

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

ROMANS 8:5-11

Romans 8:5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

02/07/16

Introduction

I love math. There is just something about taking a bunch of information and coming to precise resolution. Contrary to what I thought when my 7th grade math teacher told me, he was right. I have used math about every day in my life. I used math around the house to ensure that the pictures I hung on the wall were perfect and symmetrical. When I was working on jet propulsion engines, math was used to make sure the right fuel to air mixture was accurate. There is just something exciting about taking a problem, applying the correct theorem, and it results in the correct answer.

Most word problems can be solved with a simple math formula: direct or inverse proportions. That discovery helped me through my high school and college classes. For example: you are paid \$20 per hour for the work you perform. That is a direct proportion. The greater number of hours you work results in a greater amount of pay on your pay check. The inverse proportion would be like speed and driving time. The faster you drive, the shorter the travel time. As speed increases, travel time decreases.

In our passage today, we find that the Apostle Paul is giving us a math problem to the Roman believers. The solve the problem, one of two responses are given. Both are correct, but with drastically different results.

Where Do Your Loyalties Rest?

Romans 8:5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

Generally speaking the human nature has three components: the body or flesh, the spirit or the inward man, and the soul, which makes man different from all other created beings.

Paul talks a lot about the “flesh” in this passage (6 times in these verses). So what is Paul referring? The general meaning is “the nature of man.” Paul details the deeds of the flesh in his epistle to the churches in Galatia.

Galatians 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

That is quite a laundry list, 17 items, not counting the general “and such like.” This is the anti-Fruits of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Note: there is a sharp contrast between verse 19 and 22. “Now the works of the flesh” verses “the fruit of the Spirit.” Works vs Fruit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Paul gives us two “IF / THEN” statements. IF you are carnally minded, THEN there is death. Or IF you are spiritually minded, THEN there is life and peace. Hmm, which of these results would you prefer to have in your life today: death or life and peace? Seems kind of like a “duh” statement. The answer is obvious.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

The rationale behind Paul’s “IF / THEN” statements is found in this verse: “the carnal mind is enmity against God.” Enmity is a “deep rooted hatred” against God. The carnal mind does not want to be in subjection to God or His commandments.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

In his conclusion to these three verses, Paul clearly identifies that there is a great difference between a carnally minded person and God. In that state, you cannot please God.

Who Dwells Within You?

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Paul clearly identifies the difference between the believers in Christ and the carnal mind. Believers have been changed; they are no longer under the laws of the flesh, but have the Holy Spirit indwelling them. Another IF / THEN statement follows: IF the Spirit of God dwells in you THEN you should not be living in the flesh. The conclusion to this thought is: IF you don’t have the Spirit of Christ in you THEN you are not one of Christ’s.

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

It seems like Paul is “jumping horses in the middle of the stream.” In the previous verse he speaks of the Spirit of God indwelling the believer. In this verse he moves from the “Spirit of Christ” to “Christ” indwelling the believer. Notice how Paul freely discusses the trinity in these verses: “Spirit – Spirit of God – Spirit of Christ – Christ.” There is no difference in the work of God – Christ – Spirit in the indwelling of the believer.

And as such, Paul reveals the result of sin: the flesh is dead because of sin. Without the indwelling of the Spirit of God/Christ, the body is dead. However, salvation brings life to man and therefor man becomes righteousness in the sight of God. May I say Halleluia!

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Now the beauty of this passage is revealed. The same Spirit that resurrected Jesus from the dead, lives within each believer...and if the Spirit resurrected Jesus, that same Spirit will quicken your fleshly/carnal self into a “bodily” resurrection and receive a new body.

1 Corinthians 15:42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: 43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. 45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

Conclusion

The believer can have two “dispositions” (minds): he can lean toward the things of the flesh and be a carnal Christian (“carnal” means “of the flesh”) who is at enmity with God; or he can incline toward the things of the Spirit, be a spiritual Christian, and enjoy life and peace. The carnal mind cannot please God; only the Spirit working in and through us can please God.¹

I started out by discussing problem solving, specifically using math.

In this passage the Apostle Paul poses rhetorical questions:

Where do your loyalties rest; in the fleshly, carnal side of you which results in death, or in the spirit which brings life and peace?

Who dwells within you, is it the Spirit of God or a carnal mind which cannot please God?

I would like to ask you these two questions this morning:

Where do your loyalties lie?

Who dwells within you or more importantly, who have you given control to: the flesh or the Spirit?

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1992). *Wiersbe's expository outlines on the New Testament* (p. 388). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.