

Subject: *How Real Christians Live and Think*

Scripture: *Romans 8:1-8*

Augustine was one of the great spiritual leaders of the early church. Before his conversion he lived a very sinful life. After he became a Christian one of his old girl friends saw him in public and called out to him in a flirtatious way, “Hi there, Augustine, it’s me.” When he saw and heard her, he replied, “Yes, but it’s not me.”

A Christian is a new person with new spiritual life. A Christian is a new creature.

John 3:7 *Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

Ephesians 2:1 *And you hath he quickened (made alive), who were dead in trespasses and sins.*

1. Two Categories of People – people who are in the flesh (the unsaved) and people who are in the Spirit (the saved)

- Saints and sinners
- The godly and the ungodly
- The just and the unjust
- Believers and unbelievers
- The righteous and the wicked
- Friends of God and enemies of God
- Lovers of God and haters of God
- Children of God and children of the devil
- Children of obedience and children of disobedience
- Children of light and children of darkness
- Children of the kingdom and children of wrath
- The wheat and the tares
- The blessed and the cursed
- The justified and the condemned

Dr. R. G. Lee preached a sermon and after the service a lady approached him and said, “I didn’t appreciate that message one bit.” He replied, “The devil didn’t like it either, so classify yourself.”

2. Two Patterns of Conduct – people who live after or according to the flesh (the unsaved) and people who live after or according to the Spirit (the saved). How you live reveals what kind of person you are.

3. Two States of Mind – people who are carnally minded (the unsaved) and people who are spiritually minded (the saved)

When Paul writes about those who are “spiritually minded” he is not describing a special kind of Christian. He is talking about the essential nature of every Christian. To be spiritually minded is the birthmark of every believer.

Our mind or mindset describes our basic nature as a believer. It describes our thinking, interest, and affection. Maybe the best way to understand it is the word “disposition.” One commentator described like this: “It is what occupies us, the ambitions that drive us and the concerns that engross us, how we spend our time and our energies, what we concentrate on and give ourselves to.” A spiritual mind is a life focused on Christ, centered on Christ:

Philippians 1:21 *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

The carnal mind and the spiritual mind are radically different, and they can be understood in the light of what they think and how they feel about four things:

- A. Different thoughts about God – the carnal mind has its own ideas about who God is and what He is like. The carnal mind thinks of God as all love and no hate, all mercy and no justice, all forgiveness and no wrath, a god of limited knowledge and limited power.
A. W. Pink said, “Men would strip God of His omniscience if they could—what a proof that the carnal mind is enmity against God (Rom. 8:7). The wicked do as naturally hate this attribute of God. They wish there might be no witness of their sins, no searcher of their hearts, no judge of their deeds. They seek to banish such a god from their thoughts.” But the spiritual mind loves all that God reveals about Himself.
- B. Different thoughts about sin – the carnal mind thinks that sin is no big deal and that a person is entitled to have some sin, after all, nobody’s perfect. The carnal mind sees God’s command, “Be holy, even as the Lord your God is holy,” as too restrictive and calls it legalism. The carnal mind is more concerned about what works than what’s right and wrong. But the spiritual mind is bothered by sin and sees it as offensive to God. The spiritual mind hates sin because it loves holiness.

Richard Baxter, one of the great Puritans, wrote about the kind of holiness that comes from the spiritual mind: “Holiness consists not in a mere forbearance of a sensual life, but mainly in living unto God. The principle or heart of holiness is within, and consists in the love of God, his Word, his ways, his servants, his honor, and his interest in the world. It consists in the soul’s delight in God and the ways of God. It is inclined towards him, and seeks after him to please him. It hates to offend him. The expression of it in our lives consists in a constant, diligent exercise of the internal life, according to the directions of the Word of God.”

- C. Different thoughts about life and eternity – the carnal mind thinks about having the best life now. Dr. Adrian Rogers said, “The lost person is not interested so much in heaven or hell. He just wants to know how to hack it on Monday.”

The spiritual mind thinks about heaven and longs to be there.

Colossians 3:1-2 ¹*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.* ²*Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

4. Two Types of Condition – people who are spiritually dead and at enmity or hostility with God (the unsaved) and people who are spiritually alive and at peace with God (the saved)