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THE CARNAL MIND VS. THE SPIRITUAL MIND

We just read in Romans 8:5 that those who are after the Spirit set their minds on spiritual things.

That's what you're doing by reading this book. Your attention is on spiritual things concerning God, His Son Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Kingdom of God. That's why you're giving time, attention, and effort to study such an important material as this.

Now, there are Christians who wouldn't be interested in this or any other kind of spiritual pursuit. They'd rather set their minds and attention on worldly things that are more appealing to the flesh. But Paul sounds a strong note of warning to such folks; he says in **Romans 8:6**,

“For to be carnally minded is death;”

The carnal mind is the mind that has been trained to only recognise, appreciate, and desire worldly (sensual) things that have no spiritual benefits. It's concerned only with things of this earth, the gratification of the senses, and indulgence of the appetites, being devoted to this world and its pursuits rather than to spiritual affairs.

Paul, by the Spirit, warns that those who set their minds (by attention and affection) on carnal things programme themselves for spiritual death, and he tells us why: ***“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be”*** (Romans 8:7).

All that the carnal mind thinks about is worldly things and how to please itself; it doesn't think about the spiritual things of God in Christ, or things that please God. The Word declares that such a mind is in enmity against God, because it's not and

cannot be subject to the law of God. And the reason for that is simple: it isn't controlled by the Spirit, but by the flesh or senses.

Paul goes on to deliver a thought-provoking point in **Romans 8:8**:

“So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”

How do you live your life? Do you live according to your senses and the things that appeal to your outward man? If you live that way, you can't please God. Paul, however, doesn't end his argument there; he follows up that grave submission with a vital and reassuring conclusion:

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Romans 8:9).

If you're born again, your spirit is alive to God. You're not in the flesh but in the spirit, because

God's Spirit dwells in you. So you're not going to live in the flesh, but you'll remain alive in Christ with the life He's given you, praise God!

You Have A Sound Mind

In learning to use your mind right, you've got to be conscious of the truth that you have a sound mind. In 2 Timothy 1:7, Paul said:

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

Imagine if all your years growing up, your parents always told you that you had a sound mind, instead of telling you that you were a pig-headed, good-for-nothing. Imagine that whenever you did something wrong or messed up, they corrected you in love, and told you not to act that way, because you have a sound mind. Just imagine what that would have done for your confidence and self-

image growing up.

Well, it's not too late. You can start today and begin to tell yourself you have a sound mind. Just keep declaring, "My mind is sharp, and I'm sound. I'm super-intelligent and excellent." When you talk like this, people would say you're proud and braggadocious, but don't let that stop you. God has not given you the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. This means you're powerful, loving, and mentally sound. When you put those three qualities—power, love, and a sound mind—together, the result is excellence. You're excellent!

Some people are powerful but not loving; some are loving but not sound. But that's not you; you've got all three; you're complete! You've got a sound mind, and you've got to use it to transform your life and your world.