

STUDY 16 – PRINCIPLES OF A SPIRITUAL MINDSET

PART 1B – WHAT TO CHANGE

This morning we want to continue to look at [Romans 8:6](#) and specifically address the idea of being “**spiritually minded**”.

Ro 8:6 (NKJV) **For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.**

Anytime that you see the word “**spiritual**”, it simply means “**of the Spirit**”. In the actual Greek text that is exactly how it reads. It says “**mind of (belonging to) the Spirit**”. I like that they have added the words “*belonging to*” because it is saying that now our minds belong to the Spirit. For instance, spiritual gifts are gifts “**of the Spirit**”, gifts that belong to the Spirit and that are given to us as believers. So, to be “**spiritually minded**” means that our mind is “**of the Spirit**”. I.e., we now think in a spiritual way and not in a worldly way. Obviously, there are many times when we will all think in a worldly way, but that should never be the norm or the ongoing pattern for the true believer. In fact, I would say that when someone who is truly born again begins to think in a worldly way that will be damaging to their life that the Holy Spirit supernaturally intervenes in their thinking **to make them very uncomfortable and unsettled**. [Colossians 3:15](#) says to “**let the peace of God rule in your hearts**”. When you feel uncomfortable in your spirit, it is most likely the Holy Spirit wanting to guard you from doing something that He knows will not be the best for your life. This should be your constant experience.

To be “**spiritually minded**” means that your mind is **controlled and influenced** by the Holy Spirit, and when you actually have this “**spiritual mindset**”, it means that you will experience both the “**life and peace**” that only God can give to you. Think of it in the negative way. If you are rarely “**spiritually minded**”, then it is very doubtful that you even have spiritual life residing in you. If being “**spiritually minded**” is not the governing and controlling influence of your life, then you cannot have the “**life and peace**” that God offers. The slightest provocation will cause you to lose your peace or your temper or your patience. A negative change in your circumstances will cause you to begin to doubt God. However, when a person is truly and genuinely saved, then that person has literally passed from one world into another world. They pass from the worldly kingdom of darkness into the spiritual kingdom of light, so everything in their life can be seen from Gods perspective. [Colossians 1:13](#) says,

Col 1:13 (NKJV) **He has delivered us (rescued us, NASB, NIV) from the power of darkness and conveyed us (transferred us, NASB, ESV) into the kingdom of the Son of His love,**

We were once a part the kingdom of darkness and the evidence of that was that we were always “**worldly minded, fleshly mind, carnally minded**”. The lost man never really wants to do what God wants him to do. He feels hindered and impeded by what he is told is the perfect will of God for his life. He casually rejects the Word of God, ignores it, pays it no attention, and gives it no real merit in his life. Anything that appears to be spiritual like just attending a church is just a façade. It is not spiritual to the lost man, just something social that he does. Strong, accurate preaching and teaching bore him to tears.

However, something supernatural happened to us. We were genuinely saved by God and then placed into His kingdom, and the real evidence of what happened to us is that NOW we are “**spiritually minded**”. It is like **we do not really know any other way to think** because we have finally seen that our worldly way of thinking was so wrong, misled, and undermining to our life, that we simply can never

think like that again. Personally, I could never go back to how I use to think. Why? Well, as Paul says in [Romans 8:6](#), it was nothing but “**death**” to me, and on this side of salvation I can clearly see that.

I am so thankful that now we have the Spirit of God governing and controlling and influencing our life. We are now able to yield ourselves to the Spirit of God who lives in us and we are no longer resisting what He desires for our life. Modern Christianity has completely watered down this reality of what marks a genuine salvation experience. The Word of God is clear that when we are truly born again, then at that moment “**all things become new**”. Paul says that the “**old things have passed away**”. That should have been your experience. Think of it this way. We now have the Holy Spirit, we have a new heart, and because of that, we CAN now actually think differently. Why? It is because we have been spiritually endowed by the Holy Spirit in such a way that we are now built to actually be “**spiritually minded**” and not “**worldly minded**”. If this is not the real testimony of your life, then it is very doubtful that you have ever been saved. You may have had some kind of “religious experience”, but if nothing really changed in your life, then why would you ever think that you were truly “**born again**”?

As your pastor, what I truly desire for your life when you walk out of this building today is that you will do everything to determine that you are truly a “**spiritually minded**” person and not a “**worldly minded**” person. The enemy will do everything in his power to prevent this from happening, so you may have a deeply intense spiritual battle that you will have to face, but God will be there to help you if you really want His best for your life. There will always be things in your life that God wants to inevitably change, and that is why we have called this series “Embracing Change”. I want to embrace what God wants me to change everytime that He reveals it to me, and you should think exactly the same. This is Christianity.

SOME MARKS OF A SPIRITUAL MINDSET

Now, I want to address a few things in your life that should be the evidence that you really do have a “**spiritual mindset**” and that you are fully inclined to being “**spiritually minded**”. What we are doing in these next few points is defining real Christianity and what it should really look like. Obviously, there are many more points than I have chosen to share, but at least this can be an elementary starting point.

1. **GOD IS THE PRIORITY OF YOUR LIFE.** You are someone who organizes your life and executes your life around this single priority, and nothing less. You are always seeking God and His best. This is what it means to “**seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness**”.
2. **GOD’S TRUTH AND PRINCIPLES HAVE BECOME YOUR STANDARDS AND YOUR VALUES.** I cannot live out the Christian life if I am always rejecting the Word of God and how it is designed to impact my life. It will ALWAYS make demands on the believer’s life. That is a clear given. The Bible is not like a novel that you read. It is the living Word of God, and everything embedded in it is right and true and holy. So, we need to be what I want to call “**truth driven, value driven**”. You are that person who has godly values and who lives out those values in your life. You are not driven by the world or the culture which is always changing. The truth of God NEVER CHANGES, and it is what should always be driving us, compelling us, pushing us, constraining us on how God wants us to live. You should be constantly compelled to be “**truth driven**”. If you are not, then as far as God is concerned, and He is the only One who matters, then something is seriously wrong in your life. You are driven by godly values and not the world’s values. For example, if one of your values is to always produce high quality work,

then that value is not a function of your conditions. It does not matter if it is a sunny day or a rainy day, an easy day or a difficult day, a good day or a bad day.

**YOUR VALUES ARE ALWAYS THE SAME NO MATTER YOUR
CIRCUMSTANCES.¹**

You will not forfeit your godly values to appease someone. You will not take shortcuts in your Christian life. You will always be honest. You will always treat people with respect, even when they may not be respectful to you. You will forgive when wronged. You will guard your words. Why? It because these are God’s values, and they must be yours as well.

3. **YOU TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HOW YOU RESPOND TO DIFFICULT AND STRESSFUL MOMENTS AND PEOPLE.** You live your life every day based on God’s truth and principles. When life becomes challenging and problematic, you do not allow your “*fickle feelings*” to blind you to how God wants you to live and respond to these kinds of moments in your life. You are not someone who is always blaming your circumstances and other people for what may not be going the way that you want them to go. Rather, you take personal responsibility for your life, your actions, and your decisions. You have learned to truly trust God when life is difficult and when your relationship with someone is difficult. You CHOOSE to do what is right.
4. **YOU SEE YOUR LIFE AS ONE THAT NEEDS CONTINUOUS SPIRITUAL IMPROVEMENT.** I.e., you do not allow yourself to become complacent with where you may be in your Christian life. It is like you always have a kind of “*spiritual dissatisfaction*” with where you are spiritually. You are always hungry for more wisdom, for more understanding, and for more help in living out the Christian life. [2 Peter 3:18](#) says that we are to “**grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**”. The word for “**grow**” is a present tense, imperative mood verb which implies that we are to always be growing, always be dissatisfied with where we are, always learning, always seeking God. If someone is not growing spiritually, then they are not “**spiritually minded**”. It is that simple.
5. **YOU ARE NOW INCLINED TO SUBORDINATE YOUR IMPULSES AND REACTIONS TO GOD’S VALUES.** Jesus is the perfect example. He said “**Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do**”. He subordinated His impulses and feelings to what He knew was how His Father wanted Him to respond in the most difficult moment of His life.
6. **WHEN YOU MAKE A MISTAKE, YOU ADMIT IT, CONFESS IT, CORRECT IT, AND LEARN FROM IT.** I.e., you are not always looking for someone else to blame and accuse. Here is what you want to do, so listen carefully.

YOU WORK ON YOU AND NOT SOMEONE ELSE.

You leave someone else to God and you take care of yourself by doing what you know God wants you to do when you have failed in an area of your life. You become a model and not a critic. You become the solution and not the problem. I am convinced that we are responsible for

¹ Covey,

our own effectiveness or ineffectiveness, and very often for many of our difficult circumstances.² We overreacted, said the wrong thing, acted the wrong way. We created that difficult moment.

7. **WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE, YOU UNDERSTAND THAT THE SMALL THINGS ARE ACTUALLY THE BIG THINGS.**³

Becoming angry, being unforgiving, unkind, impatient, disrespectful – these are the things in your life that destroy the relationships that you have with people. It could be your marriage partner, your best friend, your boss, your co-workers, anyone with whom you have a meaningful relationship. If you want to destroy that relationship, then simply ignore the small things.

8. **BEING “SPIRITUALLY MINDED” IS YOUR WAY OF LIFE, YOUR LIFESTYLE.**

Because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in your life, you have the greatest resource available to always choose God and His best for your life. The Holy Spirit is always there to help you. He is called the “**Paraclete**”, or the One who comes along side to help when help is needed. He does not do everything for you, but He does give you all of the help that you need to choose God and do the right thing no matter the circumstances in which you may find yourself.

Now, I deeply believe that [Romans 8:6](#) is a kind of spiritual microcosm that is always revealing the difference between those who are saved and those, listen carefully, who just think that they are saved. Those who are saved are driven to think spiritually. It is the ultimate priority of their life, the core value of their life. Those who are not saved, even though they may think that they are, they are not motivated to think like God thinks. They are much more inclined to be “**worldly minded**” and to love the things of the world more than they love God. I will close with this last, but very important principle.

YOUR LIFE ALWAYS REVEALS WHAT YOU ARE THINKING.

May God in heaven help us to be spiritually minded.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Covey, Stephen R. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*. 25th Anniversary Edition. London: Simon and Schuster, 2004.

² Covey, 100.

³ Covey, 202.