

Spirit or Flesh?

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[0:00] Romans 8 verse 1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walked not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit are things of the Spirit.

For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. We read here about two things, the flesh and the Spirit.

Contrary things, a battle between the flesh and Spirit. We're told, ye are not of the flesh, but of the Spirit.

[1:22] Our world is fleshly. It's anti-spiritual. Now, notice it says spiritual, not religious.

Someone said everyone is religious. And that's really true, isn't it? Everyone is religious, but not everyone is spiritual. Are we spiritual or fleshly?

It's a question for all of us. Sometimes we may, maybe we, at times can be both. But we shouldn't be, should we?

It should be quite clear what side we're on. The purity of the Church is under attack today. Is it of the Spirit of God, or of the Spirit of the age?

These are questions we all need to consider. Sometimes Christians get mixed up and not discerned between the two. And these verses in Romans 8 through from Romans 1, Romans 8, verse 1 to verse 9, talk about three areas of how we can have a spiritual life.

[2:37] How to be spiritual. So, to help make it clear, just write those three things on here. First one, the spiritual walk.

Spiritual walk. The second one, spiritual walk. And the third one, spiritual life. We've got to colour these three things.

Three things. First one, spiritual walk. Verse 1. Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. We can walk after the flesh.

We can walk after the Spirit. As believers, we should walk after the Holy Spirit. Step by step. In step with God. Moving closer to where He wants us to be.

Closer and closer to Him. Being a Christian is not easy believism. It's being a follower of Christ.

[3:40] It's walking in Christ. It's walking in the Spirit. It's a walk. A spiritual walk. As we mature. And we put away childish things.

We put away childish things. And we seek after spiritual things. Paul says that in 1 Corinthians 13.11. I used to think like a child.

Understand like a child. Speak like a child. When I became a man, I put away childish things.

Childish things. Things like squabblings. Sookiness. Stubbornness.

Selfishness. Being a spoiled brat. Some kids have got all those traits. We need to grow up into Him. It's like a walk.

It's a gradual growing process. As we know. We get taller. As we get older. And then sometimes. As we get older. Then we get a bit shorter. I think. I think that can happen too. But as a Christian.

[4:36] We hope that we can grow in Christ. It's a walk. Isn't it? We grow up into Him. But in Him. All things might have the preeminence. So. God wants us to live that way.

A godly life. A victorious life. And sometimes. It's those. That are the unknown. That God works the most in. Isn't it? It's the most humble. It's the most lowly.

Not the popular and prominent ones. Or respected or recognised ones sometimes. But those in the back scenes. Those behind the scenes. God wants you to walk in the spirit.

Not in the flesh. I have read this interesting story. About drifting. Drifting. Some Christians drift. They drift.

It says here. Drifting of course is one of those great evil influences. Which affect the believer. As much as the unbeliever. We drift away softly. And silently.

[5:32] Like a ship floating down the tide. Sometimes it's unconscious. Because we're floating on such great currents. And there's so much more we can say there.

Drifting with the spirit of the age. We can drift with that. Can't we? Imperceptibly at times. It's like. It's like. As some say. Think back to. Maybe 50.

100 years. What Christians would allow. In their homes. As to what Christians allow. In their homes today. And that doesn't mean to say. They were more godly in the 1950s or 60s.

But there was a difference there. Wasn't there? In what Christians perceived as. Of the spirit. And of the flesh. There's been a drifting. A changing in course.

A direction that's been set by the. Tides. Of the world. We should. Chart a course. For that which is spiritual. And godly. And that's not to say.

[6:29] That's necessarily. Everything that's old. Is good. And everything that's new. Is bad. That's not the case. But it's whether. It stacks up. With what God says. That's what matters.

And we need to be wary. Of that danger of drifting. There's a story told about a bird. An eagle I believe. That. Was on a piece of wood.

Floating down the Niagara Falls. And was enjoying the movement. Of the waters. Through the swiftly gliding stream. It had no sense of danger. Why should it be afraid?

Didn't it have wings? Couldn't it just fly off. When the danger point. Was reached. So it thought. As it rested. Free from care. On the piece of wood.

Which carried it down. Near the dizzy edge. But as the. Point of danger was reached. As it thought it could soar away. The river's mist.

[7:25] Had frozen upon its wings. And so. It miserably perished. As the waters plunged over. It's the danger of drifting. Brother. The danger of drifting. Sister.

Be aware of that. Don't let that drifting. Happen to you. It's a walk. We want to hold on. Be steadfast. In that spiritual.

Walk with God. And grow ever stronger. Grow ever. More godly. Grow ever more spiritual. As time goes by. Not drift away. And drift with the tide.

Of the world. We tread a different path. And so. We want to depend upon. The Holy Spirit. This passage speaks about. Those who walk. Not after the flesh.

But after the spirit. Secondly. There's some laws. That are at work. Another key to living spiritually. To having spiritual life. The second.

[8:22] Point. Is verse 2. The law. Of the spirit. Of life. Hath made me free from. The law. Of sin. And death. There's different laws at work.

Different laws are at work. There's a law. Of sin. And death. There is a law. Of the spirit. Of life. Now the law. Has been defined. As rules.

Established by. Governing authority. To institute. And maintain. Order. Rules. To maintain. Order. Set by. Governing authority.

Conduct to be obeyed. It's said that. In the Pharisees time. They had 628. Different. Commands. And requirements. Rules. Laws.

Of the day. In the Pharisees religion. But all our effort. At law keeping. Cannot take away. Our own sin. The Pharisees.

[9:17] Failed miserably. As we know. Law keeping. Doesn't save us. There's some. Sadly. Deceived people. For example. In Seventh Day Adventism. They think that they can keep laws.

And somehow that. Makes them. Right with God. It's not our law keeping. That saves us. It's his. Pain. The penalty. The law said we were guilty.

And he paid it. That is. What matters for us. Is that. He has paid. The penalty. Which at law. We would. Be guilty of. God. And.

Even our most righteous thing. That we can do. Is his filthy rags. As it says. In Isaiah 64. 6. All our righteousness. Is that's the best thing about us. Our filthy rags.

So. Thank God. We're no longer governed by. And ruled by. The law. Of sin. And death. He's taken us out of that. He's taken us. He's freed us from that.

[10:13] We're no longer governed by that. It says. We are free from the law. Now that's not to mean. As some would think. In this day. That there's no rules. You know. They write on their t-shirts.

And they live the. Live that philosophy. No rules. Nobody can tell me. What to do. There's no one. Can set any expectations. About my conduct. About how I live.

I don't have to obey anybody. Or look up to. Or respect any law. Or law enforcement. That's not what we're talking about. But there's a sense. Where we as God's people.

We can be encouraged by. The thought that we live. Not by the law of the spirit. Of the world. The law of sin and death. But that we live. By the law of God's spirit.

The spirit of life. And sometimes we need to be governed by things. To make us function better. For example. You could think of. A violin string. If the violin string is.

[11:08] Is not twisted. And taut. And stretched. And placed where it needs to be. Then it will not function. And God's. Holy spirit.

Will test us. And tug us. And place us in situations. That might be. Testing for us. But it's God working still.

The freedom in Christ. Really means. We're his bond slaves. We're actually his servants. We're actually. But not bound by obligation. But it's a.

Relationship of love. Isn't it? We serve our master. Because we love him. Willingly. Seeking to please him. As we read. Of those who willingly became servants.

In the Old Testament. That's the picture for us. As his servants. We're not doing it out of. A forced thing. But because. We love him. We're responding to his.

[12:05] Invitation. And so. Doing what doesn't come. Naturally. To seek. To please the Saviour. Going against the grain. Against our pride.

Against the flesh.

Against the self. And that's what he. Changes us to be like. So. Our law. Our governing authority. Is. The law. Of the Lord.

Isn't it? It's his word. The law of the Lord. It's the law. Of the spirit. Of life. In Christ Jesus. Jesus. The spirit. The very same spirit.

That raised up. The Lord Jesus. From the dead. The very same spirit. Comes and lives. And resides. In our hearts. By faith. He saves us. And he enables us.

To live right. Because there's different laws. At work. Sometimes we. Tugged and torn. In different directions. It's a bit like. You can picture. A 747. As it goes.

[13:00] Down the runway. There's the law. Of gravity. Holding it to the ground. The law of gravity. This massive weight. This huge size. Of this massive jet. It seems incapable.

Of breaking. The law of gravity. But as another law. Comes into effect. The law of aerodynamics. That plane is able.

To lift itself. To 35,000 feet. And travel at 600 miles per hour. Why? Because another law. Has taken over. The law of gravity.

The law of gravity. Is still. About the place. But the law of aerodynamics. Means that that jet. Can fly. It can break free. From the bonds. Of earth.

And like that too. For you. As God's people. As a man of God. As a woman of God. Today. Through Christ Jesus. The law of the spirit of life. Has made me free.

[13:57] From the law of sin and death. That can be your claim. Of verse 2 there. Romans 8. We have a higher law. It's a law. It's undeniable. It's a heavenly truth. It's absolute truth.

This is God's law. L-A-W. God's law. And yet some. In fact 48% of evangelical Christians.

They're the ones you think would get it right. Don't believe in absolute truth. What a reproach. What a tragedy. What a mockery of truth. They don't believe in absolute truth.

Nearly 50% of evangelical Christians. But God has the final word. And it's right here in our hands.

This isn't something we need some angel to come. And modify. Or give us further revelation.

Yet some say it's unity now. At any cost. Even at the expense of truth. But no. This is non-negotiable. It's non-negotiable.

[14:55] We don't want to deviate from God's holy word. The immortal souls of men are too precious. And God's truth is too important for us to compromise.

And seek to shift from that. It's not about the mere opinions and philosophies of men. Or creeds. It's a battle for eternal truth that's at stake today.

And that's why we want to rescue the parishing. We want to declare the missing sampling. Because hostile forces are out to drag men to hell. As we know.

Man's innate nature is hell driven. And hell bound. But we want to see another law happen. As the jet breaks the law of gravity.

The law of aerodynamics takes over. As we. As God's people. The law of sin and death can be broken. By the law of the spirit of life.

[15:53] In Christ Jesus. That happens as we obey him. So. Are we living. In the spirit. Living by that law.

Or do we go by what the world says. They're contrary. They're contradictory. As we know. The world says. What's in it for me. It's entertainment oriented.

But really that's vain. And worthless. And sadly. They're missing the boat. And yet we. As God's people. What are we told. As Paul says. Whether you eat.

Or drink. Or whatsoever you do. Do all to. The glory. Of God. That's what matters. Not the law. Of sin and death.

But the law. Of the spirit of life. In Christ Jesus. Is it acceptable to God. Is it pleasing to him. Is the law that governs you. The law.

[16:48] Of the Lord. Law involves lordship. It involves. A rule. A governing authority. Is he your master.

He is our life. We're told. In Colossians. 3 verse 4. The very source of our life. I am the vine. He are the branches. He that abideth in me. And I in him.

The same bringeth forth. Much fruit. For without me. You can do. Nothing. Nothing that we can do. Of our own strength. Is of any.

Value. Really. When it boils down to it. And. Our motive. Is to please him. Our master. Our king. We are not lawless.

But we are. Governed by his law. The law of the Lord. Is perfect. And the law of the. Spirit. Of life. So friends. We see. The walk.

[17:46] Flesh or spirit. You can choose. Either direction. Either pathway. As it were. The law. That we govern by. That which rules our life. That which guides our steps.

That which. Is the. Basis. For which we. Make our. Decisions in life. Is it the law.

The governing authority. Of this world. Who's the. Lord. Of this world. At this time. As it were. The God. Of this world. The prince. Of this world.

Is the enemy. Of our souls. We don't want to go. By his laws. But by the spiritual law. And thirdly. We see. A spiritual mind. As we read. In Romans 8.

Through 5. 6. 7. 8. Talks about the mind. Talks about the flesh. They that are of the spirit. Do mind. The things of the flesh. Sorry.

[18:42] I'll say that again. Romans 8. 5. It says. 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. It's about your mind.

It says there. Verse 6. It says again. To be carnally minded. Is death. But. To be spiritually minded. Is life. And peace.

It's about your mind again. Carnally. Spiritually. Verse 7. The carnal mind. Is enmity. Against God. It's hateful. It's hostile. It's against him.

And verse 8. They that are in the flesh. Cannot. Please God. So. The question for everyone tonight. Think of your mind. Your mind is what you think about. It's what. It's what captivates you. It's what you. Concentrate upon. It's what you. Spend your time. Mulling over. It's our awareness.

[19:37] It's our conscious thinking. Our perceiving. It affects our behaviour. It affects our decision making. Our personality. Our priorities. Our desires. In understanding being men.

God wants us to be very careful about our understanding. And he uses your brains. There's some out there that think. You've got to somehow. Flick a switch. And go all crazy.

You know. You somehow. Turn your mind off. That's somehow being spiritual. You know. Which is crazy. Because God has given you a brain. For a reason.

He's given you a mind. That you might. In understanding. Be men. That you might. Put away childish things. That you might. Have a brain. That is. Washed.

As it were. From the world. And it's. Corruption. That you might have a mind. To think. That which is right. And true. To decide. Those things that are good. And godly.

[20:35] To make. Righteous judgment. Not ungodly judgment. To know. The truth. And to do it. And. Friends. We want to.

Have our mind. In tune. With the spirit. Not in tune. With the flesh. So. Friends. Just to. Think of that. For a moment. Your mind. It includes your will.

Well. I could. Really put it to you. The carnal man. Has to. Die. The carnal man.

Has to die. And that takes a decision. Takes an act of your will. To put him to death. Our old man. Is crucified with him. That's what should happen.

Isn't it? And yet. At times it doesn't. But. There's a story told. Of a man. Who was a pilot. And. He was heading up. In the clouds. And suddenly.

[21:30] The plane. Had some problems. He heard a sickening sound. Of gnawing. And he knew. There was a rat. Starting to bite away.

At some of the. Mechanisms. That controlled his plane. There was already some. Suspicions of that. And. What could he do? He. He took the plane. Higher.

And higher. And higher. And so that. The higher altitude. Would kill the rat. And eventually. It did. He found it hard to breathe. As he got higher. But eventually. The rat. Stopped gnawing.

And when he arrived. At his destination. He found the rat. Wind dead. Behind the cockpit. And it's a picture for us. Of how. As Christians. We need to move up. Away from the world. Away from this sin bound world.

To that high level. To the things of. God. Away from the things of this world. And so. The things of the flesh. The things of. The enemy. Will be put to death.

[22:26] But the question. For everyone here tonight. Is. What are we minding? What are we thinking on? What are we pondering? Are we minding the things of the flesh? Or minding the things of the spirit?

You know. All of us. We all have natural. Needful things. To prepare. And consider. And live our lives. But sometimes. They predominate. Don't they?

So it's that our lives. Are just filled. With fretting and fussing. About how we are to. Make a living. Or go about. Our regular living. And sometimes. We neglect. To think of the things of the spirit.

Or sometimes. We can. Be so. Saturated. With the philosophy. Of this world. That we're bombarded. With constantly. That we drift. As I talked about before.

So. Friends. Think of it. If you lack peace. Maybe you're not spiritually minded. Because to be spiritually minded. Is. Life. And peace. If you're struggling with life.

[23:25] If you're lacking peace. Maybe the question is. Am I. Spiritually minded. Chapter 8. Verse 6. To be spiritually minded.

Is life. And peace. And. It involves pleasing God. Verse 8 there. Talks about pleasing God. Are we alive spiritually.

Think of doctrine. We think of truth. We think of. Are we pleasing him. Without faith. It is impossible. To please him. Some people. They struggle with religious. Ritual.

And. Religious. Trappings. And they miss the point. Because they. They never learn. What it means. To please God. You know. The son you read of.

They. Go through all kinds of. Crazy. Punishments. Of themselves. Flagellating themselves. Or. Crawling over. Uncomfortable ground.

[24:22] On their knees. Or. Going to certain. Shrines. And. Doing pilgrimage. And. All kinds of. Difficulties. They put themselves through.

Thinking that somehow. That will buy them. Some kind of credit. With God. God. But without faith. It is impossible. To please him. For he that cometh to God. Must believe.

That he is. And that he is a rewarder of them. That diligently. Seek him. Now I was talking in the bus. Just coming. Through here today. And. Talking about. We need to speak our mind.

And. And sometimes. People do speak their mind. And. They show what's on their mind. And it's not a godly thing. But we have the mind of Christ. Christ. So if we have the mind of Christ.

There should be a problem. If we speak our mind. Should it? If you think about that for a bit. We've been given the very mind of Christ. So. How we speak. How we think. How we.

[25:20] Interact. Should be like Christ would. Our mind has to be renewed though. Doesn't it? It has to be made new. And. Friends. Just to wrap up.

How are we walking? Are we walking after the flesh? Or after the spirit? Maybe you're at a fork in the roads. And you're still. Double minded.

Not sure which way to go. He says. I am the way. The truth. And the life. No man cometh to the Father. But. By men. Walk.

In Christ. Find that way. The way to life eternal. The way that he is. It's knowing him. He is the way. He is the one we should walk after. And follow. And secondly.

We see. The law. The law. That which governs us. Are we governed by our own thinking? And feelings? Or. Governed by what this world says? What the.

[26:16] Ruler of this world says? And his rules. His laws. The law of sin. And death. Is it? Or how we. Have we broken. Free from the.

Bondage of that law. And found the. Liberty. Of. The law. Of the spirit. Of life. In Christ Jesus. And thirdly. Our mind.

Is our mind. Dwelling on the flesh. And the things of the world. And the cares of this world. Or. Is our mind. Dwelling on that. Which is. Wholesome. And spiritual.

And will help us to grow. Help us to thrive. Help us to. Be a vibrant Christian. A useful Christian. That our mind. Is dwelling on sound doctrine.

And that which is pleasing to him. And praiseworthy to him. That will glorify God. Friends. It's a choice between flesh. And spirit. Flesh.

[27:13] Is sin. Flesh. Is pride. Flesh. Is arrogance. Flesh. Is human effort. Flesh. Is selfishness.

Flesh. Is self will. Flesh. Is being self centered. Governed by self. And the fleshly path. Crucify flesh. Crucify self.

We are instructed. And surrender to him. I love to tell the story. Of haunting things above. Of Jesus and his glory.