

GRACE TO YOU

ROMANS 8:4-9

# TWO KINDS OF MIND



---

**FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

DAVID MURRAY  
APRIL 30, 2023 (PM)

---

# INTRODUCTION

**What kind of mind do you have?** There are multiple classification methods for mind-types:

- **Two** types of mind: creative or analytical.
- **Three** types of mind: photo-realistic visual thinking, pattern mathematical thinking, and verbal/auditory thinking.
- **Four** types of mind: the soul-mind, the body-mind, the emotional mind, or the rational mind.
- **Five** types of mind: the disciplined mind, the synthesizing mind, the creating mind, the respectful mind and the ethical mind.
- **Six** types of mind: joy oriented mind, love oriented mind, hate oriented mind, fear oriented mind, boredom oriented mind and sex oriented mind.

Believe it or not, some say there are seven, some say eight, and on and on it goes. IQ or EQ is another way to divide minds into almost infinite classifications. But, according to God, there are only two types of mind: the flesh-mind and the Spirit-mind. **What kind of mind do you have?** Let's get the answer from Romans 8:4-9.

## BACKGROUND

Romans 8 tells us a lot about the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. What the law could not and cannot do, the Holy Spirit can and does.

- The Holy Spirit transforms our conscience (1-3)
- The Holy Spirit transforms our minds (4-9)
- The Holy Spirit transforms our bodies (9-11)
- The Holy Spirit transforms our holiness (12-14)
- The Holy Spirit transforms our assurance (14-17)
- The Holy Spirit transforms our suffering (18-25)
- The Holy Spirit transforms our prayers (26-27)
- The Holy Spirit transforms our purpose (28-29)

Before looking at the two different kinds of mind, let's remind ourselves of the different meanings of "flesh" in the Bible. Sometimes it means flesh and blood humanity, sometimes it means weak and frail humanity, and sometimes it means sinful humanity.

We have three of these different meanings of flesh in Romans 8:3-4. "By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh (weak humanity) and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh (humanity), in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh (sinful humanity) but according to the Spirit.

Christ's past life in human flesh (weak humanity) results in a different present life in the flesh (weak humanity) for his people. We are now much more able to live in obedience to God's law because Christ paid the penalty of the law, satisfying both God's law and our consciences. That transformed life comes from a transformed mind, changing us from a flesh-mind to a Spirit-mind.



What is the flesh-mind?



---

# 1. THE FLESH-MIND IS A BROKEN MIND

The flesh mind is flesh-focused

**For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh (5).**

"Flesh" here means sinful humanity. Paul was looking at people who were living sinful lives, and concluded their primary problem was not so much their lives but their minds. Their lives simply reflected their minds. Their lives were flesh-full because their minds were flesh-prompted. Flesh dominated their lives because flesh dominated their thoughts. When their mind was not taken up with their daily work and responsibilities, it was taken up with sinful subjects. Their minds were magnetically drawn to sinful things. Their mind-set was sin-set on self, money, sex, and power.

With AI, everything depends on the prompts we enter. The prompts determine what's produced. Paul is telling us that our mind-prompts determine our life-product. When the life-product is flesh, it tells us the mind-prompt is flesh. There's a flesh mindset, mentality, and outlook. The dominant tendency, bent, and disposition is flesh.

The flesh-mind is death

**For to set the mind on the flesh is death (6).**

A flesh-mind not only ends in death but is actually dying while the person is still living. Every time their minds turned to flesh-things it died a little. There was a mini-funeral service and burial. A little gravestone was set up to memorialize the little death that had just happened.

The flesh-mind is hostile to God

**For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God (7-8).**

The flesh mind is at war with God and rebels against God's order, no matter how much it damages them and others. If God's for it, they are against it. Flesh-minds want God and any of his spiritual influences eliminated from every area of life. Nothing they do at any time can please God. It's not just difficult for them to please God; it's impossible.

## CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

**Examine yourself and pray.** Does this describe you? It doesn't matter if you don't know your IQ; you need to know if you have a flesh-mind or a Spirit mind. If you have a flesh-mind, pray for God to give you a Spirit-mind.

**Examine yourself and praise.** If you don't have a flesh-mind, praise God. You were born with one, but God has changed your mind. Any time your mind turns from the flesh to the Spirit it's the work of the Spirit.

A FLESH-MIND  
IS A FATAL MIND.



I really don't want a flesh-mind.  
How do I get a Spirit-mind?



---

## 2. THE SPIRIT-MIND IS A HEALTHY MIND

### The Spirit-mind is Spirit-focused

**...but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit (5)**

There were others in Rome who were living according to the Spirit. They lived in a way that reflected the Holy Spirit. How did they do this? They lived differently because they thought differently. They thought about the things of the Spirit. They loved to think about God's salvation, sanctification, and service. Their automatic prompt was "Spirit." Their minds went to the Word, worship, prayer, fellowship, mission, growth in grace, eternity, and heaven. That was their dominant bent, their tendency, their disposition. This is a perfect description of our Savior while on earth.

### The Spirit-mind is life

**...to set the mind on the Spirit is life (6)**

Every time their minds went to spiritual things, there was a little birth of new life, a little life was generated. They lived a little more, life got more lively. The Spirit gave life to their spirit.

### The Spirit-mind is God's happy place

**...to set the mind on the Spirit is...peace (6)...You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you (9).**

These minds were no longer a hot-bed of sinful rebellion but of holy happiness. Peace filled these minds as God filled these minds. God loves to live in peaceful minds because peaceful minds love to be filled with God. It makes our minds a happy place for us and for him. He enjoys living there because he feels at home there, he feels welcomed and loved. It's a little piece of heaven on earth. It's a piece of human real estate that Christ owns (9) and invites the Spirit to live in.

## CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

**Your mind can be a graveyard or a maternity ward.** It can be a place of death or the birthplace of life. It all depends what you think about.

**Your mind can be little hell on earth or a little piece of heaven on earth.** Yes, you can have a foretaste of heaven on earth if you set your minds on the right subjects.

WHEN THE SPIRIT TAKES OVER  
HE STARTS A MAKEOVER



Hear God's Story > Change your story > Tell the story > Change others' stories



## SUMMARY



## A NEW CHAPTER

Just as mental exercises improve brain function, spiritual exercises can improve mind function:

- feed your mind with God's Word
- exercise your mind with meditation
- refresh your mind with fellowship
- grow your mind by discipleship
- elevate your mind by prayer
- brighten your mind with heaven

**Prayer:** Magnificent Mind, share your mind with us so that we have living Spirit-minds rather than dying flesh-minds.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe your spiritual conversion from the viewpoint of how it changed your mind.
2. How do you know if you have a flesh-mind? A Spirit-mind?
3. What exercises have you found strengthen your Spirit-mind?
4. Why is it impossible for non-Christians to do anything to please God?
5. How would you encourage someone with a flesh-mind to seek a Spirit-mind?
6. How did this message help you understand and love Jesus better?

First Byron Christian Reformed Church  
8541 Byron Center Ave SW, Byron Center, MI 49315  
Phone: (616) 878-9768  
[www.firstbyroncrc.org](http://www.firstbyroncrc.org)

Pastor David Murray  
[www.thestorychanger.life](http://www.thestorychanger.life)