Study in Romans

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Mind of the Spirit Versus Mind of the Flesh
Romans 8:5-8

After the summary statement of vv. 1-4 about the present temporal condition of the believer–sinful, but freed from condemnation and living by the power of the Spirit–Paul now begins one of the most important discourses on the Holy Spirit in the Bible. What does it mean to live according to the Spirit?

The answer centers on the mind. There are only one of two conditions for the mind of every person:

Mind of the Flesh	**Mind of the Spirit**
Death	Life and peace
Set on the desires of the sinful nature	Set on the desires of the Spirit
Cannot nor does not want to submit to God's law	Obedience to God's law (cf. 7:25)
Cannot please God	Pleases God

The reason that the Christian can identify with the confused and frustrating state described by Paul in chapter seven is that the Spirit has moved into a body that is suited to serving the old sin nature. The power of God through the Spirit has transformed the nature of the Christian to that which is suited to pleasing God even as Jesus did. However, unlike Jesus, the Christian does not yet have his new body which will be suited to this new nature and so the conflict arises.

How is this difference seen? In the way the believer and unbeliever thinks. This is important groundwork for the application section in chapters 12-16 where Paul begins by reminding us to stop letting the world tell us how to think.

1. Contrast of the mind set on the flesh and the mind set on the Spirit (vv. 5-6)

2. Condition of the sinful nature revealed in the mind (vv. 7-8)