

Defiant or Devoted?
The Two Mindsets of Humanity

Romans 8:5-8

I. Driven by the Flesh or Directed by the Spirit (v. 5)

A. The operating principle of the flesh (v. 5a)

1. Those who hold to the idea of “*carnal Christians*” teach that there are two classes of believers:
 - a) The “spiritual Christian” — who has surrendered fully to Christ and lives victoriously
 - b) The “carnal Christian” — who has accepted Christ as Savior, but not as Lord; who still lives under the power of sin, yet supposedly remains saved

I. Driven by the Flesh or Directed by the Spirit (v. 5)

A. The operating principle of the *flesh* (v. 5a)

2. Paul divides humanity into two groups only:

a) Those who live *according to the flesh* (v. 5) — they set their minds on sin, and they are hostile to God (v. 7), and they *cannot please Him* (v.8)

b) Those who live *according to the Spirit* (v. 5) — they set their minds on the things of the Spirit, have life and peace (v. 6), and they belong to Christ (v. 9)

I. Driven by the Flesh or Directed by the Spirit (v. 5)

A. The operating principle of the *flesh* (v. 5a)

3. Scripture consistently presents salvation as a radical heart change:

a) “If anyone is in Christ, he is a *new* creation” (2 Cor. 5:17)

b) “We know that we have *passed* out of death into life, because we love the brothers” (1 Jn. 3:14)

c) “Those who are Christ’s have *crucified* the flesh with its passions and desires” (Gal. 5:24)

I. Driven by the Flesh or Directed by the Spirit (v. 5)

B. The operating principle of the *Spirit* (v. 5b)

1. The *attention*: We think differently — truth replaces lies (Rom. 12:2)
2. The *affection*: We love differently — holiness replaces indulgence (1 Pet. 1:14-15)
3. The *ambition*: We live differently — God's pleasure replaces our own (2 Cor. 5:9)

II. A Mindset of Death or a Mindset of Life (v. 6)

- A. To be carnally minded is death (v. 6a)
1. Leviticus 20:23 says God “abhorred them”
 2. Psalm 5:5 says He “hates all evildoers”
 3. Psalm 11:5 says “His soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence”
 4. Proverbs 3:32 says, “For the devious person is an abomination to the LORD”
 5. Hosea 9:15 says, “Every evil of theirs is in Gilgal; there I began to hate them”

II. A Mindset of Death or a Mindset of Life (v. 6)

B. To be spiritually minded is life and peace (v. 6b)

1. Psalm 4:8 says, “In peace I will both lie down and sleep”
2. Psalm 119:65 says, “Great peace have those who love your law”
3. Isaiah 26:3 says, “You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you”
4. John 14:27 says, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you”
5. Philippians 4:7 says, “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus”

III. Defiant Toward God or Devoted to God (vv. 7-8)

A. Those who are in the flesh

1. Hostile to God (v. 7a)
2. Rejection of God's law (v. 7b)
3. Incapable of obeying (v. 7c)
4. Unable to please God (v. 8)

III. Defiant Toward God or Devoted to God (vv. 7-8)

B. Those who are in the Spirit (v. 9a)

1. Friend of God
2. Submission to God's law
3. Empowered in obedience
4. Lives to please God

TAKE HOME:

- Where is my *mind* set most of the week—on the things of the flesh or the things of the Spirit?
- Am I fighting against God's authority or *delighting* in it?
- Do I live to please myself or to *please* the Lord?