**Sermon Preview for Sunday, May 11, 2014:**

*The Spirit-Directed Life:*

 *(2) Focus Your Mind On What the Spirit Desires*

**Romans 8:5-11**

*Our Situation*

In his book, ***The Me I Want to Be***, John Orberg says the following about “setting your mind”. *“Setting your mind is like setting a setting a thermostat. It is creating a target for the climate.*

*Once you set a thermostat, the heating and air-conditioning will have to adjust in relation to the weather. It is a constant process, but the goal is for the system to create a life-giving climate. So too it is with our minds.”*

--***The Me…***p *96*



One of the important tasks of Christian living is to “set our minds on what the Spirit desires.” If we purposefully set our minds on something good there is a strong possibility it will stay there. On the other hand, if we live mindlessly then our minds will be vulnerable to the dazzling power of temptation, the paralyzing power of fear, and the toxic power of blame.

Paul seems to suggest that the Holy Spirit is at work to stir us to set our minds on what He desires. This is yet another way God is for us! Even so, each day we should ***a-Spire*** to think about the desires of the Holy Spirit.

**Aspiration and Mortification**

John Stott says that two major dynamics of the Christian are *aspiration*—setting your mind on the Spirit who gives life, and *mortification*---putting to death the misdeeds of the flesh.

**Heidelberg Catechism**

**Question 89:**

 **What is the dying-away of**

 **the old self?**

**A.** It is to be genuinely sorry for sin, to hate it more and more, and run away from it.

**Question 90:**

 **What is the coming-to-life of**

 **the new self?**

**A.** It is wholehearted joy in God through Christ and a delight to do every kind of good as God wants us to do.

**Observation and Interpretation**

* **Verse 5-8** are descriptive, not

Prescriptive. Paul **does not**

Say, “Be careful or the mind

Of the flesh will lead to death.”

Instead, he says that spiritual

Reality is like this: “the mind

Governed by the flesh is death.”

* **V7 “hostile to God”---**This

Verse gives us a deep view of

Goodness. Some argue, “I

Believe all good people should

go to heaven. Good people

should not be disqualified

because they do not believe in

 God.”

On the surface, this view has

Force. But if all goodness

Comes from God, then it is a

serious thing not to

acknowledge the source of your good behavior. What’s more to take credit for goodness given to you is actually shoddy behavior. Thankfully, non-believers can do many good things but if they are simultaneously hostile towards God (the source of goodness) then they wouldn’t want to be in heaven, a place that bursts with God in all His glory.

* **“Flesh”—**as James Edwards puts it, “Flesh does not connote base instincts or the material side of life….(it refers to) what human nature in its rebellion against God has made of itself.”

**-**-James Edwards, ***Understanding Romans, @39%***

* **“The Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in**

**You.” V11.**

**--**Paul depicts the Holy Spirit as an amazing houseguest. He

Not only resides in us, but he determines to give us life after

Death. The Holy Spirit is in the resurrection business and

and when He sees your dead body He will resolve to raise you.

* **The Holy Spirit resides in every Christian**. Verse 9b is clear: “If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.” The word Paul (oikeo) is the normal greek word for permanent resident. In a genuine Christian, sin “grieves” the Holy Spirit but it does not drive the Spirit away

***Reflect***

\* “Human beings in their natural state, faced with God’s law, are about as much use as a gas lamp plugged into the electric supply….. (the Law) must run through an appliance of the right sort, one designed to work in the same mode. In other words, it (the law) must be applied to someone who very being is no longer ‘fleshly’ but spiritual.”

--Tom Wright, ***Paul For Everyone: Romans: Part One,*** 140

\* “What sets a Christian apart is a whole outlook on life that prizes spiritual riches over earthly riches. Having one’s mind set on what the Spirit desires is what marks a Christian---not a super-Christian, just an ordinary Christian. This is the psychology of faith. And it is this beautiful mentality that flowers into a sanctified, law-fulfilling human personality.”

--Ray Ortlund, ***Supernatural Living,*** 41

***Nice People or New Men***

God became man to turn creatures into sons: not simply to produce better men of the old kind but to produce a new kind of man. It is not like teaching a horse to jump better and better but like turning a horse into a winged creature.



**Application: Set Your Mind On What the Spirit Desires**

The Spirit doesn’t simply desire that you do right things. In a more basic way, the Spirit desires that you delight in what God has done for you! Consider some of these things from Romans 8

1) The Spirit desires that you delight in God’s sure love---no

 Condemnation! (see Rom 8:1, Rom 8:16, Rom8:35-39)

2) The Spirit desires that you delight in God’s fantastic future

 for you—you are an heir! (see Romans 8:17)

3) The Spirit desires that you delight in God’s attentive care.

 In Romans 8:26-27, Paul says, “The Spirit helps us in our

 weakness” and prays for us. He shapes prayers that honor

the desires of our own heart and also are in harmony with

 God’s will. What a fantastic friend!