

Minding the Things of the Flesh

(Rom 8:5-8)

I. Summary

- A) Rom 8:5-13 (Considering v.1-4 a summary statement, in v.5 Paul begins the subject of ch 8)
 - 1. Rom 8:1-2- His great assertion concerning all those “in Christ”
 - 2. Rom 8:3-4- How these same people were put in this position
 - i. Rom 8:4b- The practical results of v.1-4a
 - a) Now starting in v.5 Paul shows how only those who “walk after the Spirit” are able to have “the righteousness of the law fulfilled in them”

II. Mechanics

- A) Rom 8:5-13- Paul’s expounding of 8:4b
 - 1. Rom 8:5-8- Contrast of the believer with the unbeliever proving why righteousness can only be fulfilled in the believer
 - i. Paul is not contrasting 2 types of Christians
 - 2. Rom 8:9-11- This truth applied to the Romans (believers)
 - 3. Rom 8:12-13- Practical exhortation

III. Terms (I am following MLJ’s suggestion of taking this by category of person rather than verse by verse)

A) “After the flesh”

- 1. Remember the use of flesh here is “fallen human nature w/o God intervening”
 - i. “After” or “under” or “according to the usual method”
 - a) Fallen man as he is habitually dominated by his sin nature

B) Paul lists several things that are true concerning those who are “after the flesh”:

1. V.5- “He minds the things of the flesh”

- i. “Mind”- to direct one thoughts towards, to feel, to think upon, focus interest (“savor” in Mt 16)
 - a) This term includes thoughts, but isn’t limited to that
 - b) Also includes emotions, passions, desires
 - 1) Phil 3:15-16- Focus of the mind, deliberate actions
 - 2) Col 3:1-2- Set your affection on
 - 3) 1 John 2:15-17- Mind not the world
- ii. “Things”- The command is not limited to just the sensual or “fleshly”
 - a) Gal 5:19-21- Includes the mind and emotions and desires
 - 1) Many think this only refers to filth, lust, sexual immorality, etc.

- 2) But this refers to the noblest and most sophisticated lost people as well
 - (a) His goals, ambitions, art, culture, habits, delights, food, everything including his own religions
 - (1) Pharisees were a perfect example of worldly minded
 - b) 1 John 2:15-17- “Things” here = “Lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and pride of life”
 - 1) “Mr. Worldly-Minded” from Pilgrim’s Progress is perfect example
 - 2) Refers to life in this world only, without God or His will considered; to things temporal only, no thought for eternal spiritual things
2. **V.6- “To have the mind of the flesh is death”**
- i. Those doing the above are “dead” spiritually
 - a) Eph 2:1-2- Dead in sin
 - ii. The natural man is in a state of spiritual death and stupor; blinded
 - 1) Rom 12:2- Be not conformed to this world
 - 2) Eph 4:17-24- Put off the old man
 - 3) 1 Cor 2:14- Natural man cannot receive/think/understand spiritual things
 - (a) Example of Wilberforce and Pitt
3. **V.7- “The mind of the flesh is at enmity with God”**
- i. This statement alone disproves the “carnal Christian” teaching
 - ii. Col 1:21- Natural man’s mind is “alienated from God”
 - a) Now many will say, But I believe in God, or Christ”
 - 1) But it is not the God of the bible nor the Christ of the bible
 - (a) Confront them with the truth concerning God or Christ from the scriptures and they will reject Him; such as:
 - (1) God’s sovereignty
 - (2) God’s wrath
 - (3) God’s justice
 - (4) God’s election
 - (5) God’s rejection of their “good works”
 - (6) God’s testimony of hell and eternal punishment
 - I. Rejecting the truth concerning God proves one is at enmity with Him and His revelation of Himself
4. **V.7- “Not subject to the law of God”**
- i. The natural man will not submit the God’s law, and in fact hates it
 - ii. The natural man concocts a religion by twisting God’s law into what pleases him

5. **V.7- “Neither indeed can be”**
 - i. The unbeliever can do nothing whatsoever about his condition
 - a) He cannot truly desire God
 - b) He cannot truly seek God
 - c) He cannot truly love God whatsoever
 - 1) John 6:44
6. **V.8- “Cannot please God”**
 - i. “So then”- shows the result of all this
 - ii. The natural man cannot please God, thus cannot in any way merit His attention for salvation:
 - a) He cannot please Him
 - b) He cannot understand Him
 - c) He cannot hear Him
 - d) He cannot pray to Him
 - e) He cannot believe Him
 - f) He cannot “bring forth fruit whatsoever” (8:4b)
 - 1) How then can anyone be saved?
 - (a) Rom 8:2- “The law of the Spirit of life.....”
 - (b) Eph 2:8-9- All of grace/a gift