***Romans 8:5-8 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7Because 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.***

Recall with me that we studied a few weeks ago what Jesus said to the group of three disciples in the Garden, when He came back and found them sleeping from sorrow. He said – The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. This morning, the Apostle Paul brings a dose of logic dealing with the flesh and the Spirit, with regards to how we live. In Matthew 6:21, Jesus says -*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* He finishes in Matthew 6:24 *No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and mammon.* Mammon holds the idea of wealth and possessions that create a false sense of confidence. We’ll either place our confidence in God or the world. One is sure, the other false. We must choose wisely.

Verse 5 this morning says – *For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.*RomansChapter 8, verse 1 is a verse that should make us burst into song every single time we read it! It says - *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, whodo not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit*. Those living according to the flesh desire what the flesh desires. Those living according to the Spirit, who have accepted Christ Jesus, and truly submitted to His Kingship, focus their desire on the things of the Spirit. The flesh is characterized by outbursts of anger, envy, immoral thoughts and actions, jealousy, strife and bickering. None of this brings peace. Paul is giving a test here. If our hearts desire the things of this world and care little about the things of the Spirit, when we are honest with ourselves, we see that the flesh is our master and not God. No one can serve two masters.

Verses 6-7 *For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and* ***peace.****7Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.* There’s that word peace again. Peace is what I call a bell-weather word. It’s a canary in the coal mine. When peace disappears, something has gone wrong within. The issue is not with Bob or Sue or this place or that event. We want to blame others. If I blame someone else, I have no responsibility to fix. I bear no blame. Make no mistake – lack of peace is an inside job. When our mind is ruled or governed by the flesh, this is death. This makes sense. *For the wages of sin is death* (Romans 6:23). When our mind of ruled or governed by God’s Spirit, we have life and peace. This makes sense! Romans 6:23 again - *but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*. Being of the world and of the flesh is contrary to being of God and in the Spirit. Enmity with God means being hostile and rebellious to God. When we have truly submitted to Christ, we gladly submit to His leading. He is Master. James 4:4 says *Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.* What does a carnal mind look like? Christian writers agree it is a mind characterized by selfishness, self-will, self-focus, self-seeking, and an inability to fully surrender to God. It shows up in the need to be always right and have the last word. It presents in the inability to enjoy anything unless it goes our way. We choose instead to take our toys and go home. These verses are like a light switch. God- the Light is on. Flesh – darkness prevails. Light or dark. Friend or enemy. Life or death. We choose which master we serve – God or mammon. Only One brings life and peace.

In the verse above, Paul said - *for it* (meaning the carnal mind hostile to God) *is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.* Why? Because we’re either focused on the Spirit or self, God or mammon. Now, we read in verse 8*So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.* Those with minds set upon the desires of this world cannot please God. They are carnally minded, self-focused, self-willed, and unconcerned with the things of God. They are concerned only with what serves self. The mind of flesh is indeed hostile to the things of God. But the mind truly surrendered and submitted to Christ Jesus, emptied of self and filled with the Holy Spirit, desires the things of the Spirit. What are these? Well, in part, we’ll desire to grow in Christ, align with God’s word daily, do God’s will in our life, serve others as our worship of God, we’ll hunger and thirst after righteousness, we’ll share one another’s burdens, and we’ll love our neighbor as ourself.

Those who have accepted Jesus and His Kingship walk in the Light. There is a battle: Flesh or Spirit. Galatians 5 says these lie completely opposite to one another. When we are in Christ, we have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires that once governed our minds. We take up our Cross daily and, if we live in the Spirit, as Galatians 5:25 says, let us also walk in the Spirit. Crucify the carnal desires of the flesh that still tempt us today and surrender our all to Christ’s Kingship, as He leads us in the Spirit’s way.