long as you yourself and your desires.

Are still on the throne of your life. Verse 8. So then those Who are in the flesh? Cannot. Please. God. But this brings us To a wonderful consideration. Because of that matters to you. If? It matters to you that you would, please god. Then you're not actually in your flesh.

Are you? You already just those who are in the flesh. Cannot please god. But if you hear that and you say, but i want to please him They're all these ways that i don't, please him. They're all these things that i do instead that i hate, Aren't you already describing the one that we just got finished hearing about the end of roman 7?

Who has this law of your mind? Even though there's a law that remains in your members even though they're sin that dwells in you. You say i love god and i want to please him. It's just so hard and i keep failing so much. But that wanting to please him, that didn't come from you.

That came from his spirit. That came from christ. Doesn't mean that you're not in danger, it doesn't mean that you're not in a battle. But it does mean that you have a symptom of somebody who's alive. Who has your mind set upon the things of the spirit? Who has god, who is for you?

And now having him for you, We're going to hear. In the upcoming. Portion of the passage means that you have him as your ally in the battle and we'll hear about what that battling. Looks like in the life. But if your flesh has been depththrown, it remains in you, but it's not on the throne, you're not in your flesh than praise god, because he's the one who did it.

You are alive and your desire to please. God has come by the help of your almighty ally. But it does bring up the question. Do you? Do you want to please god? Is that the desire of your heart? Because if not my dear hearers, It may still be the case that you are in your flesh.

That your soul is dead. That you continue to live as an enemy of god. And if you are still an enemy of god, Remember that? This is the god who Gave his son. To die. So that his enemies could be reconciled to him. You may be an enemy, but this is a god who even now extends to you, The invitation to receive his son.

The lord jesus christ. To belong to him to come out of yourself. And hope only in jesus and to be found in him to have that shared life with him. Forgiveness from him, goodness from him. He is a god who offers life to his enemies. Reconciliation. To his enemies.

Through the death of his son. And so, if you've been hearing tonight and struggling with the idea that i might actually still be an enemy of god, Do not give up the struggle easily by comforting yourself quickly. If you still have the symptoms of being in your flesh, And do not give up.

Looking to god. Pleading with him, to give you that life to give you that faith. To give you his spirit to join you to his son. So that you will say, yes, the battle is fierce. But i would really do want to please him. Because he gave me life.

And in that life, I love him. And i set my mind upon the things that his spirit. Has given me to set my mind upon from his word. And i trust that he who gave me all of that, Will not stop. He will persevere with me. Until i am.

Holy. Like jesus. Amen.