

The Mind of the Spirit

February 12, 2017

To KNOW Christ and one another more deeply,
To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW as followers of Jesus.
- CG Mission Statement

Worship: Romans 8:1-4

(Here is a passage to help your group as you worship. You can go through it together or in groups in meditation and/or in prayer)

Read Romans 8:1-4 using the prayer practice of Lectio Divina. Read the passage aloud 3 times. After each reading, spend a few minutes reflecting. After the first reading, open yourself to the presence of God. On the second reading, listen for a certain word or phrase that stands out to you. On the third reading, listen to what God's invitation might be for you.

Icebreaker

What did you worry about as a child that seems funny to you now? How did you grow out of it?

Text for Discussion: Romans 8:5-7, 13

Turn in your Bibles and read this passage aloud together.

Aid for Discussion: Sermon Summary

When He died on the cross and was raised from the dead, Jesus won the decisive battle in the war against Sin and Death. Whatever is true of Jesus in God's eyes is now true for all who are in Him (Rom 6:11). And yet, these defeated foes continue to wreak havoc and ruin lives. Victory is assured and we participate in it by faith, but the ongoing fight against sin and death requires our daily vigilance.

Our Mindset includes what ambitions drive us and what concerns engross us. It is our whole outlook as well as how we interpret what happens to us. The mindset of the Flesh is our tendency to be self-focused and self-absorbed. It is a life mired in disorder, which leads to upheaval, anxiety, a lack of peace, and exhaustion. (*See Galatians 5:19-21 for a description of the works of the flesh.*) It is a way of life that enslaves us, and it is killing us! But with the mindset of the Spirit, we live with the peace, love, and joy of the Holy Spirit inside us (1 Cor 2:16, Rom 8:6).

A symptom of a mind set on the flesh is worrying because it is a means of soothing our anxieties. It offers some semblance of control over our problems without actually solving them. How might we, in the light of our New Self, diffuse our worry?

Recognize our worry. Worry is carrying a burden that God never intended us to bear. "Do not be anxious about anything" (Phil 4:6). And so first, we must recognize and name our worries.

Remember who we are in Christ. The voice of worry is our Old Self talking, and that's not who we are any more.

Refute our worry. We must challenge it with the truth of God's word. God is in control, so we don't have to be. God knows what we need better than we ever will, so we can trust Him in every circumstance.

This exercise of recognizing, remembering, and refuting is an example of life in the Spirit. But initial deliverance does not mean we won't be tempted by our former life in the Flesh. We will experience pain as we wean ourselves of it. Our new life in Christ by faith is immediate, but the transformation of our mindset takes years. Yes, the battle rages on. But thank God, He won't leave us content in our old ways. The power needed to set our minds on the Spirit is not of our own will; it is God's power. He never leaves us to rely on our own resources, for we now live rooted in Christ.

People who live in the Spirit are who God made us to be and who Christ redeemed us to become. This will produce a harvest of peace in our life. This isn't just a promise of eternal life, which is a free gift of grace. God yearns for us to have a rich and satisfying life here and now, and life in the Spirit is the way. But harvests take time, so we must persevere.

Guiding Question of the Week

(This question is intended as a target for the whole conversation. Do not ask for responses now. It will be repeated later in the study.)

How can we set our mindset on things of the Spirit as opposed to the flesh?

Questions for Discussion

(Remember it is better to wrestle deeply with two good questions than gloss over many. Sub-bullets are intended for potential follow-up.)

- 1) What stands out to you after reading Rom 8:5-7, 13?
- 2) What does “flesh” mean to you? How would you define it?
 - One definition of the flesh is “ambitions that capture your heart”. What’s the difference between good ambition and bad ambition? What ambitions capture your heart?
- 3) How does the mindset of the flesh manifest itself in your life?
 - How can you tell when you are living in the flesh?
 - What do you dwell on?
- 4) **Guiding Question: How can we set our mindset on things of the Spirit as opposed to the flesh?**
 - What are signs of living a life of the Spirit?
 - How can we experience God’s peace, even in the light of difficult circumstances?
- 5) How can we, as a community, help one another set our mindset on the things of the Spirit?
 - Take one thing you are worrying about and take it through the grid of the “recognize, remember, refute” process.
 - Recognize—How would you define this worry, and how does it align with God’s perspective on your life?
 - Remember—Repeat Eph 4:20-24 out loud 3x. How does it relate to your worry?
 - Refute—Challenge the worry with truth. Find a scripture verse that shows you God’s perspective on this matter.

Praying for One Another

(Here are some ideas from the study to help focus your time in prayer as a group. Use by themselves or along with other prayer requests.)

- Thank God that He has died for us and we are made alive in His resurrection.
- Ask God to help us set our mind on things of Spirit.
- Pray that God would transform our minds so that we can all walk in newness of life (Col 3).