

THE BATTLE FOR THE MIND

Romans 8:5-8

February 27, 2022

"The set of our minds will determine not only eternity but the quality of our life now." (R. Kent Hughes)

Our mindset, on one level, puts most of us into one of four types of people:

Avoiders -

Coasters -

Controllers -

Conquerors -

Two groups of peoples:

(Ezekiel 33:30-32)

1. "Those who live according to the flesh"

Set [their] minds on the flesh (ESV)

Think only about things that their sinful selves want
(New Century Version)

Think about sinful things (New Living Translation)

Think they can do it on their own (The Message)

Obsession with self (The Message)

(1 John 2:15-17)

☞ Death (v. 6 - To set the mind on the flesh is death) A dead end (The Message)

☞ Hostility towards God (against God) (v. 7- the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God)

☞ Rebellion & refusal to submit to God's law (v.7) (NLT: They refuse to obey God's law and really are not even able to obey God's law.)

☞ Self-rule (v. 8)

☞ Actions & attitudes that will not please God (v. 8 - Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.)

2. Those who live according to the Spirit

Set [their] minds on the things of the Spirit (v. 5) (ESV)

Think about the things the Spirit wants them to do
(NCV)

Trust God's action in them (The Message)

Pay Attention to God (The Message)

Experience life and peace (v. 6)

Think they can do it on their own (Message)

Put to death the misdeeds of the body (v. 13)

Are led by the Spirit of God (v. 14)

vv. 12-14 (NIV) - Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

"It is the Spirit who frees us from sin and death, enables us to fulfill God's law, changes our nature, gives us the ability to overcome the desires of our unredeemed flesh, confirms our adoption as God's children, and guarantees our eternal glory. In short, there can be no success or progress in the Christian life apart from an utter dependence on the third Person of the Trinity." (John MacArthur)

Living according to the Spirit, having a Spiritual mind-set, is consciously or unconsciously oriented toward:

☞ Life and peace (v. 6b - To set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.)

When evangelist D. L. Moody described his conversion experience, he said: "I was in a new world. The next morning the sun shone brighter and the birds sang sweeter ... the old elms waved their branches for joy, and all nature was at peace."

When Ernest Hemingway died, everything was lost! This is not so for the believer.

2 Corinthians 4:16 (NIV) "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day."

☞ Truth

☞ Friendship with God

Colossians 1:22-23 (NLT) You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions, yet now he has brought you back as his friends. He has done this through his death on the cross in his own human body. As a result, he has brought you into the very presence of God, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.

☞ Guidance by, & Obedience to the Spirit's influence - desire to please Him and to follow Him (Galatians 5:16-22; 6:8) - awareness of the Spirit's Presence (John 14:17)

No longer do we obey because we OUGHT to, we obey because we

- ☞ Knowing and following the words of Jesus - (John 14:26; Psalm 119:9, 97)
- ☞ Sensitivity to sin (John 16:7-11)

Question: What are some Counter-productive responses to “the misdeeds of the body:”

- ☞ Denial - “I haven’t done or couldn’t do that.”
- ☞ Claiming Ignorance - “I wasn’t sure if it was wrong.”
- ☞ Capitulation - “I’m weak, but at least I’m being honest about it.”
- ☞ Excuses - “I was deprived as a child.” “It’s not really a habit.”
- ☞ Minimizing Sin - “At least I’m not as bad as...”
- ☞ Legalism - “I’m doing so many things right, those wrong things don’t really matter.”

Question: How do we cooperate with the Spirit’s Control?

- ☞ Respond to the gospel invitation...
 - ☞ Pray - as for greater openness and responsiveness to His guidance
 - ☞ Humble yourself -
 - ☞ Be in the Word
 - ☞ Obey - Where God’s will is clear
 - ☞ Train yourself - “Our response to the gospel does not involve trying to live a certain way, but training to live in the way of the Spirit.”
- Through:
- Responding properly to suffering
 - Persevering
 - Developing Self-Control
 - Developing your Spiritual Disciplines
 - Consciously relying upon the HS
 - Consciously and intentionally put to death what remains of your sinful nature

Colossians 3:5 ^(NLT) - Put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual sin, impurity, lust, and shameful desires. Don’t be greedy for the good things of this life, for that is idolatry. (Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:22-5:14;)

Matthew 6:24 ^(ESV) - “No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Romans 8:35-37 ^(ESV) - Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

A Truth to Remember: Those who live following their sinful selves think only about things that their sinful selves want. But those who live following the Spirit are thinking about the things the Spirit wants them to do....

If people's thinking is controlled by the Spirit, there is life and peace. When people's thinking is controlled by the sinful self, they... cannot please God.

A Challenge to Consider: Are you cooperating with the Spirit's control, feeding Him and seeking Him? Or are you too consumed with what your natural self desires?

One thing I heard this morning was...

One way I heard the gospel this morning was...