

## Romans 8:6-8

When I preached through this text the first time I thought it would be an overview that would receive the back fill of Mike's preaching. I taught on verses 5-14. Now I am having to go back and take a second look at the depths of the passage. I pray that God will use this passage to accomplish the changes he wants in this church. Romans 8 is such a solid foundation for our faith and our practice.

Remember the assurance sandwich that Mike described. Verse 1 says there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ. Verse 39 says that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.

One of the purposes of this chapter in Romans is to lay out irrefutable proof that the Christian is secure in Christ forever. And based upon that logic the Christian has the power, by the nature of who he is in Christ, to live a godly life. Mike continually stressed that Justification and Sanctification are so tightly entwined that you cannot separate them except in an effort to study them. The Christian life cannot be lived without both. Any effort to come up with a doctrine that separates them in the life of a believer is going to end up being false teaching.

The other certainty is that the passage we are currently studying is contrasting believers and non believers. Anyone who comes up with some theory that this is contrasting one kind of believer with another kind of believer is cheating on scholarship. You can't come up with that kind of a view if you do serious business with what our text says.

Mike had preached on verses 5 and 6. He preached on the characteristics of a non-believer and the characteristics of a believer.

This morning we will look at Romans 8:6,7,8 and focus on two things.

- 1- The life and peace of the believer.
- 2- The enmity of the unbeliever.

**<sup>6</sup>For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.**

**To be spiritually minded is life and peace-**

Notice here the difference. You would think when Paul says to be carnally minded is death that he would then say the direct

opposite to that is that to be spiritually minded is life, and just life. But here Paul adds peace.

We will start by looking at the life that the believer has. We are told over and over again in the new testament that regeneration is about having life as opposed to having death. Let's take a quick look at the book of John. We won't look at all 38 references but just enough to make the point about Christ being life to us.

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15that whoever believes in Him should not perish but **have eternal life**. 16For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish **but have everlasting life**. 17For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world **through Him might be saved**.

John 3: 36He who believes in the Son **has everlasting life**; and he who does not believe the Son **shall not see life**, but the wrath of God abides on him."

John 4: 13Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him **will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life**."

John 6:**It is the Spirit who gives life**; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and **they are life**.

We see in these texts that believers **have** life. A believer possesses an eternal life here and now. It isn't just that he or she will **receive** life, he or she **already has it**. And it cannot be taken from us. We see that it is **the Spirit** who gives life. The life doesn't come from being **born**. The flesh doesn't give us any life that really matters. The life that matters comes only from God. It comes from being born again, born from above. And it is by hearing the word of Christ that we receive this life. Faith comes by hearing the word of God.

So as you look around you this week, those who have the most of the world's stuff are not the ones who are, as we say, **really**

**living.** It is only those with the Spirit of God in them who are **really living.** We should have pity for those whose lives are made up of only this world's pleasures. They have no **life** that is worth having. It is only in Christ that there is **life.**

And we who **have life,** we must train our minds to think properly. We should never pity ourselves for not having the things that our neighbors live for and possess. What do they have? Are they not just held by those who are dying? Would you envy a person who has a million dollars but only 2 days to live? That is the world around us from God's perspective. The things they **don't have** are what matter. And the things they **do have** contain no value.

Yet we have eternal life. We have spiritual life in us. We are carried by it. We cannot lose it. We are, in a sense, indestructible. We cannot be destroyed, not in the way that matters most.

So if you are a believer you are really living. That is something to rejoice about. We have been entrusted with real life.

**And peace-** When Paul says **“For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life,”** that makes perfect sense to us. The opposite of death is life. But why does Paul add the word “peace”? Galatians 5 tells us that the fruit of the spirit is love, joy and then peace. Why doesn't Paul use all these words here, in addition to life?

Notice in verse 5 that Paul tells us the positive and the negative. They that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh. Those after the Spirit mind the things of the Spirit.

Then in verse 6 he does the same thing. To be carnally minded is death and to spiritually minded is life and peace.

But in verses 7 and 8 he only gives the negative and not the positive. Why doesn't he do this?

It is possible that the word “peace” is the positive opposite of the negative things stated in verses 7 and 8. He didn't have to give the opposing positive to these negatives because he already covered that ground by using the word peace.

When Paul talks about Justification in chapter 5 he says “Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God. In Chapter 14:17 he goes on to say that the Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Peace is the

first thing we experience as a result of the righteousness we receive from God.

So when Paul goes on to say **Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.**

The opposite of those two statements is peace. First he says The carnal mind is **enmity** against God. He doesn't have to say that the mind of the Spirit is peace with God because he has essentially already said it. Peace is the exact opposite of enmity and is perfectly fitting as a contrast to enmity.

Then he goes on to say that those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Could the contrast to that be that those in the Spirit **already** have peace with God. They already **have** the righteousness of God. They are **already pleasing** to God and they will continue to please him. They are pleasing to God and at peace with God because they have been justified. They will continue to please God as the **righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.**

We are on this planet to glorify Christ. That is what we are designed for. That is what we are saved for. And that is what pleases God.

**I Peter 2:9-12** talks about what we are here for- **But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.**

**11Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.**

That is what it looks like when the righteous requirements of the law are fulfilled in us.

Oh, and on a side note. This peace involves more than just peace with God. It also involves peace with ourselves. This peace

removes the perpetual restlessness that a non believer lives with continually. And it involves peace with each other. We can now have peace in our dealings with fellow believers.

Well, that is the life and peace the believer has. Now for the enmity of the non-believer.

**<sup>7</sup>Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. <sup>8</sup>So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.**

Think about this. Think about where we as humans started. We were second only to the angels. God would come down in the garden and commune with us, face to face. We were made in the image of God, pure and spotless. How bitter it is to consider how far we have fallen. Adam has presented us with condition I just described. The carnal mind, the mind we are born with, the mind that Adam has passed down to us is nothing but enmity against God. We, in the state we were born in, cannot please God. It is beyond us.

Notice that it says- **IS ENMITY**- It doesn't just say that it is opposed to God. No, it is **enmity** itself. I borrowed some ideas from Spurgeon here. He said It is not black, but **blackness**. Not **AT** enmity but **enmity itself**. It is not **corrupt**, but **corruption**. It is not **rebellious**, but **rebellion**. It is not **wicked**. It is **wickedness** itself. The heart, though it be deceitful, is **positively deceit**. It is evil in the **concrete**, sin in the **essence**, the **quintessence of all things that are vile**.

And it is **Against God**- against not just the **laws** of God, not against just the **doctrines**. It is enmity against the **maker** of this world. Against **His essence, his existence, and his person**.

First let's look at evidence that is readily in front of us that displays this fact. We will start by looking at the whole forest and will work our way down to thinking about the individual trees. For the forest view, let's think about the world's **political history**. Let's look at what the race has done to itself. You don't have to know much about history to know that history is pretty much a display of man's inhumanity to man, wars and rumors of wars. Governments have started wars with other governments for the basic human motivations of greed or hatred

or the lust for power. Every war, except for those that God initiated in the old testament, that was ever started has in it the seeds of man's lust of the flesh, lust of the eye or pride of life. These are all directly opposed to God's law and God's expressed will for human behavior. Even the government's treatment of its own citizens shows the signs of that same sinful condition. You can't watch the news without seeing the awful results of what happens when mankind rules itself., what mankind does when it is given power over life.

Think about it even now in our country. Can't politicians add and subtract and come up with a course for the preservation of our economy? Of course they can. That isn't the problem. The problem is that we have a small number of humans making decisions for us. And many of them cannot say no to their own selfish desires. The problem is that the force that rules their lives is in a state of enmity against God. They are ruled by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. That is the problem with our government. And that is the problem of the world. When this sinks in, we can be grateful that Christ did not send us into the world to perfect **it**. He sent us into the world to perfect **us** and to win people to himself by the preaching of the gospel.

You often hear on the news some idealist who wants to change the world, who wants to aid in world peace, who thinks peaceful coexistence with all other human beings is attainable. He will be about as successful as the guy who thought he could live in peaceful coexistence with his brother the grizzly bear. Well, if you are what you eat, I guess he and the bear are now one. The problem with our world is not external, it is internal. It is in our nature. The natural man is enmity against his God. And he can't, in and of himself, do anything about it. And he doesn't **want** to do anything about it.

God doesn't intend to improve this world and its state of enmity against Him. He plans to rescue some from it and destroy the rest, because it is not fixable. We do well to avoid being seduced into a mission that God Himself does not intend to accomplish. Our world's political history displays perfectly the state of man's enmity against God.

Now, for the tree view- how about the internal evidence from a man's experience?

How about our own consciences. Let me ask you this. Have you ever heard your heart say, "I wish there were no God?" Maybe it was at the point of strong temptation, at a point where you were sick of your life as it was and you wanted to make a change that God did not allow. Or maybe you wanted to maintain an attitude that God forbade. Or you wanted to pursue a course of action that was forbidden. At that point it is easy for us to wish that God did not exist. We are tempted to join in with the epitome of this thinking that was expressed by John Lennon- He expressed enmity with God clearly. He said-

Imagine there's no heaven  
It's easy if you try  
No hell below us  
Above us only sky  
Imagine all the people  
Living for today...

This song was very popular because it states very well the wish of the unbeliever. It appeals to the unbeliever to imagine that there is no God.

In studying for this sermon I learned something about Psalm 14:1 The fool has said in his heart, "[There is] no God." They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good.

In reality it says the fool has said in his heart- NO GOD! It is more a statement of his **desire** or his **position** than his **belief**. It isn't that a fool always has the **belief** that no God exists. The fool simply does not **want** that God's rule over his life. It is as if the fool puts a sign outside his house that says "No God". And this serves as the perfect example of the truth in our text. Natural man is Enmity against God.

We all know that impulse, that desire, to have no God over us. The wish that there be no God is evidence of natural man's

hatred of God. Even believers know by our own experience that apart from God's work in our hearts that is exactly where we would stand. We would wish there were no God and if there is one we would wish that He would leave us alone so we could be masters of our own lives.

Our whole world provides us with evidence after evidence that flesh is enmity against God. There is no other logical explanation of how our world functions.

**Now let's think about the fact that this original state of enmity is true of every person born on this planet. Every carnal mind is enmity against God.**

This means that it begins in infancy and shows itself as a child grows into an adult. It is no wonder that the humanist ideas for child rearing don't work. They are planting weeds and waiting for flowers to grow. As Christians we should never be surprised that raising children is a lot of work. We are dealing with carnal minds that are enmity with God. We should know that telling a child what to do is only part of the process. Requiring and reinforcing the right behavior is going to be just as necessary as informing them, and many times more effective. If a child in Adam is enmity with God, do we really expect that they will gladly submit to us? It won't happen until they have a change in their natures. We can make a child obey, but only God can change their natures to gladly submit.

Now as these infants grow up, unless they are born again, the Bible says they retain this same enmity against God. This is every person who has a carnal fleshly mind. They may be polite. They may be considerate of others. They may even act in a way that is more moral than most believers. They may be people of great courage or great strength. They may even be ready to give their life to save yours. They may be self sacrificing. They may be kind and gentle. But if they are still under their father Adam, they are the epitome of enmity toward God. Their good behavior is no different before God than their evil behavior in terms of relationship. They are enmity. And as long as they remain in their unregenerate status, they remain an enemy of God's.



This enmity does not exist for just some of the time. **Every minute of every day** the carnal mind retains the position of enmity. It isn't that they sometimes venture out of that state to do things that are pleasing to God. No. It is a state of enmity. They are an opposing force.

And this is not referring to part of the man. It is the **whole man**. A man is never part in this state and part out of it. He is either all in or all out.

Let me use an illustration here. Suppose your neighbor were a member of a terrorist cell. Suppose he is here to plant a bomb to kill thousands of innocent people in Oakland. Now maybe one day he might mow your lawn for you to keep his cover. And one day he might ward off a burgler for you. And maybe he might shovel the snow for you. But if you knew what was in his heart, if you knew that he was committed to a cause that was intending your destruction, how much would their good and kind deeds mean to you? How much would they impress you? That person is an enemy. It is their position. And no amount of deeds will change that. That is how God sees the carnal man.

And without a doubt, the person with the carnal mind is **guilty**. It is a mind they love and cherish. Spurgeon has a quote that is for anyone this morning that knows that they have never responded by faith to Christ's call. Keep this in mind at the fair this week.

Sinner! why are you at enmity with God? God is the God of love; he is kind to his creatures; he regards you with his love of benevolence; for this very day his sun has shone upon you, this day you have had food and clothing, and you have come up here in health and strength. Do you hate God because he loves you? Is that the reason?

Do you hate your mother, who nursed you on her knee? Do you curse your father, who so wisely watched over you? No, you say, we have some little gratitude towards earthly relatives. Where are your hearts, then? Where are your hearts, that you can still despise God, and be at enmity with

him? Oh! diabolical crime! Oh! satanic enormity! Oh! iniquity for which words fail in description! To hate the all-lovely; to despise the essentially good; to abhor the constantly merciful; to spurn the ever beneficent; to scorn the kind, the gracious one; above all, to hate the God who sent his son to die for man! Ah! in that thought-"The carnal mind is enmity with God;" there is something which may make us shake; for it is a terrible sin to be at enmity with God. I would I could speak more powerfully, but my Master alone can impress upon you the enormous evil of this horrid state of heart.

So we see, this morning, two truths that Paul portrayed in Romans. We see the life and peace of the believer. And we see the enmity of the unbeliever.

If you are in the state of enmity I beg you to repent and respond to the call of God on your life.

And if you are a believer who has life and peace, I challenge you along with myself to live to please God, because we can, we should, and we must.