

NO CONDEMNATION

Romans 8:1,2.

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There are three things that disturb the peace of the saint, First, the guilt of sin. Although he is aware that the guilt of his sins are laid on the Lord Jesus, in his stead, yet there are occasions when the feelings of his guilt will disturb his peace. Second, the corruptions of the saint's heart disturb his peace. When the Spirit of grace gives us a look into our heart and we see the pool of iniquity, it gives occasion for grief. Third, the miseries of this life, that are caused by the corruption within the heart of the sinner, disturb the saint's peace.

This chapter of Romans gives assurance, and should restore our peace. In this chapter we find an answer to every doubt that arises from the flesh. Our fears of guilt are removed in the first line - "No condemnation." Our fears caused from the corruptions of our hearts are removed by verses 12 & 13. The fears brought on us by the miseries of this present life are removed by verse 18.

An Outline that I would give to chapter eight of Romans is:

- [i] No condemnation, v. 1
- [ii] Glorification, v. 17
- [iii] Justification, v. 30
- [iv] No Accusation v. 31
- [v] No Separation v. 35
- [vi] No alienation v. 21
- [vii] No Disintegration v. 21

1. THE BLESSED PORTION OF THE SAINT.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." v. 1(a).

This means that the believer in Christ is sheltered from the wrath and judgement of God. He is safe in Christ, and can never suffer condemnation. No condemnation! "This is his triumph after that melancholy complaint and conflict in the foregoing chapter - sin remaining, disturbing, vexing, but, blessed be God, not ruining." (Matthew Henry).

This happy condition is by union to Christ through faith. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:18). "It is by the human nature of Jesus Christ that we enjoy union with His Divine nature, and that He is Emmanuel, 'God with us.' His humanity is the medium by which his Divinity communicates itself with all its graces." (Robert Haldane). Faith unites the soul with Christ as a spouse with her husband. Everything which Christ has, becomes the property of the believing soul; everything which the soul has, becomes the property of Christ. Christ possesses all blessings and eternal life -- they are thenceforward the property of the soul. (Martin Luther).

2. THE COURSE OF THOSE IN THIS POSITION

"Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." v. 1(b)

Some of the translations omit this part of the verse, in that it appears again in the 4th verse. But I don't think that is right because this phrase describes the benefit of being justified. Once we are delivered from the curse of the law we have a new walk, a new perspective, a whole new direction.

When the words "flesh" and "spirit" are used naturally we have no trouble understanding their meaning. When we speak of flesh we think of the animal nature, or, the body of man. When we speak of the spirit of man, we think of his intellect, or, soul. It should be no problem as to what the Spirit means by these terms by these terms spiritually. The flesh has reference to sin, and the practice of it; the spirit

has reference to the principle of holiness. I will try to answer two things: why sin is represented by the flesh; and why holiness is represented by the spirit.

1. Sin is represented by the flesh, firstly, because the chief delights of the flesh are fleshly, or sensual objects. There is no concern for the soul's welfare in the natural man. He cares only for those things that give delight to the flesh. The great business of the flesh is to fulfil its lusts, and to make provision for it. The sinner is concerned with the gaieties of life; gold and silver, pomp and equipage, a fine house, showy appearance in the world, gaudy clothing and glittering ornaments of the body, great splendor in the eyes of men. These are the idols, the gods of sinners, and, I fear, the temptations of the saints.

Secondly, sin is called flesh because it is communicated and propagated to us by our natural parents. Our spirits are formed by God, but the flesh is given to us by our parents. The original sin of Adam is passed to all his posterity; we are conceived and born in sin, and sin is our delight. (Acts 27:26; Ps. 51:5; Job 15:14; John 3:6).

Thirdly, sin is called flesh because the chief springs of sin lie in our fleshly natures. When we are drawn away into temptation it is by the flesh; for God tempts no man with evil (Jas. 1:13). Sinful actions are called 'the deeds of the body,' (Rom. 8:13). The sins that we commit are called the members of the body (Col. 3:5). Sin can, and must express itself through the body. (Rom. 7:5).

2. Why is holiness represented by the spirit? Firstly, because the objects and aims of holy souls are chiefly spiritual. The holy soul which has been regenerated by the Spirit of God, Who imparts to him a holy nature that delights in God, Heaven, the Word, etc. The holy soul seeks the welfare of the spirit rather than the flesh. His concern is not with the sensible things of this world, but rather with spiritual things, that it might be well with his soul. His affections are set on things above, and not on things here below, (Col. 3:1). The saint prays, 'Lord, lift upon me the light of Thy countenance, and this shall put gladness into my heart more than in the time that the corn and the wine increase.' (Ps. 4:6,7).

Secondly, holiness is represented by the spirit, because it is communicated to us by God, the Father of spirits. "That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." Just as we receive a sinful disposition from our natural birth, so we receive a holy disposition from the heavenly birth. The new nature is holy, and cannot sin. (1 John 3:9). This gives us a love of holiness, a desire for it, and a hatred of sin. Although we do sin after our spiritual birth, it is against our will; there is, in the believer, a constant war with sin. The saint is against everything evil, everything that has the appearance of evil, and for everything that is right.

Thirdly, holiness is represented by the spirit because the chief springs of holiness and opposition to sin are found there. (Eph. 4:23; 2 Cor. 4:16). Just as every sin comes from the lust of the flesh, so every holy action springs from the spirit of man.

3. THE NATURE OF THOSE IN THIS BLESSED POSITION

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. 8:2).

Through Christ Jesus the saint is made free from the rule of sin and death. He has a spiritual jubilee. There are two things implied in this verse; firstly, the past condition of the saint; secondly, his present condition.

(I) What was the past condition? If we, as believers, have been made free from the law of sin and death, it necessarily implies that we were formerly under a bondage to sin and death.

(a) We were under the law of sin. The binding of every sinner is threefold in nature. Firstly, there is the sin of Adam. This amounts to the guilt of his transgression. This, we term imputed sin, i.e. the guilt of Adam's transgression passed to all his posterity. Secondly, the sin which springs from the first sin of Adam; resulted in the derogation of the Divine image of God in man in his original condition, and implantation of corruption. This is termed original sin. Not only was he made guilty by the Fall, but the image of God in him was vitiated; horribly marred and almost totally destroyed. Thirdly, the sin of actual

transgression. Every sinner is so, not only because of what Adam did, but through his own actual personal transgressions.

"Every sin doth, as it were, tie us faster to damnation, and keep us faster under the bondage of sin. Every new sin takes away some part of the light of the understanding, and takes away some freedom of the will. It darkens the judgement more and more, and enthrals the will and affections; blinds a man more and more to the just sentence of God, that, as it is in Prov. 5:22 'the sinner is tied with the bondage of his own sins.' He is under the chains of an habituated wicked course of life, as well as the sin of nature, which is the spring of all." (Richard Sibbes).

A saint, upon conversion, has in him the beginning of eternal life, and heaven. The sinner has hell within his bosom; the bondage of a corrupted will, the agonies of a tormented conscience, the outbreaks of a distemper, selfish pride; these are the miseries and the lot of the unrepentant sinner.

(i) What does it mean to be under the law of sin. It is to be under Satan (Eph. 2:2). Just as the saint, the Christian believer, is under the control of the Holy Spirit of God, so the sinner, the unbeliever, is under the power and control of that wicked spirit, the Devil. Satan drives the sinner to sin. Satan blinds his mind so that he does not see the glory of Christ in the Gospel. Satan intends the eternal death of the sinner. (2 Cor. 4:4).

(ii) It is to be enslaved to earthly things. The sinner cannot get himself above the world. His hopes, his desires, affections are here, earthbound. His aim is to gain the whole world, or as much of it as he can, even if it costs him his soul. This is to be enslaved to things worse than ourselves (1 John 2:15-17).

(iii) It is the immortal soul of the sinner that is in bondage. The greatest burden on my heart is to observe the little value that men place upon their souls. They live as though this life is all that is allotted to him. 'If I, O God, could but reach into the sinner's heart to show him the value of his immortal soul!' You think you will live forever, O sinner! But this life is petty compared to the eternity which you yet have to face. If you spend your soul for the things of this world, and perish in hell, it would be better than that you had never been born.

(iv) This is to be under damnation! The writer to the Hebrews says there are pleasures in sin, "for a season!" O, what a short season! The pleasures of this life are not to be compared (indeed they cannot be) with the eternal joys which belong to the saints. The pleasures of sin will hold no pleasant memories for the sinner in the torment of hell. If you are in sin (and those who have not turned away from their present self-centered lives and committed their souls to the Lord Jesus Christ in self-denying trust, are in sin) you are under the damnation of God. Wake up! See the value of suffering for a little season with the Saviour. See the value of eternal joy in His presence.

(v) The sad thing is that those who are under the damnation of God are ignorant of it. Sinners do not know that they are perishing. Only the grace of God can show you your hopeless condition. Only His Spirit can awaken you, and quicken you into life. Sinners are blinded; they are led by the equally blind, and they shall all fall into the dark ditch of hell.

(b) We were under the law of death. There are degrees of death that every sinner experiences. Firstly, he is under the present spiritual death inherited from Adam. All are born into the world spiritually dead., in need of the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. This spiritual death blinds us to our need, and present condition. Unless the Spirit of God breathe upon us this shall remain our condition. Secondly, there is natural death, when the soul leaves the body. In this the body sleeps in the grave, but the soul does not die. There is an eternal death, where the body is rejoined with the soul, and both are thrown into the lake of fire to suffer eternal death, and separation from God, forever!

These thoughts are seldom considered, but I ask you, to consider what I am saying carefully. This life is too short, full of troubles, to abandon it to sin. The eternal pangs of hell can never be removed once entered into. Whatever your condition, as you pass into eternity, so shall you remain. If the Spirit of God has awakened you to see the danger, implanted within you are concern about coming judgement, take courage! This is the beginning of eternal life. But only the beginning. Many fail who had real concerns about these things. This is only His awakening of conviction in you. Continue to read the

Bible. He will finish His work. He will remove fears and plant a hatred of sin; a love for holiness. But you must begin with seeing yourself as a hell deserving sinner. What God says, believe, even if it amounts to taking sides with Him against yourself that what He says about you is true. Put your confidence in Christ. He (and only He) can save you from your sins.

Lord, didst Thou send Thy Son to die,
 For such a guilty wretch as I?
 And shall Thy mercy not impart,
 Thy Spirit to renew my heart?
 Lord, Thou hast wash'd my garments clean,
 In Jesus' blood from sin and shame?
 Shall I not strive with all my power
 That sin pollute my soul no more?

(2) What is our present condition; those who have committed their all to Christ? The passage states that we are free from the law of sin and death. This most happy condition is through Jesus Christ. How did He effect that freedom?

Firstly, He freed us from the law of sin, and of death by making a satisfaction to Divine justice. The law was broken by our actual transgressions; we were motivated by a sinful principle; and we could not make satisfaction for our sins. As a result we stand condemned if there be no Mediator. But, thank God, Christ Jesus came into the world, took our nature upon Himself, lived in perfect obedience to the will of God, and died on the cross under the curse of the law. This satisfied the justice of God, and set into operation His mercy. God can now pardon the sinner without offence to any of His attributes.

Secondly, we are freed by the effectual calling of the Spirit. We were dead in sins, therefore unable to help ourselves. We were corrupted, therefore unable to produce a righteousness. We were absolutely dependent upon the mercy of God. In His mercy He sent His Spirit to us. The Holy Spirit breathed into us life, opened our eyes, unstopped our ears, and revealed the Gospel to us. Through the Gospel He called us from the grave of corruption, broke the chain of sin, and broke its power in us.

Thirdly, we were made free by justification. This is a legal terms and has reference to our standing before God. On the account of Christ, God declared us not guilty. There is nothing on the records against us. Our debt is paid in full.

Fourthly, we were freed, and are being freed by sanctification. By positional sanctification we were once for all set apart, and cleansed by the blood of Christ. (Heb 10:14). Progressively, we are being freed from the power of sin. There is now a hatred of sin. If we sin we are dragged into it against our will.

Fifthly, we shall be freed by glorification. There is coming a day when the Lord Jesus shall come for us. He will give us new bodies. He will set us free from the presence of sin. This will be at the resurrection. (1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:6).

THE WEAKNESS OF THE LAW

Romans 8:3-4.

In the preceding verses we saw that as a result of the justification of God the saint is not, and can never be brought, under condemnation. We are justified from all things. The righteousness of the law found full satisfaction in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the mercy of God found full demonstration in the death of Christ. The saint has been made free from the law of sin and death through the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, and, as a result, he now walks according to the ruling principle of the spiritual nature, and not after the dictates of the flesh. In verses three and four we have, [1] the inability of the law, [2] the ability of the Son of God, and [3] the righteousness of the law fulfilled in us through the Son of God.

1. NOTICE, FIRST, THE INABILITY OF THE LAW - "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh." v. 3a.

(a) "What the law could not do." That is, the law could not justify the sinner. It could not remove the condemnation that was resting upon the sinner. It could stay the hand of God's judgement. Let us not forget that the law is good, holy and just (Rom. 7:12), but because of man it is powerless to justify. The precepts of the law are "do and live;" and if man had continued in righteousness after his creation he could have used the law for life. "The law was ordained to life," (Rom. 7:10) - that is, to justify man, if he had remained in innocence; but by his sinning it condemns him, as the Apostle adds, "I found it to be unto death;" so that the law, the breach of which constitutes sin, and on account of this awards death, is now unable to justify, but powerful to condemn." (Robert Haldane). Because of this transgression everyone is under the condemnation of the law; we have all broken it, and not to continue in it all the way, damns us to the wrath of God.

(b) "In that it was weak through the flesh." The weakness is not in the law, but in the corruption of human flesh. Were it not for the weakness of man's flesh, the law could justify. The law is still God's perfect standard of righteousness, but no man is able to keep it perfectly. If there is any doubt in your mind about this, please read Matthew, chapters 5,6 and 7, and see how far short you have fallen. It can be illustrated in this manner: I cook a pot roast. It becomes so tender that I am unable to pick it with a fork. It is that the flesh will not cling to the fork, but falls apart. It is not the fault of the fork; it is perfectly strong enough to pick up the roast. The inability lies within the flesh of the roast. That is the law. It is strong enough, but the flesh is weak.

John Calvin said, "That no one might think that the law was irreverently charged with weakness, or confine it to ceremonies, Paul has distinctly expressed that this defect was not owing to any fault in the law, but to the corruption of our flesh; for it must be allowed that anyone if anyone really satisfies the divine law, he will be deemed just before God. He does not then deny that the law is sufficient to justify us as to doctrine, inasmuch as it contains a perfect rule of righteousness: but as our flesh does not attain that righteousness, the whole power of the law fails and vanishes away. Thus condemned is the error or rather the delirious notion of those who imagine that the power of justifying is only taken away from ceremonies; for Paul, by laying the blame expressly on us, clearly shows that he found no fault with the doctrine of the law.

But further, understand the weakness of the law according to the sense in which the Apostle actually takes the word weakness, not only as meaning a small imbecility, but impotency; for he means that the law has no power whatever to justify. You then see that we are totally excluded from the righteousness of works, and must therefore flee to Christ for righteousness, for in us there can be none, and to know this is especially necessary; for we shall never be clothed with the righteousness of Christ except we first know assuredly that we have no righteousness of our own. The word flesh is to be taken still in the same sense, as meaning ourselves. The corruption then of our nature renders the law of God in this respect useless to us; for while it shows the way of life, it does not bring us back who are running headlong into death." (Commentary of Romans, p.280).

2. IN THE SECOND PLACE WE SEE THE ABILITY OF THE SON - "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (v. 3b)

(a) "God sending His own Son." This verse has reference to the mission of Christ, which was to make an atonement, or satisfaction for His people. This tells us that the source of the Atonement is God. A.W.Pink, in his greatest of all works, "The Satisfaction of Christ," points out the following as the cause of God sending His Son into the world to die for sinners:

(1) His will was the determining factor (Eph. 1:11). God does not will a thing because it is right, it is right because He wills it. It was His will that determined the manner in which sinners are to be saved.

(2) His love was the motive-spring (Jer. 31:3; Eph. 1:5; Acts 13:38). God loved His people from all eternity, and this love was in His Son, which moved Him to ordain them to life.

(3) His righteousness is the incentive for the Atonement. The cross demonstrates the righteousness of God more than anything in the world. God could not save sinners at the expense of His holiness.

(4) His glory is the ultimate cause (Rev. 4:11). Everything will ultimately bring glory to God's name. We were created for this purpose.

(b) "In the likeness of sinful flesh." This teaches us that the Lord Jesus was sinless. He is the only person that ever walked this earth who did not, and could not sin. It was an impossibility for the Son of God to sin. His flesh was real, He was as much man as any, but it was sinless flesh. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, i.e. He suffered sin's penalty for us. He rested under the curse of sin all the days of His flesh on earth. PERSONALLY, He knew no sin; OFFICIALLY, He was made sin. Just as His righteousness was imputed, or charged to our account, by faith, our sins were charged to Him as our federal Head, and He died under the curse that we deserved.

(c) "And for sin" The reason of the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ into the world - of His incarnation and humiliation - was the abolition of sin, its destruction, both as to its guilt, and its power. The same expression occurs in 1 Pet. 3:18, "Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." It is sin that is the cause of separation from God; and by its removal reconciliation is made, and peace is restored." (Robert Haldane).

(d) "Condemned sin in the flesh." This has reference to His whole human nature. He suffered, body, soul and spirit for our sins. God punished sin in Christ's human nature. God dealt with Him as He would have had to do with us. Whereas we are treated as righteous in Christ, He was treated as a sinner in our stead. If we could but see the terrible price paid for our redemption!

N.B. There are manifold doctrines found within this one verse that space will not allow an exposition of. I list them for your own meditation.

- (1) The total inability and depravity of man, "weakness of the flesh."
- (2) The present purpose of the law, to condemn, rather than to save. The law was never given to save sinners.
- (3) The eternal Sonship of Christ, "God sending His own Son."
- (4) The eternal covenant of grace. Compare Acts 4:28 with "God sending His own Son."
- (5) The incarnation of Christ, "In likeness of sinful flesh."
- (6) The sinlessness of Christ, "In LIKENESS of sinful flesh."
- (7) The substitution of Christ for the elect (Vicariousness and Imputation), "Condemned sin."
- (8) Satisfaction of Christ, implied in the actual forgiveness of sins.

3. NOTE THAT THROUGH THE SON, THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW IS FULFILLED IN US

"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

The question is, how is the righteousness of the law fulfilled in us? The answer is three-fold.. Firstly, through the passive obedience of Christ; secondly, through the active obedience of Christ; thirdly, through the saints' delight in the law, following it as a standard of life. In order for sinners to become justified two things were necessary; the law had to be perfectly obeyed, and the penalty had to be paid for a full satisfaction. Both of these were satisfied in the active obedience, and the passive obedience, of Christ. Actively, He obeyed every precept of the law. In that He was perfect, this obedience was for His elect. Passively, He subjected Himself to the full wrath of the law, and died under its penalty on the cross. It is on this basis alone we are accounted righteous, and it is in Him. He fulfilled the law, which we were unable to do. Now, as a result of regeneration; in which we receive a holy disposition, we walk according to the moral law as a standard of life, delighting in it.

OUTLINES

The following are outlines from different authors which will be of value in studying these verses.

- [1] Our prerequisite - "No condemnation" v. 1
- [2] Our position - "In Christ Jesus" v. 2
- [3] Our power - "The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" v. 2
- [4] Our protection - "Hath made me free" v. 2
- [5] Our provision - v. 3

[6] Our possibility - "That the righteous requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us" v. 4

[7] Our principle- "According to the Spirit" v. 4

(W.H.Griffith-Thomas D.D.)

The end and design of Christ's Mission -

- (1.) God's desire and purpose was to restore His people to true holiness.
- (2.) The law was not sufficient to effect this because of the weakness of the flesh.
- (3.) God, therefore, in order that His purpose be accomplished, sent His Son.

Though we cannot fathom all the depths of this mystery, we may show,

(1.) In what way it was effectual for the end purposed and proposed. "We speak not of the way in which the death of Christ obtains our justification, but of the way in which it is instrumental to our sanctification. In reference to this we say:

- (a) It (the death of Christ) displays the evil and malignity of sin. That such a death was necessary.
- (b) It obtains for us power to subdue sin; fulfilling the righteousness of the law.
- (c) It (deliverance from the penalty and power of sin) suggests a motive sufficient, in and of itself, to call forth our utmost exertions after holiness.

Inference

- (1) How vain it is to expect salvation while we live in sinful lives.
- (2) How foolish it is to think we can attack sin in our own strength.
- (3) Just how indebted we are to God for sending His Son into the world.

(Charles Simeon.)

THE CARNAL AND THE SPIRITUAL

Romans 8:5-8

There are only two types of people in the world; the saved and the unsaved. The saved are described as spiritual in this passage and the unsaved are spoken of as carnal; those who have the mind of the spirit, and those who have the mind of the flesh. In this passage these two types of people are contrasted, and which, becomes a rule whereby we may test ourselves as to whether we truly are in Christ, or not. If you are in Christ your fruit will be spiritual fruit, if not, it will be of the flesh. You know a tree by its fruit!

1. I WISH TO DESCRIBE THOSE WHO MIND THE THINGS OF THE FLESH.

These are they who are still held captive by sin, They have not come into a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus. Firstly, we are told that they are "after the flesh." (v.5). What does it mean exactly to be, "after the flesh." I think that this can be explained fully by comparing several other Scripture passages with the statement here. In John 3:6, we read, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." That is, we have only the fleshly nature inherited from Adam through our natural parents. It means to be born in sin, without spiritual understanding. It amounts to nothing less than being blind so far as our understanding of spiritual matters goes. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14). It is to be under the control of fleshly lusts. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings,, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past," says the Apostle Paul, "that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:19-22). It is to be earthly. "The first man (Adam) is of the earth, earthy: the second Man (Christ) is the Lord from Heaven. As is the heavenly, such are they also are they that are heavenly." (1 Cor. 15:47-48). To be earthly is to be bound by (focus the attention on, be wholly taken up with) the things of the flesh and of the world, without desires for the heavenly. It is to walk after the lust of uncleanness; to despise government; i.e. the sovereignty of God, not wanting Him

to have the rule over you; to be selfwilled, and not afraid to speak against those in the place of dignity. (See 2 Pet. 2:10ff).

This is a terrible description, and yet it is true of every person who has not been cleansed by the blood of Christ (See 1 Cor. 6:9-11); and shows the absolute need of repentance (turning away from these things, and wholly to God) and that, through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, making the sinner alive to God.

The character of the natural man is to mind, give heed to, the things of the flesh. What this amounts to is to be driven, motivated, drawn, carried along by, the desires of the flesh wholly to the exclusion of God. This is described in the Bible as the "imagination of the heart." (Gen. 6:5). John Calvin defined the word, "mind" as the thinking, imagining, caring of the flesh. Paul describes those who mind the flesh, as the enemies of the cross, "for many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross; whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things," (Phil. 3:18-19).

Commenting on this verse, Robert Haldane said, "the word translated "mind" here, includes both the understanding and the affections, and signifies the strong bent of the mind regarding the objects desired. The minding of the flesh comprehends all the faculties of man in his unregenerate (i.e. spiritually dead) state, there being no power of the mind which is exempt from sin. If, then, a man walks according to the flesh, seeking acceptance with God by his own endeavors, moral or ceremonial, however sincere or earnest he may be, he will remain under the prevalence and dominion of sinful appetites. Such persons have their minds intent on the things that gratify their corrupt nature. They have no relish for spiritual things, whatever it is they may be induced to do from dread of punishment, or hope of reward in a future world, their desires are, in reality centred in the things of this world. Whatever may be their profession of religion, their hearts are supremely engrossed with earthly things; and for these, if they could obtain their wish through eternity, they would gladly barter all the glories of Heaven. In one word, they mind the things of the flesh; they love the world, and all that is in the world."

To be carnally minded is to be under the sentence of death. This death is the wages of sin. (Rom. 6:23). Every person who is born into the world, has, without any exception, this sentence upon him. This death is the result of Adam's sin, and its sentence is passed down to his posterity. It is inexorable. God said to Adam, "Dying, thou shalt die." The moment Adam sinned, he died spiritually, he began a process of dying physically, and, without the blood of Christ, he would finally die eternally. This death is passed upon everyone. All are born spiritually dead, they are in the process of dying physically, and if you die without Christ, this eternal death awaits you too.

2. BY WAY OF CONTRAST I WOULD LIKE YOU TO NOTICE THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SPIRITUALLY MINDED.

Everything that has been said of those who mind the flesh, the opposite can be said of those who mind the spirit. As the term flesh has reference to the sinful principle that we inherited in our natural birth, the spirit has reference to the principle of holiness which is implanted by the Holy Spirit at the time of the new birth. In Scripture this is termed, "the new man," the seed born of God, and what we term, "the new nature."

Firstly, the regenerate are after the spirit. This means that they have been born from above; they have two births; they have been RE-generated by the Holy Spirit. "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). The question is, what does it mean to be "after the spirit." How may I now that I am after the spirit? In the first place, this is to walk in obedience to Christ, which is evidenced in a spiritual warfare. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh." This means that although the Christian is still in this body of flesh, his war is not in the flesh, but in the spirit. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.; casting down imaginations and every high things that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:3-5). In the second place it is to have your understanding opened so that now you can understand the things of God. "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he

may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:15-16). Thirdly, the spiritually minded are driven and motivated by the spiritual nature, and this causes them to manifest the fruit of the Spirit. What is this fruit of the Spirit? "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." (Gal. 5:22-23).

"To be spiritually minded is life and peace." If the carnal mind is death, then the spiritual mind is life. This life is eternal life. And this life is implanted in Christian believers through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, and was made experimental through our faith in Christ Jesus. This peace is the result of justification, and is both here and hereafter. We now have peace with God (Rom. 5:1). We are no longer the enemies of the cross, but we have been reconciled by the blood of Christ. We shall have peace hereafter. Never shall a child of God hear the words, "Depart from Me, I never knew you." Throughout all eternity we shall enjoy this peace in the presence of the "Lamb that is worthy."

3. VERSE SEVEN SUPPLIES THE REASON FOR THE FOREGOING.

Here we are told by statement why this is true of the carnal, and, by implication, what is true of the spiritual.

(1.) The carnal mind stated. Firstly, because "the carnal mind is enmity against God." Such men hate the holiness of God, His justice, His sovereignty, and even His mercy, in the way in which is exercised, is contemptible in their eyes. However, many of this character have no notion that they are haters of God. They would be very offended if you told them so. No, many of them profess to love Him. But God's testimony is the sole arbiter in the matter, and He says that they are His enemies; and His testimony is to be hailed over against that of all men. "Let God be true and every man a liar." (Rom. 3:4). Men may imagine that they love God, but the god they have in view is a god of their own imaginings, a god all of mercy, without justice and therefore unjust, and no god at all. They abhor the one true living God, the God of the Scripture. (Robert Haldane).

(2) "For it (the carnal mind) is not subject to the law of God." This is an explanation of the previous sentence in the verse. It shows how all thinking of the flesh carries on a war against the will of God. In the law God has revealed that which is pleasing to Him. Hence, those who want to find out how far they are in agreement with God must test all their purpose and practice by this rule. For, although nothing is done in this world but the governing of the secret providence of God, yet, to make a pretext of this as an excuse for sin is nothing less than blasphemy. "The law has set the difference between right and wrong plainly and distinctly before our eyes, and to seek it in a deep labyrinth (of carnal speculation and philosophy), what sottishness is it." (John Calvin).

(3) "neither indeed can be." This phrase concerns man's total inability of himself to move himself towards God, by seeking Him. Man is so depraved in his sinfulness that he will not come to God; indeed he cannot come, and even if he could do so, he would not. The will of man is determined by the judgement of his mind, and his judgement is determined by his understanding. In view of the fact that his understanding is corrupted, consequently his judgement and will are also. This does not destroy the liberty of the will, but it is the disposition of the person which determines what the willing will be. In God's regeneration of the sinner, the subject is given a new understanding and he acts in accordance with it towards God. "A moral agent chooses according to his inclinations.....according then to Scripture, the natural man is entirely incapable of choosing what is good spiritually, although it is his God given duty to do so. There is nothing which prevents men from obeying God but their own depraved dispositions and aversion to the good things of God." (Robert Haldane).

Some Scriptures should be sufficient to convince of the inability of the natural man. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." (Jer. 13:23). "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves up unto lasciviousness, to work work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph. 4:18-19). "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin." (2 Pet. 2:14). "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44).

Charles Simeon well said , "There is the same contrariety between the carnal mind and the law of God, as there is between darkness and light. It has been shown before, that the carnal mind is enmity itself against God; and that the very first principle of obedience to the law is love. Now how is it possible that enmity should produce love? We may sooner expect "to gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles."

This incapacity to obey the law of God is justly adduced as a proof of our enmity against Him: for if we loved Him, we would love His will, whatever we may pretend, we in reality hate Him."

The condition of the spiritual, is that they are at peace with God. They delight in the law of God; welcome it, embrace it, and employ it as a standard of conduct in their lives. It is not the law that saves them. They are saved by Christ alone, but, and as a fruit of their salvation, they are enabled to embrace that which before threatened them with the direst consequences for the least transgression of it, by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, and it is Christ who gives them the Holy Spirit. And they receive Christ by owning everything that God says about them as true. "We have sinned against Thee. We have offended Thy law. We are guilty. We offer no excuses. We give ourselves up wholly to Thee to do with us as Thou wilt." Instead of condemnation they receive salvation. They deserve condemnation, and they know it. But they receive SALVATION. It is God's free gift to them, and they receive it through faith. "The faith of Christ." "There is therefore now NO CONDEMNATION to them which are in Christ Jesus."

"they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Without faith it is impossible to please God. If one has not faith, whereby Christ Jesus is claimed as one's own, it is impossible to please God. "The apostles said to the Lord, 'increase our faith.' " (Luke 17:5). He who can increase faith is the one who gives faith. If you seek God on the terms set out in these verses, owning everything about you as a sinner as true, you will not be far from the kingdom of Heaven. But there is a condition. You will only find God when you seek Him with ALL YOUR HEART. (Jer 29:13).