

Last week, we spoke about the two sides of what Paul referred to as those "who walked in the flesh" and those "who walked in the Spirit." Read again from Romans 8:3b-4:

**Romans 8:3b-4 (ESV) By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.**

Now let us read the passage that we are going to review tonight:

**Romans 8:5-8 (ESV) 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. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.**

Stop right here. We already bifurcated this particular passage and study the one half that describes what it means to walk in the flesh. With some creative word juggling, we came up with and expounded the following:

*For those who live according to the flesh have set their minds on the things of the flesh, you are hostile to God, you do not and cannot submit to God's law and it is impossible for you to please God. You are going to die.*

I did this for the express purpose to hopefully show you that the intent in which Paul wrote this. I have to be crystal clear that Paul intended this passage to be either/or, this or that, this one thing or that one thing but never a mix of the two. There was no way Paul could have been more clear that you either walk in flesh or walk in the Spirit but you cannot do both. I threw even more verses at you in order to beat this into your head.

So last week, I left you hanging with questions like

- "Who can save me and keep me from having my mind on things of the flesh?"
- "How can I not be hostile towards God?"
- "How can I truly submit to God's law?"
- "How can I have my faith in Him alone?"
- Even more importantly, "How can I not die?"

For those of us who grew up in church, the correct answer is always 'Jesus' and we all know that there is power in the name of Jesus. But we are not simply talking about the name that is made up by the letters J-E-S-U-S. Because if that is the case, every unbeliever could simply walk out on this message, say the name, "Jesus!" and think that he is now right with God. When you speak of the name of Jesus Christ, you are speaking the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty of Jesus Christ. You are speaking of His honour and not the fact you can simply pronounce it.

How many of us rattled off the sinner's prayer when we were kids and yet the lives we lived could not be confused as Christian? \*raises hand

This is about denying your old self, literally changing your mind about sin and placing all of your trust, hope and belief into Jesus Christ and be all satisfied with Him alone and unsatisfied with the things of this world.

So...

I. Who can save me and keep me from having my mind on things of the flesh?

... or as Paul puts it:

**Romans 7:24-25 (ESV) Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.**

Wait a second. My mind still remembers some of the bad things I used to do. Even still, I remember some of

the bad things I used to do and I really really really want to do them now. I know that it is wicked and perverse and evil but I still want to do these things.

Understand what your body really is in the eyes of the Lord:

**1 Corinthians 3:9 (ESV) For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.**

In other words, it is you, into your heart and into your mind where Christ comes in, strapped with toolbelt with some awesome power tools, powered by the Holy Spirit, and goes to work in you. How?

**1 Corinthians 3:10-17 (ESV) According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.**

I won't digress too much over this but I wanted to give you something to think about. Think of all the times God uses fire in the Bible: burning bush, pillar of fire by night, chariots of fire and horses of fire that took up Elijah, tongues of fire in Acts and even the eyes of fire in Jesus Christ in Revelation 19. It is God who will reveal your heart by fire. If you have not been given a new heart by Jesus Christ, then whatever pitiful foundation you have built will disintegrate like taking a Bic lighter to sheet of rice paper.

**1 Corinthians 3:18-19 Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.**

By repenting of sin and believing upon His name, God comes into your temple, cleans it out and gives you a new heart and declares you to be holy and righteous. Just like when Jesus Christ came into the temple, immediately goes bat-crazy and doesn't just start to tidy up the place but cleans it totally out. That temple might have been the same old temple on the outside, just like you have the same old body. But the temple is now holy and righteous because Jesus Christ has done all the work to clean it out.

**Romans 12:1-2 (ESV) I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.**

Only Jesus Christ can do that work in you.

II. How can I not be hostile towards God?

Churchfolks, what's the answer? Jesus! Okay, so how did Jesus do it? Simply put and to really make this stick, I am going to be as graphic as possible: because of your sin and your sinful nature, God in His holiness, righteousness and justice should have poured His wrath upon you. But Christ in your place and took all that wrath upon Himself. This is the fancy seminary term: propitiation. Look how it works itself out in the Scriptures:

**Romans 3:21-25 (ESV) But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.**

We are all sinners and we have exchanged the glory of God for our own glory. Yet, if we believe in Jesus Christ that He was propitiated, that is, He took on the likeness of sinful flesh and incur the wrath of God for our sins,

then we are forgiven and wiped clean of all sins and justified and made right standing before God. Even those who lived before the time of Christ, they have believe for the One who would be their Messiah and would cleanse them of all their sins and unrighteousness.

**1 John 4:9-10 (ESV) In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

It was out of the love, grace, mercy and compassion, of which God is fully, that God sent forth His Son to die in our place.

**1 John 2:1-2 (ESV) My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.**

This is not to say He died for all the world and the world is justified before Him simply by what He did. This accounts for all the sins that were committed against you. When His blood wiped your sins clean, those were all of your sins and the sins that were committed against you. You might have been raped but God sees you as whole and new and beautiful and wonderful. You have might been physically abused but God is your shield, sword, strength and might. You have might been called an idiot or worst things all of your life.. you are this guy who seems to constantly make the wrong decisions time and time again but God gave you a renewed mind and gives you not the wisdom of the world but the wisdom of God and it is all there if you just ask for it.

**Hebrews 2:17 (ESV) Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.**

When you are a child of God and you face temptation, you know you are child of God because that temptation is painful. You suffer under the brute force attack of it. But Jesus Christ lived the life that you could not have lived, suffered the same exact temptations as you and I faced but with the strength and grace empowered by the Holy Spirit, He overcame it all just so He could hang himself on the tree, taking all of our sins with Him, bled to death and taking all those sins into the tomb where they will be there forever forgotten. When the same Spirit that empowered Jesus with strength and might raised Him from the dead, and resurrect with new life just the Holy Spirit is able to resurrect you with new life.

John 3:1-8; Romans 8:4-11; 2 Peter 1:3-15; Galatians 5:22-23;