

Mind Vs. Flesh

"So then I of myself with the mind indeed serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Rom. 7:25). To Paul's words here might well be posed this question: "At the same time?" That is, can one with the mind serve the law of God while at the same time his body is serving the law of sin? Some insist so. Calvinists preachers have been known to say, "I don't sin, but my body does." Was this what Paul said here?

How could we attribute such to him who said, "*What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any long live therein?*"; who wrote, "*know ye not that to whom ye present yourselves servants unto obedience his servants ye are whom ye obey ...?*" and "*neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness*" (Rom. 6:1f; 16, 13). Whatever Paul meant in Romans 7:25; we may be certain he did not mean that at the same time he served God with his mind, he served the law of sin with the flesh.

It is not coincidental that immediately after writing, "*So then, I of myself with the mind indeed serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin*" that Paul launched into an extensive discussion of "*spirit*" and "*flesh*." It is interesting to see that he states that those after the flesh, "*mind the things of the flesh*"; "*that the mind of the flesh is death*"; is "*enmity against God*"; "*is not subject to the law of God nor can be*"; that "*they in the flesh cannot please God*" (8:5, 6, 7, 8). On the other hand he wrote to emphasize that the mind of the Spirit is life and peace; is at peace with God, subject to God's law and can (and does) please God.

The truth that when Paul wrote of the mind with which he served the law of God but with the flesh the law of sin, he was introducing what he will later define as "*the mind of the Spirit*" and the "*mind of the flesh*." The flesh of which Paul writes, has a mind as well as the mind that serve the law of God.

The mind of the spirit is that attitude and direction of life that walks according to the directions of the Holy Spirit and the mind of the flesh is the attitude and direction of life that walks according to the carnal and base desires of sin. Both minds are found in one man, but no man follows with both minds at the same time. That is impossible! "*Walk after the spirit*" says the apostle "*and ye shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh*" (Gal. 5:16). Further, Paul said, "*that they that are in the flesh cannot please God*" (Rom. 8:8). Obviously, to be in the flesh means something other than possessing a

physical body. Were this true, no person could please God. They who are in the flesh are those who live a life directed by the desires of the flesh.

So, when Paul says that with the mind "*he serves the law of God*" but that with the flesh "*the law of sin*" he is but preparing his readers for the next thesis he writes of in Chapter Eight: "The mind of the flesh and the mind of the Spirit." NEXT: "No Condemnation To Them That Are In Christ."

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