Northwest Bible Church – Dec. 14, 2003 Worship Service – Alan Conner

**Rom. 8:5-6**

*The Failure of the Flesh*

**INTRO**

Romans 8 is setting forth the great teaching on assurance. Assurance is based on at least three things:

1) the promises of God – Rom. 8:1-2.

2) inner witness of the Spirit – Rom. 8:16

3) evidence of a changed life – Rom. 8:4f.

In Rom. 8:5-8 Paul now explains why only those who walk by the Spirit can fulfill the requirement of the law. The depravity and failure of the fleshand its mind come to the forefront. The flesh cannot justify and it cannot sanctify.

**I. WHY ONLY THOSE WITH THE SPIRIT CAN FULFILL THE REQUIREMENT OF THE LAW (8:5-8).**

The “**For**” in Rom. 8:5-6 introduce two reasons for v. 4, namely, why only those who walk by the Spirit can fulfill the requirements of the law. These two reasons in the form of contrasting statements between those in the flesh and those in the Spirit.

**Only two kinds of people** are in view here in 8:4-8: you are either “according to the flesh” or “according to the Spirit,” either in the realm dominated by the flesh or in the realm dominated by the Spirit.

This is clear from Rom. 8:9.

*Reason #1 - The contrasting interests of the minds (Rom. 8:5).*

**1) Those according to the flesh fix their mind on the things of the flesh.**  This is the unregenerate man. He has not the Spirit.

“According to” indicates what is the nature of the person.

“Flesh” – unregenerate sinful nature that is lost and without God.

“Mind” describes the reasoning, affections, pursuits, desires of the person.

“Things of the flesh” - all that is consistent with our sinful nature and lusts.

The principle is that any nature reproduces after its own kind.

**Gen. 1:24** -

**Jn. 3:6** -

This passage teaches TOTAL DEPRAVITY and the NOETIC effects of sin. Cf. 1Cor. 2:14; Rom. 1:28; Eph. 4:17-19; Tit. 1:15.

**2) Those of the Spirit fix their mind on the things of the Spirit.** What are the things of the Spirit? The Bible, fruit of Spirit, godliness, humility, obedience, love, truth and sound doctrine, the things above, the glory of God. Cf. Col. 3:2; Phil. 4:8.

*Reason #2 – The contrasting character of the minds (Rom. 8:6).*

**1) The mind of the flesh is death.**  This has a three fold meaning:

a) spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1),

b) it bears fruit for death such as dead works, etc (Rom. 7:5), and

c) leads to eternal death (Rom. 6:23).

**2) The mind of the Spirit is life and peace.** The regenerate mind which possesses the HS will have both life (spiritual life, eternal life), and peace (both with God, objective peace, and subjective peace in our heart).

**CONCLUSION**

1) Don’t ever be surprised that the unbelieving world thinks and acts the way it does.

2) Our assurance is not based on your unregenerate mind that one day decided to follow Jesus.

3) Your assurance is that God the Spirit came and set you free and how do you know it has happened to you?

Is there evidence of a changed life? Then REJOICE.

4) How Christians need to walk by the Spirit.